

NORTH OF CENTER

WEDNESDAY, MAY 11, 2011

FREE

TAKE HOME AND READ

NOCLEXINGTON.COM

VOLUME III, ISSUE 9

May Day sprout

Josephine Rose Mayer born 5:35 AM

NoC News

Monday, May 2

Central Baptist Hospital

The news coming down the line says that your world's on fire, and I'm trying

to get a message through to you.

—D. Rawlings

With her right arm raised and her tiny fist pushed tight between her temple and mom's canal walls, Josephine Rose Mayer was born on May 1, 2011 at 5:35 A.M., after 28 hours of labor. She came out crying and with a head of black hair, in search of warmth and a pair of arms to hold her close, things her mother, strong and beautiful, happily provided.

Though Josie was unavailable for comment, inside sources say that the allure of being a May Day baby, coupled with Mom's Friday night dinner of white bean agnolletti, led to the ambitious sprout's decision early on

Saturday morning, a rare sunny day in a season of downpours, to come upon the world three weeks early. Over a period of hours, as Mom calmly finished painting the baby's bookshelf and Dad frantically rushed to plant the beans, install the baby seat and transplant the tomatoes, Josie's demands became more insistent, pressing, sharp.

Things ultimately crested, crowned actually, 64 minutes before the sun's rise on May 1, International Worker's Day and pagan Spring holiday for the northern hemisphere; a Sunday.

All in all, it's a real fine day to scratch your first mark and pitch your first good holler. Great-grandmothers Josephine "Josie" Lazare, a line worker



Josie Rose Mayer raises her hand band in solidarity with workers across the world.

at the Philadelphia Scott Paper plant in the 1940s and still alive at 95, and Rosalind "Papa Rose" Decker, a South Georgia florist into the 1990s, must surely be proud of their May Day hybrid born of two non-native transplants, this child arriving early with

her arms raised up, loud, and ready to go.

Both mom and baby are doing well. The dogs are a bit mystified. Most of the tomatoes survived the frost. Weather is warming. And dad's tickled pink at the whole turn of events.

Between God and Superman

Eli at the UK helm

By Danny Mayer

"We want somebody between God and Superman."

—James Stuckert, Vice-Chair, UK Board of Trustees, January 2010, speaking on the UK CEO search

I should be honest here and say that not once throughout the entire UK hiring process, from Lee Todd's stepping down as CEO last Fall on up through the May Day announcement last week of University of Alabama at Birmingham Provost Eli Capilouto's coronation as the next CEO/President of the University of Kentucky, did I ever think the school would hire a president I might imagine as anywhere approaching "good." When the same corporate hiring firm that chose the last president is granted the same hiring powers, this time on steroids—a search conducted entirely out of the view of the public with a \$700,000 salary allowed to float around publicly as possible compensation—it's difficult to hold out much hope for things going well.

My disposition might be seen in contrast to Britt Brockman, chair of the Board of Trustees and public face of the UK search committee. In March while still interviewing candidates out of the public eye, Brockman described the candidate pool as "just phenomenal." Its "depth and breadth of quality" he found "overwhelmingly surprising." Unlike Board Vice-Chair James Stuckert, who famously said that UK wanted someone between "God and Superman" as UK's next CEO/President, Brockman was bullish on several candidates, noting on March 24 that he had "already met three to five people that I would be comfortable having as the next president."

This news was not to be taken lightly. Several months earlier in January, the Florida corporate search firm Greenwood/Asher, who was paid to vet and in some instances actively recruit (as they did with new UK CEO Eli Capilouto) the candidates it put

continued on page 7

LexTran renovation moving forward

NoC News

On April 25, LexTran officials, including General Manager Rocky Burke, met with community members at Luigart Studio to discuss the future of the Kitchen Planning Center building at 101 W. Loudon Avenue. Occupying much of the northwest corner of the intersection of N. Limestone and Loudon, LexTran owns the buildings on the corner and currently has its administrative headquarters at 109 W. Loudon. LexTran is considering plans for the vacant Kitchen edifice as well as the long warehouse behind it that runs along N. Limestone.

An Earlier Meeting

For more than a year, community members have been talking to LexTran about how it will utilize the Kitchen building. In January 2010, Burke and his staff met with several northside neighborhood associations at Al's Bar to discuss the building's potential. At that meeting, residents shared memories of the building's past lives, while others expressed concern that any historic value be preserved.

"The old buildings impart a charm to this area and make it unique,

so I would like to see the old Kitchen Planning Center restored. Plus, it is more environmentally friendly to restore an existing building than to demolish it and rebuild," said Tara Rodriguez, of the Castlewood Neighborhood Association.

Marty Clifford, of the North Limestone Neighborhood Association, also saw possibility in the project. "We are hoping the building itself be a monument and part of the community—something the community will directly benefit from and be proud of."

Some also suggested that LexTran showcase an ArtStop bus shelter at the intersection, much like has been done on Third and Elm Tree near the Lyric Theatre.

Other residents made clear that they see the LexTran project as important to the rehabilitation of the intersection.

"The LexTran proposed development on the corner of Limestone and Loudon provides a great opportunity for Lexington and specifically the north side of town. Identified by the Central Sector Small Area Plan as a focus area and potential node of

continued on page 3



The LexTran/Kitchen Planning Center building on the corner of North Limestone and Loudon Avenue.

The length of the Kentucky

Life by rheotaxis, part 3

By Wesley Houpp

Collinsia verna. Blue-Eyed Mary was the first species of spring wildflowers to seduce my imagination as a young man of 23 living on the river at High Bridge. At a time when most of my friends from high school and college were discovering the music-scene (albeit anemic) in Lexington and Louisville and immersing themselves liver-first in the sporadic but engulfing barscape of the city, I was cultivating a healthy respect for the instant isolation the Lock 7 pool offers to anyone with a boat and time. In April the lush banks of Cedar Run glowed in the half blue, half white brilliance cast by a million Blue-Eyed Mary's. Cedar Run was one of the few places to boast such a generous stand. To see it full bloom is a prize enjoyed by scant few.

Cedar Run is one of those creeks that boaters (paddlers and otherwise) pass by without as much as a second glance. For those who launch at Frankie's ramp just above Lock 7, the spectacle of High Bridge pulls all attention skyward, and most are headed for the cold, clear lake-bottom waters of the Dix River and the lure of current-dumb, farm-trout in the tail waters anyway. The small, shallow mouth of Cedar Run is no more than an afterthought with outboards full-bore. Harrodsburg's municipal "straw" slurping at the downstream side also casts a quasi-industrial pallor, complimenting the massive limestone pier supporting the southern leg of High Bridge—the two man-made structures obscuring the magnificently severe gorge.

Just inside the mouth, though, moss-covered stone piers mark the spot where the old stage road bridged the creek, and immediately up to the right, the road to Shaker landing snakes around the cliff. Covering the banks on either side, the Blue-Eyed Mary harmonizes with the blues of Dwarf Larkspur (*Delphinium tricorne*), Virginia Bluebell (*Mertensia virginicus*), Greek Valerian (*Polemonium reptans*), Purple Phacelia (*Phacelia bipinnatifida*),

continued on page 6

Contents

2 — Neighborhood
Save your house
Hacking: good
Announcements

4 — Music
Music calendar
Extraordinary
percussion

5 — Film & Media
DVD illusions
Axes! Mead! Gods!
Local happenings

7 — Opinion
Letters

8 — Comics
Fierce Company
General Dallas
Delmar Von Lexington

In forthcoming issues

High Security Prisons

Review of Mondragon

River Rats comics

The Neighborhood

Alternatives to foreclosure

Info for the diligent

By Natalie Rae Lile

Almost weekly, a new story hits the national media describing record foreclosure rates, “robo-signing” debacles or the feds cracking down on lenders for improper foreclosure procedures. But these national stories don’t capture the fear, frustration, and heartache that exist in homes throughout central Kentucky. There are state and federal programs available for people who are at risk of losing their homes, but many who have lost jobs, have gone through a divorce, or have become disabled will not be able to successfully qualify for these programs before lenders and their lawyers complete the foreclosure process and take their homes. Once a homeowner loses the ability to fully pay his or her monthly mortgage obligation, it is a race against the clock to save his or her home.

The fact is that lenders routinely continue with foreclosure proceedings when in active discussions with borrowers regarding loan modifications. There are many reasons for this. First, some lenders are so big that most have one department that deals with collection and foreclosure litigation while a completely different department works on loan modifications. These two different groups of people may even be in different cities, and they very rarely communicate effectively. Second, even if the foreclosure arm of a lender knows that the loan modification arm is working on a modification, they will likely not inform the attorney who is in charge of the foreclosure suit, so the attorney goes full steam ahead with the foreclosure, nearly always incurring more expenses, which are added to the amount the homeowner owes the lender in the end, even if a modification is worked out.

It is imperative that homeowners not ignore the legal papers they receive from the courts regarding a foreclosure. Homeowners’ homes *will* be sold

while they are negotiating with the lender for a loan modification. Hire a lawyer, write a letter to the court, show up for a scheduled hearing. Do anything to let the court know you want to keep your home and you are willing to work with the bank.

Recently, a man called the office of the Master Commissioner in Frankfort (The Master Commissioner is the court official who conducts the foreclosure sales on the court house steps. It is his or her job to advertise the sales of the homes in the local newspapers). The man was completely surprised when he read an ad in the local newspaper advertising the sale of his home. He was finalizing the paperwork for a federal home loan modification and assumed that the bank was not moving forward with the foreclosure process.

In fact, the attorney for the lender had gone to court, obtained a default judgment against the homeowner, then went back to court and obtained an order of sale from the judge, granting the lender the right to sell the home and retain any proceeds from the sale. The lender’s attorney canceled the sale at the last minute, but not before incurring an additional \$1,500 in costs that will most likely be charged to the homeowner.

Another man, a single father living in Georgetown, was hurt on the job in 2009. He was on unemployment while working with social security to obtain disability payments. Before qualifying for unemployment or disability, he was unable to make his full mortgage payments. His lender filed a foreclosure suit and refused to take any money at all from the man. His house has been scheduled for sale twice, each time while he was working with his lender to apply for a loan modification. Finally, when he received a notice in the mail that his house was to be scheduled for sale for a third time, he hired an attorney. So far, he has not lost his home.

Foreclosures are bad for everyone

The frustrating fact is that mass foreclosures in a down market are bad for everyone. They are bad for the homeowners, bad for the tax base, bad for the neighbors and even bad for the lenders. Statistics show, not only do lenders receive substantially less than they are owed as a result of a foreclosure sale, but, in addition, property values surrounding the foreclosed properties drop, causing a lower local tax base and lower loan to value ratios on existing loans, resulting in collateral coverage issues for local lenders. According to a 2009 report from the Center for Responsible Lending, foreclosures in 2009-2012 will result in a “spillover effect” equaling a \$2,238,700,000 decrease in house values statewide, with an average decline of \$2,610 per home.

Different states and counties throughout the country are handling the problem of out of control foreclosures differently. Some state legislatures have enacted laws to guard against improper foreclosures. Franklin County, Kentucky recently implemented the Franklin County Foreclosure Diversion Program.

According to a letter sent to the local lenders and attorneys in Frankfort, “Based on a growing concern about the record number of foreclosures in Franklin County, and troubled by instances of unresponsiveness from some lenders and servicing agents, we are implementing the Franklin County Foreclosure Diversion Program. This court-mandated mediation program will bring the mortgage-holder and the property-owner together in order to determine if an alternative to foreclosure is possible.”

So far, no other counties in central Kentucky have official, mandatory mediation programs, but many circuit court judges are sending these types of cases to mediation on a

Local Resources for Homeowners

Reach, Inc.
859-455-8057 (for budget and credit counseling)

Community Ventures Corporation, Loss Mitigation Department
859-231-0054 or 800-299-0267 (for assistance prior to foreclosure and during a foreclosure suit)

Fayette County Bar Association Pro Bono Program
859-255-7244 (for legal aid)

Kentucky Housing Corporation
866-830-7368 (for assistance for very low, low, and moderate income homeowners, including a program specifically for unemployed homeowners)

regular basis. The bottom line: even though there are a number of federally- and state-funded programs to help troubled homeowners and to prevent unnecessary foreclosures, at this time, these are having minimal effect and are difficult and frustrating for homeowners to navigate without assistance.

Natalie Rae Lile is a native Lexingtonian and an attorney. She was recently appointed the mediator of the Franklin County Foreclosure Diversion Program. She represents homeowners in Fayette, Scott, Woodford, Shelby and Anderson Counties. She can be reached at Natalie@lilelaw.com.

Collexion: Lexington hacker heaven

By G. Jordan Johnson

Hack-er |noun|

1. An enthusiastic and skillful computer programmer or user.
2. A person who uses computers to gain unauthorized access to data.

Anytime the word *hacker* is uttered, images come to mind of pasty, frail, eyeglass-clad boys and girls intently staring at computer screens and tapping away at the keys. Many associate the word with its second definition and think of misuse, illegal intent, unauthorized employ of one’s technical faculties; the result is a derogatory depiction of any who choose to don programmer’s apparel. However, as a self-proclaimed hacker and an avid fan of all things technological, it is my duty to educate those unaware of or misinformed about hacking.

I find it best to develop an accurate definition of hacking by use of structured examples. Enter Collexion. I was first introduced to Collexion when browsing the web for local Ruby programming groups during my return move from Boston, MA to Lexington. Finding the term *hackerspace* on their website was all that I needed to validate my query. For all intents and purposes, that’s what Collexion’s location at 109 E. Loudon Avenue is: a space where hackers convene.

That still doesn’t correct our course, however; we’ve yet to accurately define *hacker*. For that, I must give a personal interpretation. Not because I feel my word is the authority on hacking, but because there is simply no standard take on what hacking is—it is paradoxically

defined by open and varying interpretations.

Hacking is a desire, a will even, to understand and challenge the status quo on what can and cannot be done. A hacker knows the functionality of a system, a program, a piece of technology, or anything else before it is even made public; the interest of the hacker is learning how those facilities and materials can be altered, improved upon, or reversed. A hacker has “an unstoppable desire to create, to take something apart...a unified compulsion to understand and to share those experiences,” according to one of Collexion’s own. I couldn’t agree more.

A trip to Collexion

It seems my web search ultimately took me to the right people. My enthusiasm only grew once I began to attend Collexion’s weekly meet-ups.

The first few times were enthralling. I showed up first during the assembly of a robot, one that uses prefabricated three-dimensional templates to print, out of ABS plastics, assorted items such as Green Lantern rings, Star Trek badges, and wire spindles. This first meet-up affirmed that this was a place for me; I immediately felt at home.

Collexion had me hooked. Its members, a determined and dedicated few, embrace the collective’s non-profit structure. There, presence and enthusiasm outweigh currency and concern. The group’s challenges lay more

continued on page 3

Natalie Lile Law, PLLC

502-229-4499 • Natalie@Lilelaw.com

Natalie Lile serves clients throughout Central Kentucky from her office at 315 High Street in downtown Frankfort.

- Holds regular client meetings/office hours in Lexington
- More than 13 years of experience
- Graduate of University of Kentucky and Georgetown University Law Center
- Admitted to practice in Kentucky, Virginia, Maryland and Washington, D.C.

*** Family Law * Tax * Wills * Corporations * Contracts**
*** Divorce * Real Estate * Trusts**
*** Debt Collection Defense * Foreclosure Defense**
*** Non-Profit Corporations * Probate**
*** 501(c)3 Qualification**

This is an advertisement.

Announcements

Get up, Clean up!

Help keep the north side beautiful by joining the Great American Clean-Up on Saturday, May 14. Volunteer sign-in at 8 A.M. or 10 A.M. at Duncan Park, followed by a celebration and picnic at noon at Duncan Park. RSVP by May 11 on the web site at gac2011-tu-mlkna-castlewood.eventbrite.com, or call Karen Anderson at 859.233.8182.

All events are rain or shine. Rain location for picnic: Rosenthal Commons (on Transylvania’s campus at Fourth Street). The clean-up is sponsored by Martin Luther King Neighborhood Association, the Castlewood Neighborhood Association, Seedleaf, LFUCG Division of Environmental Policy, and Transylvania University.

Let the gleaning begin!

Faith Feeds began the 2011 gleaning season on Sunday, May 1, at the Lexington Farmers Market. They will be gleaning that market every Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday until sometime in October or November (depending on the weather). They’re looking for volunteers and ask that you consider whether you have time to donate.

Ideally, they’d like to establish a schedule where a particular group or individual gleanes once per month on the same day: for example, last year, Maxwell Street Presbyterian Church gleaned on the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Tuesdays of the month. Of course, if you can only make it on an ad hoc basis—that’s terrific too!

If you’re willing to volunteer, contact faithfeedslex@gmail.com for specific times and additional instructions.

LexTran (cont.)

continued from page 1

activity, the stretch of Loudon between N. Broadway and Bryan Avenue with concentration on the Limestone and Loudon corner should become a destination corridor,” said Griffin VanMeter, who lives and owns a business on N. Limestone.

“LexTran can act as a catalyst and help jump start this destination node with a mixed used development that not only serves their programming needs but also engages the needs of the adjacent neighborhoods,” VanMeter continued. “A development with retail will energize the area, and if done correctly provide more and diverse revenue streams for LexTran. The hope is that LexTran models their development after successful public transportation-based mixed-use developments and seizes this opportunity. The neighborhood hopes that LexTran thinks and acts big and progressively.”

firm, and Messer Construction for the project. Charlie Carter, of Sherman, Carter, Barnhart, presented findings from the feasibility study of the 1928 Kitchen building. To the layperson, the structural report was interesting, but not easy to assess. If this were the exact same audience from the 2010 meeting at Al's Bar, the presentation would probably have fallen flat. However, this wasn't the same audience, although there were a few of the same faces.

This Luigart audience was less resident and more business owner—in particular business owners currently renovating buildings along N. Limestone. The gathering included Chad Needham (the old Spalding’s building), Lucie Meyers, (the blue building at the southeast corner of the N. Limestone/Loudon intersection), representatives from Broken Fork Designs (residential renovation on Rand and N. Limestone), Clifford

of Fifth Street. These are the entrepreneurs willing to take a chance on the nether regions of N. Limestone — the dirtier and poorer part that will be harder to “revitalize.” These seem to be the type of business owners who help the city “feel safe” (or safer at least) in committing money for infrastructure repair.

In fact, Mayor Gray had met with General Manager Burke several hours before the meeting, encouraging LexTran to, as Burke recounted, “think beyond building”—meaning, hopefully, to think about how the renovation could buoy surrounding area. As this heavily trafficked intersection is in the shitter when it comes to the actual roads, sidewalks, and curbs—some of which are the city’s responsibility—several at the meeting were ready to believe that the magic wand of the LexTran renovation could make the area better.

The romantic drawing of the sparkling and new intersection from the feasibility study made several attendees drool. In pastel watercolors, the drawing included wispy trees, bike lanes, and a road surface design to look like a trolley turn-around. And, best of all, pristine curbs. (At least one audience member murmured in joy, or maybe orgasmic pedestrian delight, at the thought of curbs.) We, along with Carter who unveiled the drawing, believed for the moment that N. Limestone and Loudon could be as beautiful as any streetscape further south.

A Dream Deferred

As lovely as those dreams were, some of us quickly remembered the context. First, the millions for the LexTran renovation are federal money bequeathed to the transit authority, not to the city. Surely, the money must be used for LexTran's property, not a streetscape that encompasses all of the intersection.

Second, the zoning for industrial uses near that intersection substantially limits idyllic visions of Limestone north of Seventh Street.

Third, E. Loudon from Shropshire to N. Limestone looks like the movie *Tremors* was filmed on/under it. (Remember that 1990 Kevin Bacon classic? In it, large underground creatures pop out of the ground to eat the inhabitants of a small town.) On this stretch of Loudon, there are potholes, sinkholes, and wavy pavement. There are crumbling and busted curbs. In many places, utility strips have been ground to dirt by on-street parking. (Cars pull up on the utility strips to avoid being sideswiped by the many large commercial trucks that use E. Loudon as a through-street. Consequently, utility

structures get broken, which is why it is against city ordinance to park on utility strips.)

In other words, many of the area upgrades that depend on city ordinance and city money are far from imminent.

However, General Manager Burke and Messer Construction announced an optimistic timeline for beginning work on the LexTran project. They say that, depending on administrative red tape, work could begin this fall. However, that isn't to say that LexTran has decided yet whether to demolish or renovate the Kitchen building. The next step for the project is to analyze cost to determine whether renovation of the 83-year-old building is feasible. If not, LexTran may have to build a new edifice. The transit authority does still plan to raze the warehouse that runs along N. Limestone for bus parking.

“We built this city on rock ’n roll”

Well, no, Lexington wasn't built on rock 'n roll, but let's pretend that we can determine the foundations for building, re-building, imagining, re-imagining the northside. In doing this, let's put pressure on any and all potential resources for our neighborhood. The LexTran renovation is certainly an important part of this picture. However, the LexTran project isn't a panacea, so here's *NoC's* proposed slate of projects on which to apply our collective grit and determination:

Take E. Loudon back from the nightmarish landscape of Tremors by pushing it up the city's list for wholesale repair. Find federal funds if necessary. This needs lots of neighborhood work and support.

Advocate for a noise ordinance that limits industrial noise that ruptures ear drums, interrupts sleep, and limits the neighborhood's use value.

Insist that “revitalizing” practices from small developers, non-profits, and governmental agencies maintain the cultural and socio-economic diversity of the northside. No need to go too white, or too hip, or too yup.

Demand that our streets and parks be clean, safe and functional for all residents. This includes demanding greater access to public gardens and markets.

Oh, yeah, and we need those curbs, too.

Add your ideas to the slate by emailing them to NoC at noceditors@yahoo.com or posting to noclondon.com. Suggestions will be published in future issues. If you are interested in working on the "Finish Loudon Avenue!" campaign, send an email to finishloudon@btmail.com.



Tremors-like damage on E. Loudon Avenue median.

Moving Forward

Recently, LexTran has been able to move forward with the project—and hopes to fulfill some of the requests voiced by residents at the January 2011 meeting. The transit authority has chosen Sherman, Carter, Barnhart, an architectural and civil engineering

(stretch of buildings on N. Limestone between Seventh Street and Loudon), and VanMeter (Bullhorn building). All asked technical questions about the construction of the building.

This different crop of participants is a sign of the fragile, but accelerating, private investment in Limestone north

\$5 Yoga

Strong and Stable Backs

Saturdays, 11:30 A.M.

Eagle Creek Wellness

859-264-0251

Collexion (cont.)

continued from the previous page

in keeping their space modular, their options as open as their software, and the doors forever rotating. Collexion's space itself is humble, effective, impressive, whimsical, spacious. In that space, you'll find a hospitable crew of willing, open-minded, intelligent, artistic, and industrious individuals from all walks of life; some programmers, some business owners, some students, and more. What might be considered simplicity in space and in folk, I would argue is truth and harmony; social standing and predispositions do not exist to create boundaries within Collexion. One member described Collexion as "pretty fuckin' rad." Again, I have to agree.

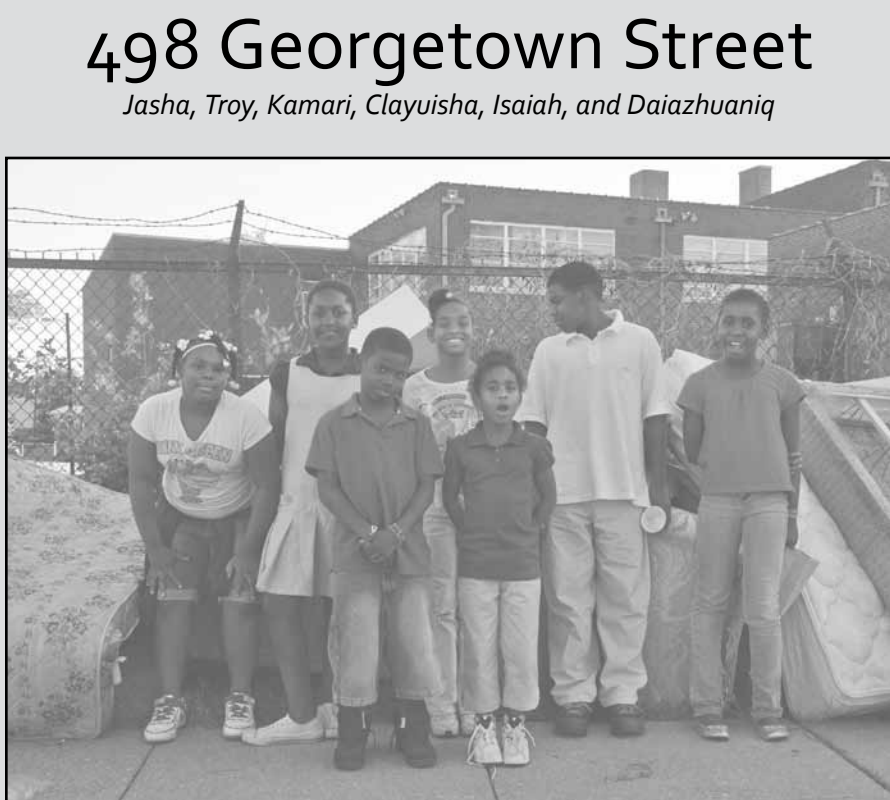
The Collexion space has also opened up for events not strictly deemed "hacker," including music shows, film production, speakers, an artist collaborative, community events, gaming, camping trips, and even the occasional party. For as much as Collexion already produces, there's plenty of desire to grow. The collective aspires to obtaining industrial screen-printing equipment, to compiling a member-submitted collection

of books, to offering workshops and training conferences. With so much on the horizon, the group may need a larger space, especially as the number of new faces also grows, each adding mass to the equation.

With so much creative activity from Collexion's member-base, it proves hard to capture what a group of hackers, teetering on the fringes of progressive knowledge, are doing and then report it.

There is only one way you may come to appreciate hackers, who they are, and what they do. It won't come to you through the programs they help to create that infect your daily lives, nor through their innovations in advancing fields. For as many screens as we may put between ourselves and others, the purest interactions take place at the biological level. If you wish to understand who hackers are and what they do, then I suggest you go see for yourself.

See the music page in this issue for a show preview. Collexion is located on the north side at 109 E. London. Visit their website at collexion.net for more information, to join their IRC channel, and to check out the discussions in their Google group.



Jasha, Troy, Kamari, Clayuisha, Isaiah, and Daiazhuanig walked outside the West End Community Empowerment Project for a fire drill just as we arrived at the pile of cast-away furniture. Because it was a beautiful October evening, because the fire drill quickly came to an end, and because their teachers liked the description of DISCARDED, they were eager to pose for a photograph.

Image and text by Kremena Todorova and Kurt Gohde, Discarded project.

MAY 11, 2011

Music

Live music to survive in the wild to: 5/14-23

Saturday, May 14

The Tim Talbert Project
The Crossroad; 286 Southland. 9 P.M.

Like most of you, I judge a man’s worth* using several criteria. First, how long he can survive, alone and minimally equipped, in the wilderness? Second, how well does he command his automobile? Third, does he know where the pocket is?

What’s the pocket? No, it ain’t those things on the front of your dungarees! It’s where the groove is. It’s the place in time where the backbeat lands for maximum funkifying. It’s the space in our id the bass fills, compelling us to move in ways that would cause our grandmas to blush and turn away, God rest their souls. It’s the connection between the harmony, the melody, the rhythm, and the astral plane. That’s the pocket.

So I have no idea how long Tim Talbert and his sturdy, seasoned Project can live in the woods, nor how they are behind the wheel. But it doesn’t matter, because they know where the pocket is. They always know where the pocket is. In fact, for all we know, they might have constructed the damned pocket in their spare time, using chicken grease, hot asphalt, and spare parts from the Mothership.

What’s this mean to you? It means that when you listen to the band play, you are hearing the music performed *in the most soulful manner possible*. There is no intermediary between you and the cosmic vein of groove; you are face-to-face with it. You’re in it. *Be it.*

*Women get their own set of criteria, which we won’t get into here, but which involve tennis skirts and reading glasses. Email music@noclexington.com for more information.

Wednesday, May 18

The Suede Brothers
The Green Lantern; 497 West Third. 9 P.M.

The Suede Brothers are three skinny kids from 40-odd miles east of Cleveland, which means they automatically pass the wilderness-survival criterion by virtue of being from, you know, Bumfuck Ohio. But that’s not the only thing that makes them special.

No, it’s also that like a tuned 1970 Chevy 454, this band exercises raw power. It’s not the slickified, safe-for-general-consumption power that’s always turning up on rock radio, and

that even your little sister likes. That crap is the sonic equivalent of your dweeb coworker showing off his new Camry’s “pep.” Screw that. This is power-trio rock the way they used to make it: loud, fast, and more than a little scary if it catches you unawares.

The band is taking their sound-beast on the road to support their new record, called “The Night.” [Look for a full review in the next issue. —Ed.] The Green Lantern is not a large space, so get there early, and bring plugs if you’ve got ‘em. And leave the Camry at home.

Thursday, May 19

Sam Wooden & the Urbane Gentlemen
Thursday Night Live; Cheapside Park. 5:30 P.M.

But you know, once you’ve got your survival skills together, you’ve found the pocket, and you’ve mastered your vehicle, you ought to take a moment to enjoy a few of the finer things: a fresh pinch of snuff, a sip of something aged and mellowed, and a warm Thursday evening with the best damned rockin’ country band assembled, to my knowledge, since...since...since goddamn ever, that’s when.

Be warned: while you’re making your way home after the show, you may feel sudden, uncontrollable urges to stop your cheatin’ ways and treat him/her better, to seal that crack in the old pickup’s exhaust manifold like you’ve been meaning to, and to spend more time on the front porch with friends and neighbors. These are normal responses.

And oh yeah: it’s a CD release party. Now you’ve got something to play while tearing down those winding back-country roads.

Saturday, May 21

Oxford Farm Report
Cosmic Charlie’s; 388 Woodland. 9 P.M.

With this show, the Lexington music scene is diminished. Why? Because evidently this show is to be Oxford Farm Report’s last. And let me tell you: they handled their machines as well as anybody. Go see ‘em, and shed a tear if the mood strikes you. It’s okay to cry; just don’t go on and on with it.

Monday, May 23

Black Skies

The Green Lantern; 497 West Third. 9 P.M.

From pristine, gentrified Carrboro comes just about the ugliest, most savage-sounding act to trample though Lexington’s pristine, gentrified borders since last year’s Mastodon show. But where that band took sludge metal and ‘70s riff-rock and made it melodic,

layered, and slightly psychedelic, Black Skies strips it naked, leaves it to bloat in the sun for a few days, and runs the carcass through a fuzzbox. This is primal metal, folks; if you don’t like it, run back to your manicured lawn and freshly detailed Land Rover. You wouldn’t survive five minutes in the wild.

—Buck Edwards



Sam Wooden & the Urbane Gentlemen.

Collexion hosts master percussionist

NoC Music

There are musicians who become proficient on their instruments, but who then choose to work within the established confines of a particular style or category of music. Then there are those who choose to use their proficiency to explode those categories and follow new directions. Percussionist and gong-bower Tatsuya Nakatani falls in the second group.

The music Nakatani plays is experimental in the truest sense of the word. Using a combination of traditional drums and percussive instruments and various sticks, bows, bowls, and found objects, Nakatani improvises soundscapes, moving from gentle to jarring in masterful fashion.

On Saturday, May 21st, Nakatani returns to Lexington for the third time since 2006. On past visits he’s collaborated with Lexington’s respected drummer and percussionist Dave ; this time, however, he’s bringing with him to town a brand new concept—The Nakatani Gong Orchestra. The

orchestra is unique to each city, as its membership consists of volunteers from the local community, who are not necessarily percussionists, or even musicians.

Each orchestra consists of five people performing on 5 gong kits, with Nakatani acting as the ensemble’s conductor. The aim of the N.G.O. is to create a metallic temple of deep harmonies, a beauty of spaces. All of the stands, bows and mallets are assembled or hand-made by Nakatani himself, which he considers an important phase of the composing process.

The members of the Lexington N.G. O. are Mike “The Geek” Bray, Matt Gibson, Jonathan Hampton, Nicholas Larkey, and Michael Lunsford. The performance will consist of two sets: one with the N.G.O., and the other a solo performance by Nakatani.

Collexion is located at the corner of Loudon and N. Limestone, behind the Hop Hop building. Showtime is at 8 P.M.; doors open at 7:30. A suggested donation of \$5 helps defray the cost of the performance.



The Suede Brothers.

Al's Bar proudly sponsors

Lexington Bike Polo

Wednesdays & Sundays at Coolavin Park

Post-game shenanigans at Al's



Tatsuya Nakatani in his studio.

Film & Media

The Illusionist

Academy Award-nominated film now available on DVD

By Barbara Goldman

With a bit of magic, deceased French filmmaker and actor Jacques Tati returns to the screen in *The Illusionist* (*L'illusionniste*), a 2010 Oscar-nominated animated film directed by Sylvain Chomet.

Tati, who died in 1982 at the age of 75, became a global legend for his silent film style. His films transcended borders with a quiet physical grace attributed to “no subtitles” being necessary no matter what language viewers spoke.

The famous French icon wrote the unproduced screenplay, but it was never brought to life until Tati’s daughter, Sophie, asked Chomet to do the honor. Chomet is best known for his 2003 Oscar-nominated animated film *The Triplets of Bellville*.

A dreamy kaleidoscope of unhurried watercolors, the wordless scenes carry a hypnotizing handmade feel. Chomet, once again, returns to the style of his 2003 hand-drawn frames. Digital details are used here and there, but the still and moving images cascade across the screen naturally, remaining loyal to the artist’s desire for organic composition that is often lost in this digital age. Blue, brown, yellow, and green overtones highlight every frame with the flow of water—each filled with precise lines and dedicated details.

Every slurp of soup, meager applause, strained cough, screaming microphone, snap of a rabbit’s teeth, rain drop, and yes, even chilly breeze, easily lures any willing watcher into the arms of the subtle background. It is the film’s dominating melodies and

acoustic instrumentation that segue the viewer into each scene. True to form, the film’s music rarely includes any lyrics and words.

Tati’s original script was set in Prague. However, Chomet moved it to Edinburgh where he lives and works. Tati most definitely would give this decision a nod after seeing Chomet’s depiction of the northern seaside, as a kilt-adorned Scottish drunkard squeals with delight while rolling down the grass. The very scene alone will make you want to roll down a hillside.

The comedic drama begins in 1959 with a struggling French illusionist who finds his music hall act is being replaced by more modern rock’n’roll performers. While no rock star cameos take place, it’s easy to see nods ranging from the hip jolting Elvis of the day to a white suited Buddy Holly to the thunderous kicking and flaring of the Rolling Stones—and even the signature hairstyles and fans of The Beatles.

Down to the signature trench coat and lanky legs, Tati’s persona is clearly seen in the main character—as if he’d played the role himself. Also shared by the illusionist is Tati’s real sir name, Tatischeff.

Tatischeff is forced to take to the road, wayfaring between chance performances. Passing through a remote village, our washed up illusionist encounters a young fan convinced that his magic is a reality. After receiving a much needed pair of new shoes from Tatischeff, she sneaks her way into his suitcase and, eventually, into his heart.

The two soon develop a father-daughter relationship which was rumored to reminisce that of Tati and

an illegitimate daughter. According to the 2006 reading of *The Illusionist* script at the London Film School introduced by Chomet, the film was written and intended to make it as a live action film with Tati and one of his daughters.

The living and deceased film collaborators easily complement one another’s signature styles with a grace best represented by both the modest and decadent characters brought to life on screen. Among the film’s company is an array of time-tethered characters including a charismatic yet suicidal clown, a lonely alcoholic ventriloquist, and a group of daring acrobats.

The attention Chomet pays to his animation is surreal. Backgrounds and inanimate objects seem to take on life and develop their own personalities. Each time the film is watched, elusive new details such as street posters and vehicles are sure to be seen. “Free Scotland” is painted on a building wall reflecting the time and consciousness of the country. City streets are dominated by fast moving taxis, double decker buses, and the occasional horse and buggy. Each character, each driver, horse, chicken, even rat, has something Chomet identifies to the viewer with *je ne sais quoi*.

Local film happenings

New York Money premieres at the Worsham Theatre

Stan Heaton’s short film, *New York Money*, will screen on Friday, May 13th at 7 P.M. in the Worsham Theater (located on the main level of UK’s Student Center). The event is free to everyone, but the filmmakers will be taking cash donations to help fund upcoming projects.

The film tells the story of Al Valentino (played by Scott Gilbert) who, after losing his job, his home, and his family in a tumultuous economy, joins with his friends to seek revenge on a bank executive. Mike Cleary and Stan Heaton co-star in this character-driven criticism of the American housing crisis and its impact on the middle class.

KET’s Community Cinema Series Screens *Welcome To Shelbyville*

This month’s installment of KET’s free documentary series at the Lexington Public Library shows the impact of rapidly changing demographics in a small Tennessee community. *Welcome to Shelbyville* provides a glimpse at how longtime African-American and white residents confront the challenge of successfully integrating with a growing Latino population and the arrival of hundreds of Muslim Somali refugees in the town of Shelbyville. The screening will be held at the Central Branch of the LPL at 6 P.M. on Thursday, May 19. The screening will be followed by a discussion. For more information, please visit www.ket.org/communitycinema.

Review: Thor

By Kevin Martinez

As a child, I had a great fascination with the character of Thor. This began when, as a 7-year-old, I was laid up sick with meningitis and my mom brought me home an 8 inch Mego figure of Thor to cheer me up. From that point on, I was hooked. I soon after bought a giant size tabloid reprint of a classic storyline by Stan Lee and Jack Kirby. These comics had a boldness and captured my imagination. I remember having a Mead notebook and 7-11 Slurpee cups with Thor. The comics were so vibrant that I even went and read the Norse myths on which Jack Kirby and Stan Lee had based their characters. In fact, I once aced a test on Norse Mythology during my senior year at Henry Clay because I had been reading Walt Simonson’s brilliant run on Thor. I also can recall the great disappointment back in the late 1980’s when Thor appeared in an *Incredible Hulk* TV movie of the week. A low budget approach may have worked for the Hulk, but not for *Thor*.

Thankfully, the new film from Marvel Films and Paramount Pictures is a high budget attempt at bringing this character into the mainstream. Director Kenneth Branagh has redeemed himself in the eyes of fanboys everywhere after letting us down back in the 1990’s with his version of *Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein*.

Unlike most summer blockbusters, this one doesn’t scream at you with a loud soundtrack from a bunch of forgettable pop metal bands. It also has a story that makes you care about these characters. Part of this, I would assume, is because the story was co-written by J. Michael Straczynski of *Babylon 5* fame. JMS to his fans, he recently had been the writer on Marvel’s monthly Thor comic series.

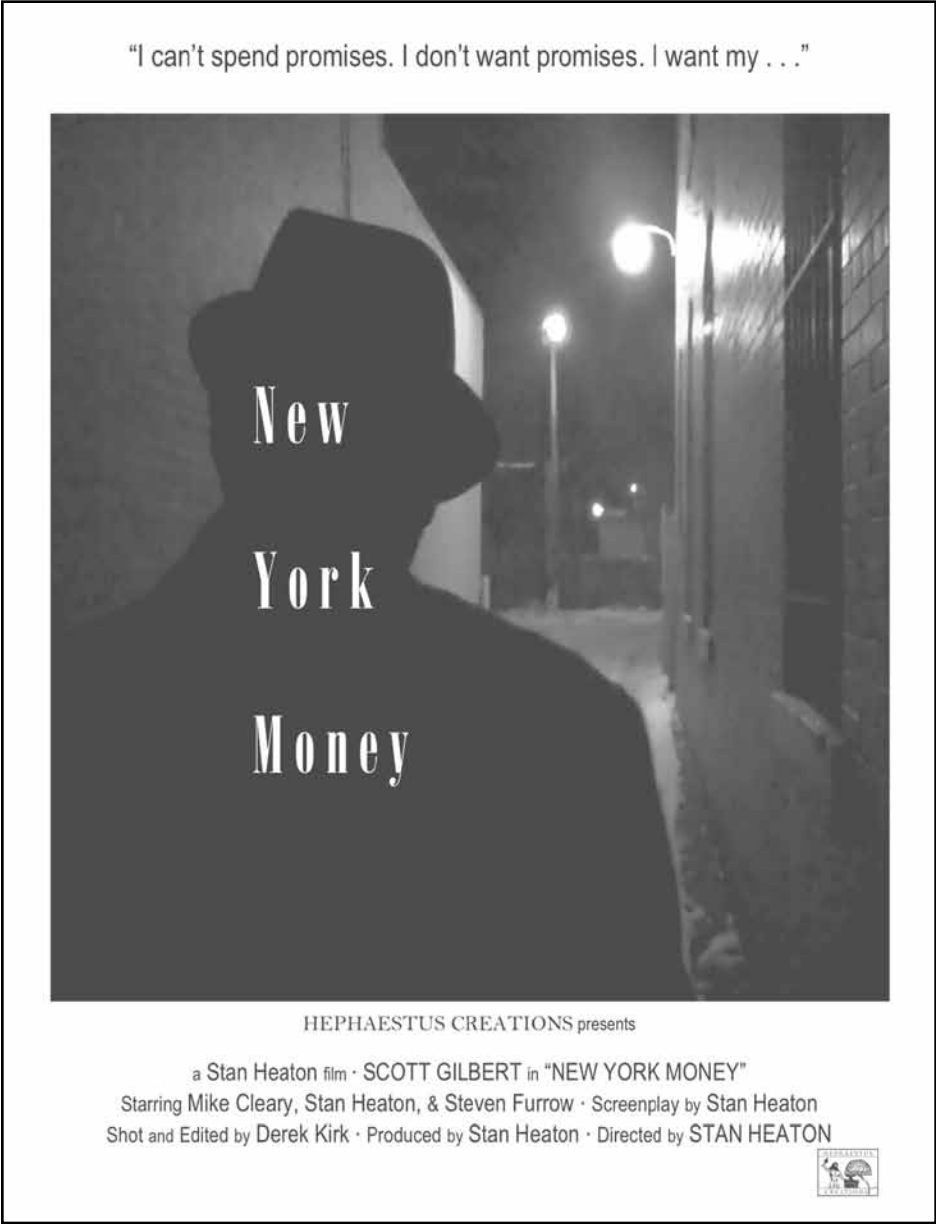
Thor is portrayed by Chris Hemsworth, who played Capt. Kirk’s dad in JJ Abrams’ *Star Trek* update. This guy is excellent. He plays Thor as a brash and temperamental character. Of course he ends up having to learn humility after having been manipulated into starting a war with the Frost Giants. These Frost Giants are the enemies of the people of Asgard, and Odin (Anthony Hopkins) forbids Thor from retaliating against them for attacking his palace.

Loki, Thor’s brother, is the manipulator in this film; and he is portrayed quite well by Tom Hiddleston. Loki comes off as sympathetic, yet he’s the mythical snake in the garden of Eden that is Asgard. He is a complex villain instead of a one dimensional cliché.

Thor, of course, takes Loki’s bait and attacks the Frost Giants. Odin banishes Thor and makes him mortal as punishment for disobeying him. Thor lands on Earth, and becomes involved



Thor knows that life isn’t all warhammers and lutefish.



in a plot with a romantic interest played by Natalie Portman. Thor’s enchanted hammer, the Mjolnir, lands in the New Mexico desert and draws attention from S.H.I.E.L.D., the secret agency that has been featured in the *Iron Man* movies. At that point the film falls into place, and I really don’t want to give any more away. I’d rather you go see this yourself and enjoy. I will say this, Jamie Alexander as Sif is great and, if I were DC Comics, I’d be casting her as Wonder Woman. She’s almost tough enough to be a skater for R.O.C.K. (who, by the way, have a bout on June 4th at the Lexington Convention Center).

This is the type of popcorn flick that is rare. It has a plot and it’s not condescending to the audience or to the source material. If you enjoy *Lord Of The Rings* or the original *Superman* movie starring Christopher Reeve, then this is the best of both worlds.

Visually, it’s amazing—at least in the scenes taking place in Asgard. The sets were actually built instead of being green screened. The 3-D makes it seem even more vast. The special effects are well done, but aren’t the focus of the film. Story counts with this one. The only real complaint I have is the fact that Thor only wears his helmet during the first few minutes of the film. Dammit, Jack Kirby drew Thor with a helmet! Don’t insult the King! Hopefully, the helmet will be worn in next summer’s *The Avengers*. Speaking of such, a word of advice: stay for the teaser after the credits. If you know your Marvel folklore, then you will see what the plot for *The Avengers* is gonna be. Of course, Captain America will probably give us a few more clues when it debuts in July.

On a scale of 1-10 on the fanboy meter, this one gets the Nigel Tufnel-approved 11.

Kentucky River (cont.)

continued from page 1

Quaker Ladies (*Houstonia caerulea*), Blue Phlox (*Pblox divaricata*), and Wild Hyacinth (*Camassia scilloides*), a pointillist’s pallet of blues from which to paint a thousand skies.

The first time I stumbled on this singular beauty I was stoned; it was dark. And then my flashlight died. It snowed later that night, the kind of freak April snow that falls like torn pieces of Wonderbread. In the frozen, growling morning, the blooms were shriveled up, wilted lavender peering up beneath tiny hoods of snow.

The uprooted clumps I clawed out, wetted with each stroke of my paddle, bled earthen veins across the flat, plastic bottom of the 14’ Coleman canoe as we pushed against the brown current; we were hung-over, otherworldly, and fully given over to the bristling cryogenics of spring morning snowfall. That afternoon I transplanted Blue-Eyed Mary on the edge of the flood-plane in my backyard. Laura planted Sweet Woodruff in a half whiskey barrel. We drank homebrew, made a snowman and watched it melt in the greening Sunday-noon. For dinner, more trout. When we drained the last of the homebrewed pilsner, I trekked up the lock-hill to Ricky’s.

Bootleggers

In a dry county like Jessamine, it’s commonsense policy to maintain good relations with your community bootlegger, particularly if you’re prone to bottle fever on Sunday afternoons. On any other day of the week, financial sanity should outweigh proximal convenience, and the 45-minute to an hour roundtrip to Nicholasville or Lexington for retail liquor is justifiable. But Sundays are special in the

Ricky G’s driveway could accommodate only one car at a time, and on any given Sunday the overflow traffic might line the road over the hill, across the creek, spilling into Gullett’s dead-end driveway. Those more furtive customers might turn around and park, engines idling, lights off, in the gravel lot at High Bridge Union Church, waiting impatiently for the line to clear and never once asking forgiveness. Just another night of second-class business on First Street in High Bridge.

After several years of patronage, I felt comfortable enough to follow Ricky into the darkened backroom, my hand crumpled around the cash in my pocket, and watch with fascination as this hometown entrepreneur opened a hinged piece of wood paneling to reveal the narrow, stocked shelves of—get this—a refrigerated, load-bearing wall. That’s right. A fucking refrigerated wall.

How he struck upon the idea of a refrigerated wall is simple. For years, bootleggers have hidden their wares in walls. How he actually constructed such system is the real puzzler. And each time I deliver this fascinating detail of the story, I’m never completely satisfied people understand, appreciate, or even believe the significance of such an invention. If there were a bootleggers’ hall-of-fame, the invention of the refrigerated wall cavity would surely warrant Ricky G’s immediate induction.

As a native son of High Bridge, like Ricky G, I had an inside track. My presence at Ricky G’s on a Sunday night had the natural ring of an innocent neighborly calling. Those other shadowy figures waiting in cars outside were just business. I was family. I was the one that was offered a seat in front of the television in the living room while Ricky

muttered over his shoulder, “Wait here and talk to Lucille while I go deal with these shithogs. I’ll be right back.”

Lockmasters

Bootlegging booze was his cottage industry. By day, Ricky G carried the big wrench down at Lock 7. Actually, by the time he assumed lockmaster duties, turning the capstan by hand to open and close the locks (an endeavor that required several men) had long since given way to manhandling an electric drill motor that allowed a single lockmaster to operate a lock unassisted. River traffic by this

time was somewhere south of anemic, so the only time and energy-consuming responsibility was taking care of the grounds.

The vast majority of Ricky’s on-the-clock time was spent idly watching the clock, shooting the shit with “Hoot” Gibson or “Walleye” Waller or Harvey “the Gut” or any one of a number of locals that considered a trip to the locks part of Standard Operating Procedure—an important component of one’s daily constitution. The Lockmaster’s house had long since been dissembled, and the well-worn horseshoe pits were lost to weeds, so, aside from lawn-care, chitchat, and shooing away the occasional truant or juvenile delinquent, being Lockmaster was about as close as one could come to a non-job job as is possible, and Ricky managed the operation with the pride and skill of a professional do-little. A do-little, that is, perched aside the mighty Kentucky.

Even still, Ricky’s tenure wasn’t completely devoid of actual lockmastering. In the summer and fall, the occasional pleasure-boater and fisherman



Cold-water mist up the Dix River.

from Frankfort required passage upstream, and the Dixie Belle, which operated from Shaker Landing just upstream occasionally locked down to the lower pool to treat passengers to a view of the mineral-stained cliffs around the bend toward Brooklyn. Aside from the Belle, though, the only large vessels were work barges hauling men, materials and equipment to lock and dam repair upstream.

As the last Lockmaster at High Bridge, Ricky unwittingly occupied a special, and I would say somewhat sad, place in the story of the Kentucky. Though mechanization had dumbed-down the job, the title of Lockmaster was nevertheless one to wear with pride, and whenever boats would come a-knockin’, he’d jump into action with the same eagerness to please as did so many of his predecessors.

The length of the Kentucky

When you drive down to lock 7 now, or any other lock for that matter, not much is going on. You might see a fisherman or two, a car full of hooligans drinking beer. But that’s it. These once vital and culturally vibrant places have fallen into disrepair, and the decision to seal the lock doors has segmented the river for good, or at least for the foreseeable future. Call it travesty or misadventure, at every turn, on every occasion it seems we’ve done wrong by the river despite our intentions.

Granted, creating slackwater allowed communities along the Kentucky’s corridor to grow and provide more and more opportunities as populations doubled, tripled, quadrupled, and so on. And surely without the relatively reliable pool-depths provided by impoundment, municipal straws would have to stretch far and wide to find enough water to satisfy needs of their populations and businesses.

But closing up the locks and doing nothing is not a long-term fix to our water-needs. Another drought like the one in 1988 will certainly push us to ever more radical alterations to the Kentucky’s current.

And this is not the stuff of fantasy. On more than one occasion, groups have proposed damming and flooding the palisades section of the river. Again, I think of the poet Richard Hugo:

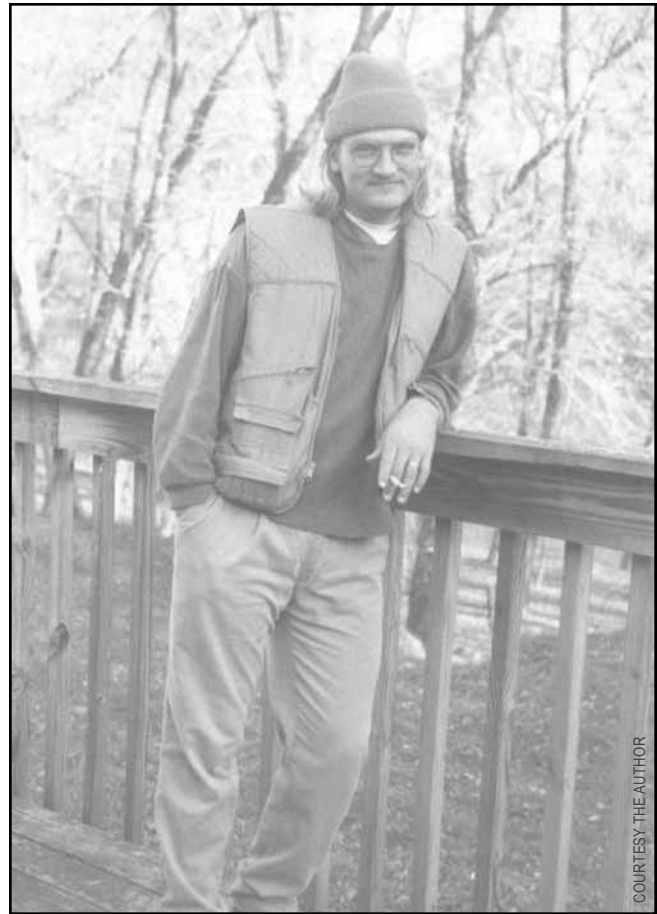
Those who favor our plan to alter the river raise your hand. Thank you for your vote. Last week, you’ll recall, I spoke about how water never complains. How it runs where you tell it, seemingly at home, flooding grain or pinched by geometric banks like those in the graphic depiction of our plan. We ask for power: A river boils or falls to turn our turbines. The river approves our plans to alter the river.

First of all, the Kentucky River Authority must

re-envision itself—reassert itself in the political process *on behalf* of the river and not just the people of Lexington and the other water-strapped cities and towns. For once, let’s first think of the river, and this means a comprehensive “think” of the river as both endangered species and vital resource, a vital interest to an entire region, with direct impact on the health and future of a much larger watershed (the Ohio). A logical first step would be reinvestment in the locks and dams, coupled with a concerted effort to protect the headwaters above each fork from further degradation by the coal industry.

Responding only to crisis, as we seem to have done from the beginning, with patch-up jobs and lower-cost short-term fixes to the aging lock and dam infrastructure, is only good till the next crisis. But it’s not too difficult to imagine catastrophe: chain-reaction failure. It has happened before. In March of 1905, floodwaters flanked the dams at locks 10 and 9, and both pools were lost—a disaster that took an entire year to remedy. How would a disaster like this affect cities like Winchester, Lexington, or Nicholasville, Harrodsburg, or Frankfort (to name a few) in 2011? And what radical alterations would such a disaster legitimize in the eyes of policymakers?

Having lived most of my life in and around a lock and dam community, I can say this with surety: when the locks were in operation, the community was more vibrant, and a river community that’s more vibrant could very easily be a community that’s more attentive—more protective—of its river. Exactly *how* the Kentucky River matters to the people will, in large part, help determine its future. Will we continue to alter the river to maintain our growing needs, inflated desires, and self-interests, or will we change something about ourselves, our behaviors and perceptions, to protect the integrity of the river and by doing so serve our own best interests? The latter would seem to be the essence of life by rheotaxis.



Author as self-satisfied river rat, spring 1995.

hinterlands—that first (or perhaps last) day of the week reigned over by preachers, old maids, and fried chicken. And, of course, bootleggers like Ricky G. Sundays in Driesville always necessitated a more liberal manipulation of the wallet. The menu went something like this:

- Old-Milwaukee, Pounders: 6 @ \$1 per can
- Jim Beam #7: 1 @ \$10 per pint bottle

Certainly not retail, but not altogether prohibitive prices either. A modest splurge of personal resources foisted upon me by dispassionate and remote powers of authority. Other distillations of devil sauce could be gotten, I’m sure, but I never made it past Old Swill and Mr. Beam. And I’ll admit there’s a palpable thrill that jolts a young man’s backbone when he knows he has raised the floorboards beneath this Nation of Laws, crawled through to the musty underworld, and traded legal tender for bootlegged liquor.

Better access to better bikes for everyone.

BROKE SPOKE

community bike shop

Currently accepting volunteers, bikes, or monetary donations.

Contact: facebook.com/brokespoke

photo by Stacy Borden

Opinion

Letters to the editor

Adjunct responses

Christian, thank you for speaking up for all us adjuncts suffering under the current state of affairs (“Adjuncts: the invisible majority,” April 27). As one of those adjuncts you mentioned who has taught several classes at several institutions of higher learning simultaneously trying to make ends meet, I appreciate you making people aware of our plight. Kudos!

Trent

As a tenured professor at BCTC I recognize that the system is set up in the classic hierarchical divide and conquer model — diffuse collective power of workers by keeping each of us clawing for a higher position and encourage those above to look down on those below.

Thank you Christian for providing your perspective on this. You are right, it is exploitive and abusive, and it is increasing in scale. For what it is worth there are professors trying to provide support to their “adjunct” colleagues and are working to bring attention to this issue.

Michael, Lexington

A colleague of mine at then-Lexington Community College, worked for years as an adjunct. Finally, they had no classes for him. I last saw him standing alone playing trombone at the amphitheater behind Memorial Chapel. His depression bloomed into a full flowered psychosis.

A coordinator of the Business Writing “department” at UK died alone in his apartment under suspicious circumstances as his meager adjunct position began slipping away.

Meanwhile, professors in the English dept. at UK spouted Marxist diatribes against exploiting workers while wage slaves toiled right under their noses.

Tim, Lexington

What can we do to change the system? My working class family has always been strong supporters of unions, but collective bargaining continues to be weakened.

Jodie

Not to be rude, but you are as much a part of the problem by continuing to accept these terms. If you have a Ph.D., you should have found a full time position by now. Adjuncts like you who survive on these terms and accept them only allow the system to continue. Why should the administration change if people continue to work in these conditions?

Anonymous

Author responds:

I’ve seen comments like the anonymous “Adjunct for extra money” post before. Blaming the victim is always easy. Homeless? Heck, like Reagan said, people choose to be homeless. Raped? Like a cop in Canada just told a group a schoolchildren, women invite rape if they dress like sluts. Poor or unemployed? You’re obviously not trying hard enough.

Garry Trudeau had a series of “Doonesbury” strips back in the 1990’s that made the best analogy. He depicted college teachers as migrant workers picked up from the street corner by a farm truck. Yes, like migrant workers, we work for criminally low wages, which, in a cold, free market world, means we’ve priced ourselves too low. But migrant workers and adjuncts need to eat.

“Why not just get another job?” such posts as this usually continue, “You have multiple college degrees, and, as we all know, a college degree is a virtual guarantee of a high-paying job.” Anybody taken a good look at the unemployment stats lately? At the economy?



Dix River trout: not as beautiful as smallmouth bass.

Trout aren’t native to the Dix

I agree with Wesley Houp (“High Bridge: 100 year drift,” April 27) that trout were never native to Dix River and survive only by artificial means, including re-stocking. So they can’t even reproduce. As for their impact on aquatic species that are native, what are they doing to the smallmouth bass? Do they occupy an eco-niche that smallmouth do not? Or do they compete for food and habitat?

How is a trout better to catch or eat than a smallmouth bass? These tax-funded “trout programs” have been going on for a long time in many places where smallmouth are native. Why? Houp notes that “Of all the native fish fauna of N America, they’re tops in terms of coloration,” and that’s all I can come up with. Smallmouth are just plain brown and may not fit the decor of outdoor-apparel catalogs from New England. But if they are being displaced by exotic game fish that are only exotic, and if this costs money. shouldn’t it stop pretty soon?

Bruce Williams, Lexington

Author responds:

While I have no hard data, my educated guess is that stocked trout are in direct competition with native smallmouth. I don’t think it’s a fair competition either. By the time the trout are large enough to introduce into a stream, they’ve developed into pretty efficient predators, and they themselves are too large to be predated upon. They are able to prey upon young, developing smallmouth, but smallmouth cannot prey upon young, developing trout. Beyond the level of microinvertebrates, I don’t think there are many eco-niches in a stream or river.

I’ll go on record: trout are NOT better to catch and/or eat than smallmouth. Yes, trout are beautiful, but smallmouth, while not as colorful, are even more beautiful because they belong here.

To answer Bruce’s thoughtful question: yes, I believe we need to put an end to tax-funded trout programs in Kentucky and make a concerted effort to protect our native species, particularly smallmouth bass. It makes no ecological sense to invest in maintaining populations of non-native species.

God and Superman (cont.)

continued from page 7

before the Board’s behind-closed-doors hiring committee, had argued that a private search would yield better candidates. Greenwood/Asher claimed that such a search would attract elite administrators from elite-tier schools, sitting presidents from other well-respected schools, well-known politicians—and others wielding great power who might not want their names public.

A private search would also allow it, Greenwood/Asher claimed with the Board’s tacit approval, to assume (for a price) the role of the media: in place of public vetting on the open market, it would privately “deep drill” into candidate backgrounds as a way to glean better information about potential candidates.

Brockman’s assurance that not one, but up to five Supermen Gods were within UK’s fair grasp, was a validation of that deep drilling. Secrecy at its most democratically efficient, or so it seemed.

No gods, no supermen

Fast forward to your next University of Kentucky President, University of Alabama Birmingham Provost Eli Capilouto, voted into the presidency by a unanimous 19-0 vote of the UK Board of Trustees on May 3.

The corporate search firm that didn’t see the value in conducting on-campus interviews gave us a president

who betrays no specific knowledge of the place he’s about to assume control over. In fact, Capilouto confessed during his one-day campus vetting tour that he “wasn’t looking for a job at all” before being contacted by Greenwood/Asher about the opening.

In fact, the common theme surrounding Capilouto’s hire has been that the life-long Alabama native does not know UK or Lexington or the state. His only Kentucky tie seems to be that his former boss came from Louisville and that as a generally Republican supporter of political figures he contributed 200 dollars to Mitch McConnell. His short overnight incognito visit the week before accepting the job was his first trip to Lexington; he didn’t even really know much about the (supposedly nationally acclaimed) Top 20 Business Plan.

Here’s Capilouto’s response to a question about the city’s town-gown relations, a topic that in March Britt Brockman assured Lexington residents would be asked of all potential candidates: “I just don’t know enough to answer this question.”

The new UK CEO’s response was a familiar refrain. Capilouto didn’t have much to say about athletics, campus maintenance and infrastructure issues, salary inequities, student tuition, or political funding (all of which have been prominently covered by the *Herald-Leader*, the city’s paper of record, in the past four months.) One has to wonder, what the hell were candidates talking about during their interviews with the Board and Greenwood/Asher?

And for a well-vetted, deep-drilled candidate, both the *Lexington Herald-Leader* and *Barefoot and Progressive* have quickly found several red flags in Capilouto’s file. In addition to a discrimination lawsuit and numerous UAB faculty refusing to offer even procedural congratulations on the new step-up hire of their old boss, Capilouto has been implicated in a Medicaid lawsuit against UAB. These charges

suggest that some of the school’s hospital revenues over a 10 year period in the late 90s and early Aughts came as the result of the hospital defrauding the government—a double-dipping of charges that one whistle-blower estimated at \$300 million dollars.

If true, this would mean that part of Capilouto’s reputation as an ingenious generator of federal research medical funds and hospital revenue—the reason he was hired at UK—owes itself to a ten-year period of legally questionable practices. Surely this is something that Greenwood/Asher’s deep drilling might have come across? And if it did, perhaps one of the other highly qualified candidates that Brockman was so high upon might have been a more prudent choice. (Unless we are to believe that all serious candidates routinely have Medicaid-related charges leveled against them.)

But again, I didn’t expect much at all from this hire. Granted, I’m mildly surprised that UK went for “Jewish with an immigrant’s story” for its piece of the multicultural pie—I expected female, maybe Indian, middle-aged or older and crusty—but beyond that, nothing. That a mid-tier-university second-in-charge medical administrator unloved by his faculty for being autocratic was enticed behind closed doors to accept a \$650,000 job to run what is, essentially, a publicly funded hospital with its own professional sports team, makes perfect sense to me.

Of course, maybe I’m just a pessimist. Perhaps you agree with Britt Brockman as he’s made the rounds selling UK’s next chief:

- “We couldn’t be more happy with this selection.” From *BizLex*, May 1, “UK selects UAB Provost as new president.”
- “He actually exemplifies all of the qualities that we’re looking for in the president.” From *BizLex*, May 1.
- “Eli will have the full confidence of our faculty and our staff.” From

the *Herald-Leader*, May 2, “Trustees pick UAB provost; Finalist Eli Capilouto oversees top medical research campus”

- “We are absolutely, totally unified behind Eli Caplouto. We could not be more elated.” From the *Herald-Leader*, May 4, “UK’s next leader vows to give job his all; Capilouto wins unanimous Board OK”



Eli Capilouto.

North of Center is a periodical, a place, and a perspective. Read on to find out what that means.

Editor & Publisher
Danny Mayer

Features
Beth Connors-Manke

Film & Media
Lucy Jones

Sports
Troy Lyle

Music
Buck Edwards

Design
Keith Halladay

Illustrations
Noah Adler

Contributors
Michael Benton
Andrew Battista
Dylan Blount
Wes Houp
Kenn Minter
Captain Commanokers
Tim Staley

Please address correspondence, including advertising inquiries and letters to the editor, to:
noceditors@yahoo.com.

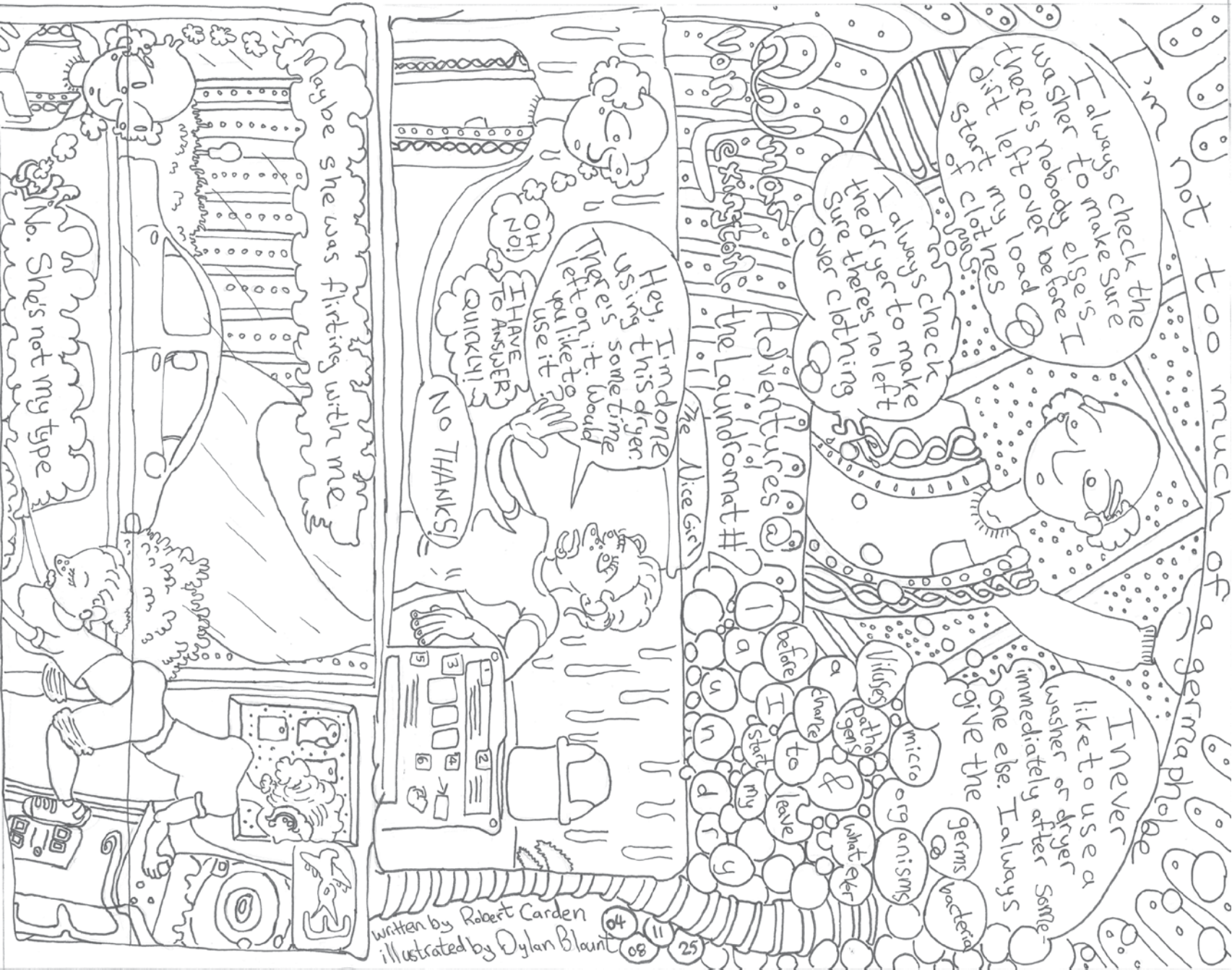
Unless otherwise noted, all material copyright © 2011 *North of Center*, LLC.

Comics

Fierce Company (part 8) by Kenn Minter



GENERAL DALLAS: BOB GIVES UP THE GHOST, PART II BY: WESTERN



Delmar
Von Lexington

Dylan
Blount