

Recovering the commons

A conversation with Herb Reid and Betsy Taylor

By Michael Dean Benton

On March 25 the University of Kentucky community will be gathering to honor the career and influence of political philosopher Herb Reid. Coinciding with this event is the release of his new book, co-authored with Betsy Taylor, *Recovering the Commons: Democracy, Place and Global Justice* (University of Illinois Press, 2010).

Since the mid-70s, much of Reid's work has revolved around a call for critical intellectuals to engage community and social justice activists' "realities," and to understand their challenges to power. In that call is a claim that local knowledge is important for us to consider and that academia, in particular, but also the government and other professions, need to pay attention to the lived experiences of those people

in the communities being affected by social, economic and political changes.

In *Recovering the Commons*, Reid and Taylor link their work to important Appalachian scholars like Mary Hubbard, whose research on the culture of the commons has led to the claim that we should recognize "that widespread loss of access to the geographical commons occurs in tandem with a shrinking civic 'commons.'" This—protecting the shrinking commons—is "the work of local culture" that Wendell Berry claims is necessary to protect places from exploitation. Reid and Taylor's book, then, looks at how that work of local culture might foster "close communities" as an alternative to unregulated globalization that solely works to extract the resources of local cultures.

Evidence of the respect for Dr. Reid is clear in the groups and people

gathering in the Niles Gallery in the Little Fine Arts Building to honor him at this event. Speakers are traveling in from Moravian University, Vanderbilt, Depaul, and Emory & Henry College: Directors of Appalachian Studies and Appalachian Centers for Community Service; bluegrass musicians; and professors of English, Political Science, Public Policy, Sociology, and Folklore and Folklife. Key sponsors include the University of Kentucky Appalachian Studies, the University of Kentucky Appalachian Center and the University of Kentucky Political Science department.

I first met Herb after the publication last Fall of his editorial on the Healthcare debate in *North of Center*. I was impressed by his insights and started investigating his other writings. Like the historians of the Annales School, headed by Fernand Braudel,

Herb calls for the development of a critical perspective of *longue durée* in which we pay attention to long-term, broader and deeper historical patterns that have brought us to particular moments and places. His work has served to remind me of who the powerful actors really are when we talk about political, social and other forms of power.

Seeking to develop a deeper understanding of their recent complex, theoretical book *Recovering the Commons*, I met with Herb and Betsy to discuss its overall project. My first question was who is their intended audience:

Betsy Taylor: This book is really geared toward social theorists, and basically, the hope is to kind of hook social theory to get more interested and engaged with the global justice movement. The

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Building a Legacy

Public art plan provides direction for growth, sets attainable goals

By Amber Scott

The Legacy Trail, a nine-mile multi-use path connecting the east side of downtown Lexington to the Kentucky Horse Park, received final approval on March 11, which is good news considering the whole thing is supposed to be finished and decorated by September's World Equestrian Games. Yes, finished and decorated. By September.

It's the decorated part that's most interesting to me. Sure, a winding path through Kentucky's greenspace usually only accessible via drive-by sounds delicious—and will make a bike ride in this town way less life threatening—but the thing that makes this better than just a sidewalk through a prairie is all the decoration.

The Legacy Center at Blue Grass Community Foundation (BGCF) is spearheading the trail effort, which involves:

- a Public Art Consortium (made up of citizen volunteers, LexArts, Lexington Art League, UK's Museum Studies Class, LFUCG and BGCF),
- a Narrative Committee charged with creating the story of Lexington's history, culture and environment that will be told along the trail,
- and the actual builders of the trail, led by engineer Keith Lovan.

Construction of a six-mile stretch connecting Northside YMCA to the Horse Park started last week, and as that work progresses, so will the decorating.

On Feb. 23, Stacy Levy and Todd Bressi, consultants hired to create the Legacy Trail Public Art Master Plan, presented a three-layered approach to getting public art along the trail, showing particular sensitivity to time constraints, uncertain future funding, and sustainable artist involvement.

"The folks who are organizing the trail are very interested in having the artwork align with the narratives along the trail to make it a museum without walls and to provide ways of working with artists from the region," said Bressi. "There are types of artists

in the Bluegrass who don't necessarily have experience creating public art, and we wanted to figure out ways for artists who aren't public artists to create things that go along the trail. There is also the reality that there's not a lot of money to start with, so how do you create a lot of splash without a lot of money?"

Layer 1: Art signs

The first phase, or layer as Levy and Bressi call it, is at first glance a bit underwhelming—and for good reasons that aren't necessarily obvious at first glance. The primary purpose of Layer 1 is to integrate functional artwork into the trail. Rather than posting a sign here or an arrow there, art will be used to indicate the direction and location of the trail.

Blazes, which are 25-foot tall poles visible even at great distances, will line the trail in clusters of 3-5. Each blaze will have a "flag" designed by an individual artist, and these flags can be updated or exchanged in the future.

The blazes are a good example of the subtle genius Bressi and Levy are employing in Layer 1 and beyond. By installing 25-foot poles as permanent fixtures along the trail but making their art component exchangeable, they are providing an opportunity for artists to have an on-going involvement in the trail and opening the door for more artists to participate. Public art tends to favor installation artists or sculptors, but these flags invite 2-D artists like printmakers, painters, graphic designers and even quilters to participate.

For the people on the trail, the flags provide a point of interest that won't become stagnant in the way a fixed sculpture may. What you see on your first visit may not be what is mounted on your second, and the experience you have along the trail will change as new art replaces old.

In addition to blazes, Levy and Bressi identified crossings and pavement tapis as affordable and executable forms of public art that can be completed by September. Crossings will identify the trail's direction at points of intersection or disconnect. For example, when the trail crosses

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Bitty Bast'rd eyeing some vengeance.

ROCK crushed by opening loss

Area squad falls to Blue Ridge Roller Girls

By Troy Lyle

Asheville, NC

Bollocks! Bullshit!! Bastards!!! Or better yet, bamboozled. Take your pick of similar expletives, adjectives or verbs and you'd be dead on in describing the frustration the Rollergirls of Central Bluegrass (ROCK) felt after their last bout. In their own words they were "whipped, disappointed and crushed."

By how much is irrelevant. At least in the eyes of Sugar Shock, Ellie Slay, Junk Drawer or any of the other rollergirls who competed and lost to the seasoned hips and rock hard elbows of the Blue Ridge Roller Girls (BRRG) on March 13.

The women of ROCK would rather chalk it up to experience, lesson

learned, or better yet, a wake up call.

"We have room to improve. This bout has only fired up our skaters to train harder, hit harder and play harder," said assistant bench coach, Junk Drawer, who despite the loss iterated how gratifying it was to skate again with the ROCK Squad.

"I am so proud of our skaters for giving their all, and getting up and skating harder every time they were knocked down," said Drawer. "They [BRRG] were more aggressive with their hits and played a strong game, but I think both teams were evenly matched in skating ability and we definitely played with more heart."

But alas heart wasn't enough to overcome the early lead of BRRG. By

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The Neighborhood

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

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This week in labor history

The Triangle Shirtwaist fire, T-Bone Slim, & assassinations

NoC News

On March 25 in 1911, a fire at the Triangle Shirtwaist factory in NYC killed 146 of the approximately 500 workers there that day. The “factory” was a typical sweatshop of its day, and the death of the workers was taken up by many labor activists as an example of the horrors and inhumanity of industrial production’s commitment to the bottom line—money—at the expense of worker safety.

The fire started on the upper floors of the Ascher building. Workers on these floors were essentially trapped since the exit doors were regularly locked to ensure that nobody stole materials from the factory. Without a way to safety, some workers jumped to their deaths rather than burn. Others pleaded from flaming windows that were located too high for fire department ladders to reach.

Though the building and factory was owned by Max Blanck and Isaac Harris, the owners subcontracted out most of their labor needs to middlemen, who pocketed some of the profits while finding laborers to work for extremely low wages, long hours, and in unsanitary and unsafe conditions. And who did they find? Mostly young women, some below the age of 15, recent Italian and eastern European Jewish immigrants, who had no knowledge of the country or its language. In other words, the subcontractors found people desperate for work under any conditions—and exploited them. (Apparently, owners Blanck and Harris didn’t know how many workers they employed at their factory, nor were they aware of the wages made by their

subcontracted workers. They would eventually pay out \$75 per dead worker in the twenty-three civil suits brought from the fire.)

The Shirtwaist fire would galvanize union membership and legitimacy. Though the Triangle Shirtwaist factory did have some members of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, the factory was not unionized. In the months and years ahead, unions would continue to push for better worker conditions—something they had been decrying for many years before the fire—to ward off more senseless job-site disasters. And every step of the way, factory and business owners cried foul, seemingly uninterested in the death of workers whose lives they valued at only \$75 per head.

On March 29, 1948, police arrested 43 strikers who were blockading the NY Stock Exchange.

On March 31, 1994, French students celebrated the defeat of a national plan to create a sub-minimum wage for young workers.

On April 2, 1920, T-Bone Slim’s “The Popular Wobbly” was published in *One Big Union Monthly*. Slim was a regular contributor to Wobbly publications. Among these was a publication Mark Damron described as a “humorous and scathing critique of the food industry,” *Starving Amidst Too Much*, published by the IWW Foodstuff Workers’ Industrial Union 460.

“The Popular Wobbly” chronicled the plight of union agitators (getting picked up, arrested, beaten, shunned). The song was later taken up in the early 1960s by Civil Rights activists, who were also unpopular agitators in their day. Candie Anderson-Carawan

changed the lyrics to the song to tell about her involvement and subsequent arrest during a 1960 desegregation sit-in taking place in Nashville, Tennessee. You can find covers on You-tube.

On April 4, 1968, Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee. Though King is largely remembered for his extraordinary effort in helping to demand civil rights for oppressed blacks fighting Jim Crow racism in the south, his later work—up until the time he was assassinated—focused on a different, though connected, sort of oppression: persistent, state-sanctioned poverty caused in part by our desire to hold war in higher regard than our poverty-stricken citizens. In short, King aimed to create “a multi-racial army of the poor” that would fight to alleviate systemic US problems of “racism, poverty, militarism, and materialism.”

King was in Memphis to lend his support to the city’s striking sanitation workers as part of his Poor People’s Campaign. In Memphis, the links between racism and poverty were connected. Black sanitation workers had been on strike for 2 months to agitate for higher wages and better working conditions relative to their white co-workers. They won concessions 2 weeks after King’s ass as in at ion. The city agreed to raise wages for its black workers and to recognize the local union (local 1733 of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees) as a representative of the workers and their rights.

Dates come from 2010 Labor History Calendar of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW).

Reid & Taylor (cont.)

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Newtown Pike, a crosswalk at the intersection will be more than the crosswalks you see downtown. It will be a functional piece of pavement art that signifies the continuation of the trail.

Pavement tapis are sort of rugs painted on the trail itself. The plan is for them to be elliptically shaped and to tie in to the narratives at certain points along the trail. Pavement tapis could last as long as 8 years, but because they aren’t permanent, they allow an opportunity for future engagement with additional artists also.

Layer 1 is scheduled to be completed in September, and because of the short time from conception to installation, Austin said there will be a rolling call for artists who want to be involved likely being issued next week.

“With the roster call, we want to build a good base of people who are interested in art on the Legacy Trail,” said Steve Austin, director of the Legacy Center. “Some of them will work on the first phase for the opening, and others will be held in reserve until later phases.”

A selection committee will choose local, regional and national artists for the roster based on a sample portfolio

as opposed to a specific proposal. Once selected, artists will be “on-call” to complete their projects as sections of the trail are constructed.

The short timeline from acceptance to installation shows another bit of brilliance in Bressi and Levy’s plan. Artists could have just a few weeks to a couple months to design and create the work for the trail, and if Layer 1 involved more complicated pieces they probably wouldn’t be finished by opening day.

Building long term: Layers 2 and 3

Layer 2, which is slated for 2011, has time for observation and experimentation built into it.

“Once the trail opens and before it can be populated with art that is relevant, we need to see how the trail is being used, where people are naturally stopping, what points are attracting the most interest. We also need a year of traction just to see what the different seasons bring,” noted Bressi.

“It’s very hard to understand what it’s going to be like to be on this trail since it’s not there yet. You have to come up with a plan that can evolve as you learn more about the trail, and that’s what Layers 2 and 3 do.”

Temporary installations, the focus of Layer 2, provide a bridge between

Neighborhood Association notes

The Castlewood Neighborhood Association (CNA) will welcome LFUCG Urban County Council District 1 candidates Chris Ford and Marty Clifford to this month’s meeting to answer questions from you. This will be a potluck dinner—please bring a dish to share with neighbors. The meeting will be held at 6:30 P.M. on Thursday, March 25 at Grace Baptist Church (at the corner of Loudon and Bryan Avenues).

On Monday, March 15, District 1 council member Andrea James held a meeting at HopHop about the condition of the E. Loudon streetscape. Residents interested in working to push repair of the street should contact CNA president Tara Rodriguez by coming to the March 25 meeting or posting a message on CNA’s website (castlewoodlex.wordpress.com) or Yahoo! group (groups.yahoo.com/group/castlewoodlex).

the functional art of Layer 1 and the permanent art of Layer 3. The installations will engage more artists and generate renewed interest for the public. They allow for experimentation without commitment and satisfy the public’s desire for more robust works of art along the trail.

With insight gained from a year of temporary installations, placing permanent art fixtures along the trail will be a more organic process.

Because Layer 3 brings in lasting pieces, it is the most significant legacy we’ll be leaving aside from the actual trail itself. Expected to begin in 2012 at the earliest, Layer 3 gives us time to raise funds and understand the way the trail is being used before putting in anything that will be here for, hopefully, generations to come.

Examples of Layer 3 features include what Levy and Bressi call garden rooms, gathering places, infrastructure and trailheads. Garden rooms are areas where art and landscape come together – not actual rooms. They’ll be installed where people tend to stop and explore narratives along the trail, provide shade or seating and channel attention toward the environment along the trail. Gathering places will use public art to create seating, play areas or vista points and will be placed where people tend to gather along the trail during Layers 1 and 2.

Infrastructure, such as tunnels going under roads, retaining walls, medians and the sides of buildings, also gets attention in Layer 3. By

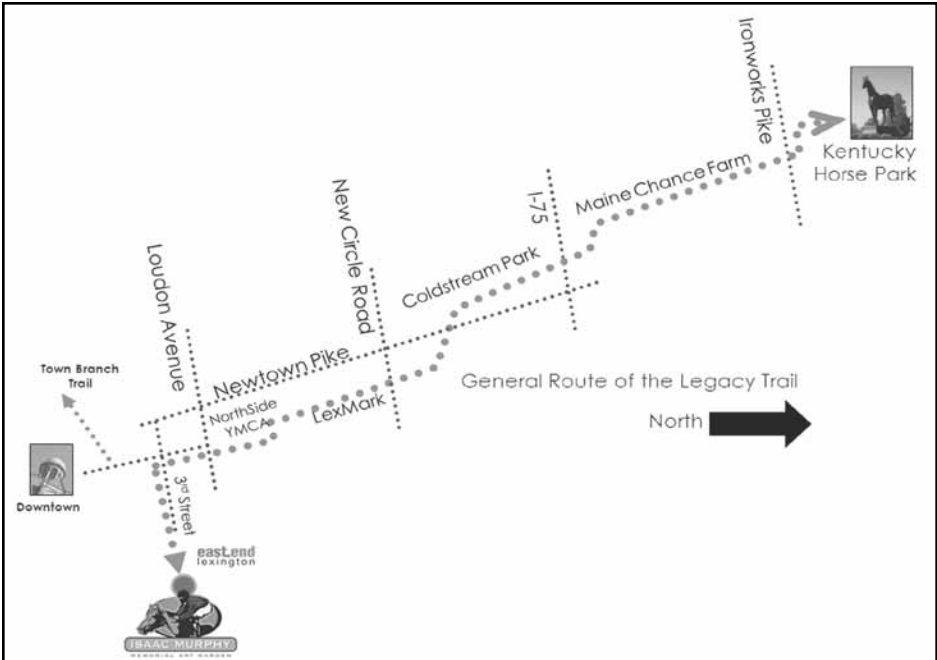
adding public art to these necessary features, they become more pedestrian friendly and overall more interesting. Trailheads are the grand finale of the Legacy Trail Public Art Master Plan. There are only a few designated trailheads, and because these are such critical spots along the trail, they have to create a sense of welcome and discovery.

“One of the goals is to get people to use the trail, so having artwork along the trail is a good way to pull people in,” said Bressi. “Instead of having something right at the trailhead, have it a mile away so that people come in and experience the trail. After you get people using the trail, then you can install beautifully designed trailheads.”

To date, \$13 million has been raised for the trail, and that total doesn’t include grants and right of way values. An additional \$150,000 has been raised for Layer 1’s public art through foundations, public grants and private donations, and Austin said the goal is to raise another \$50,000. Estimates for Layers 2 and 3 will be revealed during the unveiling of the final Legacy Trail Public Art Master Plan on April 13 at 7 P.M. at the Downtown Arts Center.

“The trail was a project chosen by the community, and it says something great about us that we chose this project when we could’ve chosen any other,” said Austin. “It says a lot about where we as a city want to go. There’s a lot of good stuff coming.”

For more information about the project, visit legacycenter.ning.com.



The route of the proposed Legacy Trail.

Reid & Taylor (cont.)

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language is very much from social theory, but the ideas come from grassroots community activist groups. We are writing another book that will be much more targeted to community activists. The same ideas, just written differently.

Herb Reid: Our book, then, is in some ways a strange mix, we are picking up on some longstanding debates that came up when we had a collaboration going between UK Faculty and Appalachian Studies and the UK Committee on Social Theory. So were coming out of that academic context, but we are also working with people like Larry Gibson on Kayford Mountain in West Virginia and Terry Blanton who is very active in KFTC and was one of our Rockefeller Fellows about six years ago. We hope-fully embody the kind of professionalism we are calling for more of in the book. That is, we want to see academics more tuned into and engaged with their regions and communities.

Michael Benton: The word “commons” has a long history as a political term. When I hear it I am reminded of the enclosures of public lands in England during the 17th century and the resistance of groups like the Diggers and the Levelers, but today it has been broadened from its original usage to refer to the publically shared resources of our immediate environment, to the “cultural sphere” (the arts, media air-waves and cultural heritage), to “public goods” that allow our society to function (necessary resources like water or education), to even a sense of “life commons” that refers to biological heritage, genomes and DNA. Is this extension of the notion of commons productive or negative for social justice action, and how so?

BT: My problem with turning the commons into solely a concept of “nature” is that it causes it to become a static object and something separate from our communities. In real place-based economies there is a constant apprenticeship that people are going through with regards to nature. Following Maurice Merleau-Ponty, we need to develop a “post-dualist eco-philosophy” to get over the dualism of nature/culture and recognize that there is a constant interchange, or interweaving, and that they cannot be separated

in Paraguay and Brazil. We’re trying to throw some light on these sorts of questions, to connect the actions and practices of American activists with those of the global justice movement. We are trying to say something about the problems and issues in India, Mexico, or South Africa and how they relate to the problems and issues that we face here in the United States. We need to recognize that these problems and issues are shared across national borders and constructed boundaries.

MB: You begin with an attempt to clarify “the basis for solidarity” (4). What do you see as the major barriers to people recognizing the power of solidarity and collective action?

HR: William E. Scheurman in *Liberal Democracy and the Social Acceleration of Time* (2004) describes how the acceleration of time is affecting our democratic institutions and citizen-participation. People are experiencing time differently, [such that] the New York stock trader has more in common, time-wise, with his Tokyo-counterpart, than the person selling papers on the street or growing his food in his own locality. You can argue that what Paul Virilio calls “The Information Bomb” works against democratic citizenship. I think of people trying to cope with things like email, as they try to get hold of exponentially increasing technologies.

But there’s another way, too. A lot of technologies need to be subjected to some kind of public debate, some kind of governmental regulation that has been democratically arrived at. We need to localize much more than we do. This means slowing things down in certain ways, but to do that we have to stop thinking that there is something inevitable about certain forms of economic globalization.

MB: You mention that “plurality is the stuff of democracy” and that plurality is the “communication that illuminates the worlds that are the generative conditions of personhood” (13). How do we develop and ensure this vital plurality in succeeding generations?

HR: There are a number of angles on the problem of identity politics, but one is we need to have a better understanding of the basis for solidarity. In particular we need to ensure we are not

propaganda. We have political races with no serious discussion of climate destabilization, a crisis that will affect future generations.

BT: This whole question of how the academy fits into this development is incredibly important in really coming up with a long-term political solution for this. We need to question the whole notion of what excellence is for a “Top 20 University.” It’s going to take regional coalitions to make that happen and we have almost no

but right now they are isolated—the Community Farm Alliance and UK’s Rockefeller Scholarships are positive examples of efforts along these lines.

MB: Can you provide an example of the “greening of inequity” (168) in which powerful individuals/neighborhoods/regions protect themselves at the expense of less-powerful peoples/places?

HR: We have a global labor market that doesn’t have the jobs to fit the



models of our great intellectual institutions, at this point, making a shift that is really a democratic shift. Look at what Wendell Berry has been saying for, at least, 25 or 30 years, about the role UK Agriculture could be playing. UK Agriculture could be at the forefront of contributing some of the intellectual labor needed regionally about how to make a switch [to less energy-intensive agricultural systems] and that’s not happening in the term of energy-related things. The International Forum on Globalization or the Urban Institute, some of these think tanks and non-profits, in some ways are doing more critical work than academia. In institutions [like UK] that should be doing critical institutional research, the conditions of labor are very much determining the products, what are produced.

Rewriting the process of promotion and tenure seems very important, so that we build in public engagement—not just as service, but as an integrated part of research and pedagogy. As it is now, it is difficult—and unrewarded—labor to develop courses that engage community issues. You need institutional support to effectively do this and it takes a significant amount of time and effort to nurture connections with community groups.

Part of that will involve rethinking the definition of “mission.”Sectors of the university at this point seek to control the turf of community involvement in service learning. There is not necessarily a deep partnership. There are many good examples [of such partnerships], but it takes vision and work, and a willingness to think long-term. It takes around twenty years to build truly effective and productive communal partnerships and work through the turf-conflicts. There are a lot of attempts to develop these types of partnerships,

market, which means that jobs are taken away from some regions/nations and relocated where labor is seen to be cheap and disposable, and where environmental regulations are the weakest. That’s been going on for a long time.

It also reinforces, what, in the book, we occasionally refer to as the “global transport sector.” All the goods that are made in China have to be shipped to a place like the port at Long Beach, CA. Of course those ships go back and they are usually re-filled with waste, including electronic waste and things like that. This whole approach to the global economy means more pollution of the atmospheric commons and behind that we have what we refer to as the fossil-fuel sector, like big oil and big coal and so on. This whole arrangement is right at the core of the global ecological crisis and the problem of climate destabilization.

MB: We are heading to Washington DC this coming weekend to protest the acceleration of the War in Afghanistan and the Obama administration’s continuation of Bush-Era policies. What are your views on the Obama administration?

HR: The difficulty some people have in taking a critical approach to the Obama Administration, and to Obama himself, is that it was an achievement of course to elect him, and Betsy and I worked for his election. But we are extremely disappointed with what we have seen so far and it is time for activists to say that.

You can’t just sit back and let an administration roll along, the way this administration has, with the help of Larry Summers, Robby Manuel and Tim Geitner, and so on. You can’t just sit back and pray that it will change, or assume that somehow it will get better than it is.

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from one another. Likewise we cannot think the human outside of nature, as if they are somehow separate.

HR: An example recently is a little town in Missouri called Arrow Rock. The people there have been trying to stop a hog factory—sometimes called a hog farm, but should be called a hog factory. Behind the agri-business effort to put in the hog factory is the Farm Bureau Federation, which mainly serves as the agri-business political factor at the state level as well as at the national. Part of the problem [with the hog factory] is the environmental impact, of course, but just as important is the inordinate political clout Smithfield, Monsanto, Cargill, ADM, and so on, all have on the decisions that impact these local cultures.

The political clout that these trans-national organizations have is important in Missouri and Illinois, but also

consumed by a simple notion of diversity, or a naïve notion of multiculturalism, that plays into the hands of the PR managers of large corporations.

If you are a community activist in Kentucky, you should also be aware of similar activist movements around the world. We need a more alert citizenry in the United States that is more aware of what American corporations, say, like Monsanto, are doing in other parts of the world. These global justice movements connect to the realities of our local struggles.

MB: What role do you see for public education, in general, and higher education, specifically, in developing citizen awareness in regard to social justice and environmental issues?

HR: In Kentucky, climate destabilization is not understood partly because of the depth of coal industry

On Making a Film

Learning a New Art Form to Tell the Story of James Baker Hall

By Whitney Baker

When I asked James Baker Hall if I could do a film on his life, his work, his teaching, I imagined a viewer who didn't know life could be transformed through writing and art. At one time, I was that person, locked in to a cycle of confusion, rehashing the same unresolved stories and arguments about life, death, beauty and destruction. Without giving ourselves the right to be surprised by creation and recreation, we spin our wheels, and our resentments entrench rather than pass away.

Jim helped us understand art's role in letting go of old ideas and opening one's self to new ones. He agreed to let me make the film. The only issue was, I knew nothing about making a film.

I thought that if I must, I could charge about \$2,000.00 on my credit cards to get a camera, then borrow time on someone's computer. I knew Jim's former student and assistant Sarah Wylie Ammerman, who was in San Francisco getting her M.F.A, well enough to send her an email and ask her advice on the best camera I could get for that dollar figure. At some point, I asked if she was would be able to come home and help with the film over the summer. She agreed. Little did I know how crucial she would be in the life of the film. I had a lot to learn about the joy, frustration and triumph of collaboration. I was a poet and painter; collaboration was not my department.

The first person I called for help was Gentleman Griffin VanMeter. Griffin helped me find a killer HD camera and a Mac the size of a file cabinet. So far, so good. Now all we had to do was make a film. "How," I was secretly thinking to myself, "the hell does one do that?"

I figured the piece wouldn't be more than an hour or so, but how to make it that short? James Baker Hall could take ten minutes to recite a poem from memory, thirty minutes to talk about why he won't drink coke out of can. How to summarize such a man? To add to that the reminiscences of former students, friends, and colleagues, and still more, footage of Jim and his wife Mary Ann Taylor-Hall's

try was with an electric razor, but it was not what I wanted. She shot him again, with a conventional razor, and washing his hair in the sink, with his face reflected in the mirror. It is one of the most beautiful pieces of film making I have seen.

When I saw that, the fun meter spiked. She went on to get one beautiful piece of footage after another. And, as luck would have it, my more

We had to trace many roads to their dead ends. I shot hours of footage of willing volunteers reading Jim's work, and hours literally just wandering around. We, mostly me, were flying by the seat of our pants. Sarah Wylie was beyond patient and cooperative. We were sniffing, sniffing. "Where is it," I kept thinking, "where is this film?" At some point, I had something pasted together while Sarah Wylie was back in San Francisco for a few weeks. I screened it for some friends. To summarize their reactions: "Man, that sucks." It was too vague, too impressionistic, too impatient. While I always wanted to be done now, Sarah Wylie and Griffin were willing to wait.

Because we had no script and no storyboard, there was no obvious order. We had to listen to what the footage had to say. I would work, then hand it over to Sarah Wylie. She would then suggest, edit, re-edit, move. I remained the director, that is, I had final say, but finally it became clear that what had started as my film about Jim had become our film. The scenes were talking to one another. Together, *Elbow of Light* began to take shape.

In addition to our other challenges, we had shot the film in all kinds of light, artificial and natural. I had no idea what all the buttons on the camera meant. The best I could do was lay a sheet of white cardboard on the ground to try and bounce some sun into the shadows on my subject.

One crucial feature I fumbled was focus. One night I went to interview Jim and Mary Ann in their house after dark. We had little light. Jim was addressing a particularly sensitive subject, and I was keen on using the zoom. Unfortunately, I didn't know how. When I got home, it turned out the auto-focus was on (and off and on), and Jim, Mary Ann and the

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Elbow of Light screens Friday, April 30.

amazing house and outlying studios and their daily lives seemed to be too much.

I believe it was when the subject of Jim's unseen art film came up that we realized that the film could not be all things to all people. It was then I decided the film would not be "about" the subject, but "of" it. As my heart had whispered to me all along, the aim was to distill Jim's spirit.

Making Elbow of Light take shape

A few seminal images persisted. Once while visiting Jim and Mary Ann, I saw him at his sink shaving, his shirt off. I found the vulnerability of that image undeniable. I asked Sarah Wylie to shoot Jim shaving. Our first

amateurish efforts at filming worked compatibly. We could see that we had a yin and yang of footage, the artful played against the rough and immediate.

After a film is conceptualized and footage is gathered, the work begins in editing. We had about twenty 43-minute tapes. I pored over them, listening, re-listening, making notes on a spreadsheet. From there we pulled the selections into a very rough time-line to begin piecing something together. Editing is exhausting, painstaking, thrilling work. With the headphones clamped on, alone for hours on end, one begins biting big chunks of footage and spitting them onto a new time-line.

Review: Alice in Wonderland

A not-so-merry unbirthday

By Stan Heaton

I'm not a purist, especially when it comes to books being made into movies. When Peter Jackson brought *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy to life on the silver screen, I wasn't nostalgic for J.R.R. Tolkien's sporadic poetry—quite the opposite, really. Film was a fantastic medium for those books because a fifty-foot theater screen simply has some powers that books don't.

On the other hand, Lewis Carroll's books, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass*, strike a special playful tone that mirrors the exploration of language and youth, something hard to do in film. But even though I love those two books, I didn't walk into the theater for Tim Burton's *Alice in Wonderland* with a snobby smirk and bad attitude.

The film is a sequel to Carroll's stories, in which a teenage Alice (Mia Wasikowska) returns to Wonderland as an escape from the pressures of growing up, namely, an arranged marriage to a noble twit of a man. After she falls down the rabbit hole and manages her size in all the familiar ways, she emerges into Wonderland, and the film begins to dazzle the viewer with its scenery. The landscapes, castles, and battlegrounds are intricate, expertly rendered, and visually stunning. The use of 3D makes the scenery all the more impressive, adding depth that extends the frame, enhances the characters against the background, and draws attention to some of the more obscure characters, like the Rocking-horse-fly. The use of 3D to enliven the environment is especially effective because the mood of Wonderland is supposed to be strange and, well, wonder full.

The acting is also enjoyable. Wasikowska delivers the necessary

innocence mixed with confusion for which the Alice character calls, and Helena Bonham Carter is particularly adept at recreating the bipolarity of the

Hatter, a choice that serves to ramp up the character's schizophrenia. Depp also delivers the "Jabberwocky" poem from *Through the Looking Glass* quite



Anne Hathaway: Alice.

Red Queen. The strongest performance comes from Alan Rickman as the Blue Caterpillar. He nails the pomp and arrogance that embody that sage character.

It's interesting and fun to watch Johnny Depp switch oddly between a lisp and a Scottish accent as the Mad

well. The combination and balance of moments like this from both books is very well done.

That's about where the goodness ends. The strange truth is that *Alice in Wonderland* just isn't weird enough. With Tim Burton, Johnny Depp,

Helena Bonham Carter, and Lewis Carroll's source material, you would think that this film couldn't fail, but it does. The problem stems from the fact that the narrative is far too linear and much too Hollywood: hero gets put in difficult situation; hero gets magic weapon; hero slays beast; the end. "Jabberwocky" is treated as prophecy, rather than poetry.

This straightforward plotline leaves little to no room for the nonsense that make Alice stories so good. Where are the Walrus and the Carpenter? Where is Humpty Dumpty? Where are all of the puzzling sidetracks and talking wildlife that frustrate and challenge Alice? And where, oh where, is the humor? I expect the general Wonderland nonsense to at least create a chuckle, but this film has almost no comedic moments.

The lack luster of this movie could also come from the fact that the Burton/Depp freak show is losing its appeal. Edward Scissorhands, Ed Wood, Sleepy Hollow, Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, Corpse Bride, and Sweeney Todd is a good track record, but it's played out. Johnny Depp can be weird; we got it. That's not to take away from those movies or the talent of Burton and Depp. I think both men have incredible careers; they just come up short in this film. As I said before, I'm not a purist, but this Hollywood odd couple simply doesn't capture the bizarreness necessary to make this movie interesting.

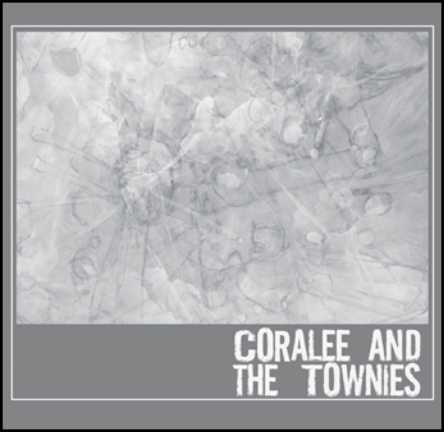
If you're a huge *Alice in Wonderland* fan, you should check this movie out. The fact that it's a return to Wonderland is reason enough to watch it once, and there are enough references to the books to at least awaken your inner child. For everyone else, I'd say pass.

Music

Coralee & The Townies new EP

By Nick Kidd

At the Coralee & The Townies album release party at Cosmic Charlies on March 19th, my buddy Jeff leaned over to me and asked, “Do you realize there’s about 80 years worth of playing experience onstage right now?” I thought he was being hyperbolic, so I did a little math: lead singer Corey Wilson’s only been performing 2 years...keyboardist Jon Grossman’s only 25 years old...so that means almost all of that experience lies in the band’s other 4 members?



If that quartet was anyone other than Smith Donaldson, Fred Sexton, David White, and Scott Wilmoth—guys who have played in more bands than I can afford to list here (including The Swells, Tallboys, Big Maracas, and Yonders)—I might have responded, “Bullshit.” But Jeff’s assessment wasn’t mere hyperbole: Coralee & The Townies have experience out the wazoo. Hearing them live, however, transcends linear calculations of time. One can hardly tell the difference between originals and cover songs; they all sound like classics.

That’s what makes their debut EP so timely. The self-titled EP, a five-song collection of original material, gives the band’s creative disposition a more discrete environment. Here, Wilson’s undeniable vocal talents make quick work of stealing the show (11 seconds, to be exact) on album opener “Wings

on the Borrow.” It’s a song of courage and compromise, of fearing love but discarding inhibitions. The remainder of the album runs through a variety of traditional roots-rock/country modes to reveal Wilson as an excellent songwriter and a woman with little use for pining or regret. Her narratives are proud visions of femininity and uncompromising tales of love. She’s assertive, confident, aware, and liberated, lending the band a distinctive guiding voice.

I sensed that Wilson’s aware she’s got a good thing going when she, unprompted, expressed frustration of all the NPR coverage emanating from Austin’s annual South By Southwest (SXSW) festival the other day. It wasn’t just that she felt bombarded by the bevy of artists featured on All Songs Considered. Rather, I think she felt left out, that her band belonged at SXSW too. And I happen to think she’s right. Take from that what you will, but Wilson’s drive is hard to question after you’ve looked inside her lyrics. It wouldn’t surprise me one bit if she’d already picked up a 2011 calendar just to highlight the dates of March 11-15, next year’s SXSW.

With so much talent in their stable, the future looks bright for Coralee & The Townies. But with the chops and the right frontwoman to take them far, it’s hard to put things in perspective. They are, after all, still a new band and this is their first recorded material (seriously: there weren’t even songs on their Myspace until now). So, there’s still room to grow. And Wilson, who’s already stealing the show, has barely scratched the surface according to keyboardist Grossman. “If she were a basketball player, you’d say she has tremendous upside.” With all the brilliance on display with this debut EP, in keeping with the basketball vernacular, that’s a downright scary thought.

Coralee & The Townies will be performing at Lynagh’s on Saturday April 3rd.

Killer Meteor album review

By Nick Kidd

With Killer Meteor’s debut LP, the first thing that jumps out is the sleek packaging and gorgeous photography of Michael Donner. The front and back covers feature a boy of roughly 5 years donning an Incredible Hulk costume. On the front, he’s glancing off to the side of the frame looking unsure; on the back, the grimacing Hulk looks outward, his stuffed arm, chest, and abdominal muscles inhumanly flexed on the undersized boy’s frame. The outfit is made complete by its loose but tattered pants, a casualty of the transformation from man to Hulk, from boy to superhuman. The scene, photographed amidst Halloween décor, is awash in sepia.

The warm, dusty songs contained on *Rescue Dogs & Ravens* shed light on the nostalgia suggested by its exterior. Its songs are about lost love and the anxieties of stagnation, about owning up to weaknesses and shortcomings, about relishing what’s fleeting and what’s long gone. Significantly, the album doesn’t savor its sorrows. Instead, it summons hope, turning the testimonials of singer/songwriter Eric Smith’s visions into a grand therapeutic exorcism. The album jumps from mood to mood, from Chuck Berry-inspired stompers (“Guns in the Middle”); a southern-rock spin on Interpol-ish pop rock (“The Snakes Can Ride”); a paradoxically lush, stripped-down appeal (“Fog Rolling In”); and a sublime lullaby (“Beauty Sleep”). In spite of its breadth of influences, you can’t help but feel like the album accurately captures Smith’s emotions, that the album came to life just as he’d imagined.

Though not marked as such on the CD’s package, *Rescue Dogs & Ravens* fits nicely into a “Side A” and “Side B” dichotomy. Its Side A plays like a chameleon-like venture through generally upbeat songs, a sextet of hybridized country and rock n’ roll that set a broad pallet of expectations. Yet the catchiness of these earlier moments play second fiddle to the stunning emotional turns taken on Side B.

It’s here that we find the thick haze of gothic Americana (think Bonnie “Prince” Billy) and the folkier side of Killer Meteor emerges. Casting

aside the barroom-friendly fare of Side A, Smith leads us through the gripping malaise of “Fog Rolling In” and the weightless berceuse of “Beauty Sleep.” It’s here the proverbial Hulk mask is removed and we’re presented with a more vulnerable side of Killer Meteor. And these moments are, by my account, the album’s best.

If I had to pick a single for the album, I’d choose “Old Ghosts,” an It Still Moves-era My Morning Jacket type rock song oozing with verve. Its first minute is a steady build of rapid-fire hi-hats, backwards effects, fuzzy lead guitar lines and a perfectly mixed acoustic guitar. By the time Smith’s vocals come in the song has amassed a palpable tension that sustains throughout its remaining verse/chorus form until a wonderful, acoustic-heavy



bridge wrestles everything back down to earth...and then it peaks again. It’s the closest thing to an anthem found on this collection, a climax track found, appropriately, just ahead of the serene “Fog Rolling In”/“Beauty Sleep” finale.

The way *Rescue Dogs & Ravens* veers nimbly between emotional highs and lows brings early Walkmen records to mind. That is to say, it’s impossible to say which style best suits Killer Meteor. They have their own style and sound, and they come off comfortable in their skin, like a pack of friends well aware of each other’s strengths and weaknesses. The dynamic fluidity of their music makes it impossible to paint into a corner. And it’s this very fluidity that makes *Rescue Dogs & Ravens* an album worth returning to over and over again.

Killer Meteor’s album release show will be at The Green Lantern on Friday, March 26th. Englishman is opening.

Fair Heron/Technoir MA at Hive

Tuesday, March 30
Fair Heron w/ Technoir MA
The Hive Salon (156 Deweese St.), 9 P.M. \$5. 18+

Given that Spring is the time of blooming flowers and new beginnings, it seems appropriate the Hive will host the debut of Lexington’s newest electronic music act on March 30th. Fair Heron, the brainchild of local musician Ellie Herring, crafts beat-oriented electronic music soundscapes by splicing dreamy synths and soothing vocals overtop hip-hop bounce. Fans of Warp Records superstars Boards of Canada and Prefuse 73 will feel right at home.

While most of Fair Heron’s recorded output is composed digitally, the group will be playing with a full band for their Lexington debut.

Following Fair Heron will be Massachusetts-based industrial shoe-gazers Technoir MA. Their sound channels both the dreamy space rock of groups like My Bloody Valentine and Spacemen 3, while delving into the deeper rhythmic territory of bands like Joy Division and Can. A DJ set will follow the entire affair, ensuring that many attendees will call in sick to work the next day suffering from “dance exhaustion.”

—Patrick Smith

LFL wants your music videos

By Lucy Jones
Lexington Film League

The Lexington Film League is accepting submissions for our Music Video Contest and Showcase from now until May 1, 2010.

Be creative and be unique! Submissions are open nationwide and to all ages.

Your video must have been made in the last three years and you must own, or have permission to use, the rights to the music.

The competition will culminate in a video showcase at Buster’s Backroom & Billiards on Saturday, May 29. Doors will open at 6 pm and the video screenings will be followed by live music.

The grand prizewinner of the competition will receive a guaranteed slot at Louisville’s Flyover Film Festival during the weekend of June 11-13, 2010.

For more information please visit lexingtonfilmleague.org and/or contact the following people:

Email: Kiley Lane, Sarah Wylie VanMeter, or Lucy Jones at: lexfilmleague@gmail.com.
Phone: 213-663-6566 (Lucy Jones’ phone).

Send a high-resolution file (QuickTime preferred) or DVD and an \$8 submission fee to:
LFL Music Video Contest
c/o Sarah Wylie VanMeter
1113 North Limestone
Lexington, KY 40505

Current and upcoming events:
• One World Film Festival, Feb. - March, Lexington
• Fly Over Film Festival, Louisville Film Society - June 11-13th



A new vision for Kentucky filmmakers

By Ben Allen
Co-producer of *Reel Visions*

Lexington’s creative community continues to grow and shine as new venues for music and visual art multiply and develop throughout the city. In recent months, the area’s filmmakers have also been given new opportunities to display their talents on a larger scale. Last month, the Lexington Film Society celebrated the culmination of its “Do-ers” Project with a packed public screening at Natasha’s restaurant. The Do-ers Project invited local filmmakers to explore the myriad activities of Lexingtonians, revealing our richly diverse culture and the different issues our citizens face everyday.

In attendance at the celebration was Sara O’Keefe, producer of the *Reel Visions: A Spotlight on Kentucky’s Filmmakers* series on KET, who gave a brief introduction of the program. The show, a half-hour collection of some of the best short-films from filmmakers native to or living in Kentucky, features everything from experimental art films to quirky short storylines to off-the-beaten path documentaries. Filmmakers have the opportunity to have their work viewed across the state—a level of exposure that may have previously been unattainable.

Reel Visions began its second season on Wednesday, March 10 and will remain on the air throughout April. Some highlights include a documentary about independent wrestling competitions in eastern Kentucky, *Fire in the Mountains*, directed by Steve Middleton; the story of a wayward and somewhat misinformed wannabe architect, *City Center Design Competition*, directed by Jeremy Midkiff; a “puppetry” film depicting the adventures of three factory workers, *Backwards Compatible*, directed by Kathryn Spivey; and several experimental films by students working in the new media department at NKU’s art school. The third season—in production—will feature more of the same, including several films from the Do-ers Project.

O’Keefe included in her remarks at the Do-ers celebration an invitation for filmmakers to submit any new work to the *Reel Visions* staff for review for the upcoming third season. To learn more about the show and how to submit your short-films for review, visit www.ket.org/arts/reelvisions. *Reel Visions* hopes to continue offering this new venue to Kentucky’s filmmaking community and welcomes any film lover to enjoy the collection of work assembled so far on the show.

Small water, big results

Shootin’ and snaggin’ with the Frugal Fisherman

There’s an old adage among fishermen: “A bad day of fishing is better than a good day at work.” I couldn’t agree more. Being in the outdoors on a sunny day in the fresh air is reward enough. But not catching fish outing after outing gets old, even to the most grizzled of veterans. Such was my case recently. I’d tried several attempts at catching everything from bass and walleye to crappie and bluegill at Lake Herrington, the Kentucky River and Jacobsen Park Lake. I didn’t catch a single fish, nor get a single bite at any of the locations.

Before I continue, let me preface my above lack of fishing skills by outlining a few facts. First of all I’m not a professional fisherman and I don’t own a boat. I use a 12’ Old Town Dirigo kayak as my main vessel. It doesn’t have a motor, so I must paddle everywhere I go. It also doesn’t have a depth finder, so locating fish is a crap shoot. If you’ve ever seen a kayak you know there’s no live well, bait containers, storage areas or a mount for a trolling motor. There’s barely enough space for me, a small tackle box, a paddle and a rod.

But what a kayak lacks in amenities it makes up for in stealth. I can’t begin to count the number of times I’ve literally floated right on top of fish because my kayak is so quiet in the water. So there are pluses to go with the minuses of such a small craft.

As you can imagine, trying to cover large bodies of water like Lake Herrington or the Kentucky River in a kayak can be a daunting and at times intimidating task. There’s just so much surface area to get to that it’s hard at times to stay patient. So after several attempts with no reward, I decided to

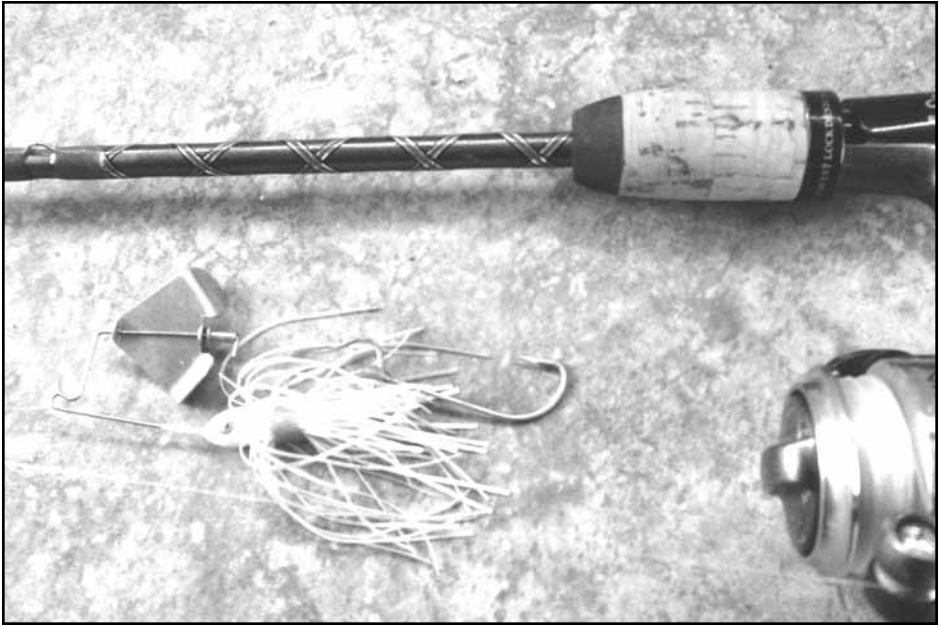
change my strategy.

Frugal goes small water

A friend mentioned fishing in a two acre pond his brother owned. Bingo! This could be just what the doctor ordered for me to get out of my fishing slump. To say the least I was excited. So much so I worried my friend

repeatedly told me how he had caught bass that weighed anywhere from 2 to 6 lbs. last summer. At this point I’d take a one-pound bass. Hell, anything on the end of my line sounded great.

I arrived around 9 A.M. that Tuesday. Since most local tackle shops have yet to stock live bait such as grub worms, night crawlers or minnows, I



The buzzbait that broke the Frugal Fisherman drought.

to death. Unfortunately he couldn’t meet me the morning of March 16. He had to watch his daughter. But he knew how bad I was itching to catch a fish, so he sent me along without him.

The pond was located just off Winchester Road about 6 miles outside Lexington. It was built some 6 years back and is fed by an underground spring that forms a small creek some 200 yards from the pond’s shallow end. When it was built, the pond was stocked with largemouth bass, crappie, channel catfish and bluegill. My friend

figured to use an array of artificial lures to try and catch a fish.

It was still early in the morning and the sun had yet to fully warm the entire pond, so I tied on a 1/8 oz. White Strike King Mini Pro-Buzz Buzzbait—a classic top water lure I’d had numerous successes with in the past. I decided to use the smaller weighted model because the pond’s size made it easier to cast the bait in and around brush and stumps, and the 1/8 oz. buzzbait can be retrieved at a slower speed and still be kept on top of the water.

Considering how cold the water was I wanted to be able to retrieve the lure as slowly as possible.

Buzzbaits have two main attractions I like when fishing foreign water—a big propeller blade that produces a lot of noise and vibration and an eye-catching skirt that gives bass a good, bulky mouthful of color and movement to home in on. I also used a 2/0 trailer hook just in case the bass weren’t at maximum aggressiveness. To be honest, I didn’t want to miss a single strike, seeing how I had yet to experience a single bite thus far this season, hence the trailer, or extra hook.

My first few casts were into the shallow end of the pond fed by the spring. Nothing. It’s here I was about to change lures when I thought to myself, be patient, this pond is small enough to walk several times over. So I decided to I’d work the shore line and intermittent water around the pond’s entirety.

Good thing I did. I no more than made my second cast down the edge of the pond’s dam when I hooked a 1 ½ lb. largemouth. I was so shocked to feel a fish on my line that I nearly dropped my pole in excitement. I think I even yelled, but who knows seeing how I was the only one there. Rejuvenated and reaffirmed I fished that buzz bait for another two hours. I only caught one more bass that day—a small one around ¾ lbs. I didn’t care how much either bass weighed. I was thrilled to simply catch something.

Frugal wisdom

Now if you are like me and have trouble working large bodies of water

continued on page 8

Spring Invitational at Coolavin Park

Lexington Bike Polo gears up for a king hell of a tourney

NoC Sports

Volunteer construction crews on bikes have been frantically working around the clock at Coolavin Park to put the finishing touches on Court 2. The preparations are for Lexington Bike Polo’s 2nd annual Spring Invitational, to be held on Saturday and Sunday, April 3 and 4. Treated lumber boards have been pedaled into place and nailed down by the construction crew to form the court’s outerwalls; the clean-up crew has been busy waxing the court to a dull green shine, while the home-court-advantage crew has followed right behind them, scuffing up and oiling down select spots on both courts 1 and 2; and the balls crew

has been keeping a close watch on their balls—checking them at regular intervals throughout the day for irregularities, deformities, and the like.

What’s more, the cookout crew has decided, after much discussion and paring down of ideas, on a cookout menu of hotdogs, hamburgers, Ale-8-Ones, and PBRs. All-city player Brad Flowers, apparently fully healed from his debilitating athlete’s foot injury, is now back to full speed and has been seen doing stop-start exercises on his bicycle up and down Johnson Avenue at odd hours of the early morning in an attempt to get back into game shape. All the while the bruiser, Alex Brooks, has been methodically sharpening the tips of his handlebars each night

before drifting off to a deep sleep in the warm embrace of his bike—a relaxation technique he reportedly learned while playing around the Juarez circuit years back.

This year’s open-format tournament seems destined to provide fans with a king hell of a weekend of free outside gamesmanship and entertainment. Lexington Bike Polo Rep Chris “Reach-around” Simpson reports that Saturday’s schedule of events will mainly include pick-up games and any early-tournament games needed in case the tournament grows too large for a single-day event.

Sunday will be when fans can expect the tournament fireworks to begin in earnest. Already, gim-crack

teams from Saint Louis, MO; Dayton, OH; Columbus, OH; Bloomington, IN; Chicago; Pittsburgh; and the District of Columbia, have made plans to travel to Lexington to take part in the 2-day tournament.

In addition, the dreaded Comosexuals from Columbia, MO, will be making their first return to Coolavin Courts since Charlie Hill slipped a ten-foot scoot-shot past Tiff Morrow in the seventh minute of overtime for a hard fought 2-1 victory over Tripple Lexxx in the Bluegrass State Games Tournament championship game last July. The Comosexuals were an early odds-on favorite to win this

continued on page 8

ROCK falls to hill dwellers (cont.)

continued from page 1

the end of the first period BRRG had all but sealed the deal. Yet ROCK continued to skate with purpose, relentlessly fighting off blocks and working on their jams. As team captain Ellie Slay put it, she skated out her dissatisfaction and planned for a little vengeance.

“I think I could have skated the entire night if it meant we would’ve been able to redeem ourselves,” she said. “I was so pissed! My entire backside was skinned to hell and bleeding and I had no idea ... I didn’t even feel it until well after the bout was over.”

Slay also noted how she needed to be more of a team player if ROCK is to have more success in the future.

“I learned I can’t do it all myself, and I don’t have to,” she said. “I’m much more effective when I work with my partner, pairing up and just taking turns hitting. I just need to hit harder and more frequently from the first whistle to the last.”

Though BRRG continued to lay blow after blow for nearly two hours, Sugar Shock said she thinks the team gained some much needed experience

and will benefit from the lose and the lesson in the long run.

“I was really proud of the way that we didn’t let our frustration get the best of us,” she said. “If you judged by our attitude throughout, you would have thought that we were the winning team.”

And a team ROCK most definitely is. Look no further than the retaliations of Ryder, Ellie Slay and Ragdoll in the bout’s first period and you’ll understand how much the team cares for each member. All three players were ejected skating their asses off defending and protecting their own.

“Shine and myself played pinball with their jammer at one point, knocking her to the outside, while Sissy Bug hit one of their players so hard she could not get up,” Slay said with a sigh that fully expressed her exhaustion. “We were all feeling the same way ... angry, disappointed, frustrated ... but that’s what brings us together in the end and makes us stronger as a team and as friends.”

Slay said ROCK will be working even harder in practice before their next bout against the Hard Knox

(Brawlers) to ensure a blowout like this one doesn’t come so easy in the future.

“From now on practice will be grueling, with lots of endurance and scrimmage drills. And something else I think we neglected this time ... we need more mental preparation ... we let those girls get inside our heads and

we forgot who we are and what we can do.”

It won’t happen again like this, said Slay.

Correction: ROCK’s home games beginning on June 19 will be played at the Lexington Ice Center, not at Champs as previously reported.

Rollergirls of Central Kentucky 39 Blue Ridge Rollergirls 234

Saturday, March 13 at Asheville Civic Center in North Carolina

ROCK Top Scorer: Sugar Shock
BRRG Top Scorer:: Skelley Tor

ROCK Most Penalties: Ellie Slay
BRRG Most Penalties: Candy Korn

ROCK MVP: Bitty Bast’rd
BRRG MVP: Sugar Magmaulya

ROCK’s next bout is this Saturday against Hard Knox (Brawlers) at the Knoxville Convention & Expo Center. Doors open at 6 PM. Tickets \$8.

For more information on ROCK go to www.rocknrollergirls.com.

Opinion

BCTC student arrested, to be deported

By Danny Mayer

On March 17, immigration officials entered the Amazon warehouse located off Leestown Road just past New Circle and arrested Julio Martinez, who worked there part-time to help pay for his college.

The ICE officials had a “lawful” reason, of course. (They always do). Eleven years ago, when Martinez was 7 years old, he was caught with his family crossing the U.S./Mexico border. At the time, Clinton-era immigration policies stressed arrest, but not deportation, of undocumented migrants caught making the journey north. The policy was called “Catch and Release,” as if human beings were equatable to fish caught for sport and then magnanimously released free back into the water. Under the Catch and Release program, Martinez, along with the rest of his family, was caught, booked and released free inside the vast expanses of the U.S., officially declared a “fugitive” in, to and by his new country before he hit the ripe old age of 10.

But times they do change. In March 2006, in the midst of an intense moment of national debate on immigration, a time when armed militias of unsanctioned whiteys stalked the border to patrol their idea of the homeland, acting Homeland Security Director Michael Chertoff went from suck to blow: he announced that the “Catch and Release” policy was changing to a “Catch and Detain” strategy. Instead of releasing detained undocumented immigrants as the “Catch and Release” policies had done, “Catch and Detain” instead called for holding immigrants in jail until such time as they could be deported to their country of birth.

Now 18 years old, Martinez got caught up in the shifting winds of immigration policy. Since he was already declared a fugitive at 7, all it took was for immigration officials to

follow up on that charge to give them grounds for detaining and ultimately deporting Martinez to his country of birth. If he has not already, Martinez will soon leave Lexington for Chicago, where he can expect to await deportation to Honduras, the country of his birth, a place he last lived when he was 7 years old. In the sick con game of state-sanctioned reverse immigration, played out US style, ICE agents and the federal court system get to play lead Coyote, dropping off their dazed cargo at cutrate prices throughout Central and South America.

I don’t know enough about Martinez to speculate on his particular circumstances, but I imagine him being in a similar position as Walter Lara, who last summer was scheduled to be deported to Argentina, a country she left when she was three years old and which she now had “no memory of.” That is, I imagine Martinez is facing the prospect of being suddenly dropped off in the middle of what is, to him, a foreign country, one that he has little to no memory of.

Though I do not know Martinez, I am connected to him in at least one way. We are both institutionally connected to Bluegrass Community and Technical College: I as an instructor of English at the Cooper campus, located at the ass-end of the University of Kentucky campus; he as a first-year student at our Leestown campus, located across the street from the Amazon warehouse where he worked part-time to help pay for college, the place where the ICE agents arrested him. Another fish caught and detained.

I do not yet know what our official college response will be—either at the college level or at the state system level—to the arrest, detention and deportation of one of our students. I do, however, want to offer my own thoughts as to why I hope my college leadership uses its immense intellectual and

political capital to work to keep one of its students, Julio Martinez, from being forcibly deported from this state and this country.

One of the central missions of our community college resides in our capacity to help people from our nearby communities improve their lives socially and economically. In that, as an undocumented migrant, Martinez is arguably part of the most marginalized of communities in the bluegrass (he has few rights because he does not exist, is not allowed to exist, officially).

The first reason is, of course, that, practically speaking, by most sane

accounts Martinez isn’t an “alien,” illegal or otherwise. If he ended up in Kentucky soon after his Catch and Release, he arrived with his family to the state in 1999 at the age of 7. He graduated from nearby Franklin high school. After graduating, he came to BCTC for college, working part-time to pay for it.

Martinez is not just part of the immigrant community, he’s a part of the fabric of many communities around here: mine at BCTC, his co-workers at Amazon, his classmates at Franklin High, and the list goes on. He’s more rooted to Kentucky than I am, an interloper who arrived a year

later than he in 2000 at the age of 25. The very idea of his illegality or alienness, not to mention my native-ness, is intellectually and morally absurd. And yet, because he was born in Hondura and I was born in New Jersey, he gets deported and I get a tenure track job.

That is a moral argument, and it is one that I hope my KCTCS president, Michael McCall, considers when as president and intellectual leader of our state system of community colleges, he discusses his thoughts on Martinez’s potential deportation.

But there is also an institutional reason why my administration should support the release of Martinez. To begin, Martinez is a BCTC student that was forcibly removed from his home; BCTC should have a vested interest in this fact along. In addition, our college’s mission statement asserts that we provide an outlet for “a broad community of learners,” and that we do “community outreach” and “economic development.” Arguably, what we provided Martinez at BCTC was all three of those things.

And now the state has taken his opportunity away, for a victimless crime 11 years old, committed when he was only 7 years of age. It is my hope that my administration finds that these actions on of our students are as intolerable as I find them as a low-level faculty member. It is also my hope that they convey that message to our state senator, Ben Chandler, and in other media outlets.

Here at NoC, we will offer space in our paper if anyone from BCTC needs a public outlet to help sustain the public dialogue on BCTC student Julio Martinez’s deportation from the land of his home.

If you are interested in helping to stop BCTC student Julio Martinez’s deportation, call Representative Chandler’s Office and urge him to help Julio, 859-219-1366



Julio Martinez, arrested by the ICE on March 17.

The present ammunition shortage: an observation

By Keith Halladay

The CCI 22 Long Rifle “Stinger” round leaves a rifle muzzle, according to the manufacturer, at 1640 feet per second, making it one of the fastest 22-caliber bullets available. Since a good part of the fun of shooting is trying new loads, in early January I took a bit of Christmas money, logged into my account at the Cabela’s online store, and began to place an order for 500 rounds of the stuff.

As I clicked through the checkout screens a message appeared to inform me that the Stingers were on back-order, and that Cabela’s was expecting a fresh shipment on March 15. “Eh,” I thought, “don’t need it *now*,” and I placed the order anyway.

The appointed day arrived, and while slogging through the morning email I logged back in to Cabela’s to see if my ammo had been shipped. It had not. In fact, a new message had replaced the old one: “This item is backordered. Estimate 8-9 weeks for delivery.” Confused, I called the company and spoke to a representative who told me that indeed the new shipment had arrived, but that it was of insufficient quantity to satisfy all the outstanding orders.

Now, this is 22 ammo. It’s fancy and comes in a hard plastic box instead of the mini-milk jug of bulk plinking rounds, but it’s still 22 ammo. Some rifle cartridges are tough to find, sure, but these rounds are produced by the billions, and yet were subject to multiple backorders at not only Cabela’s but all the major online retailers.

So the next day I called my gunnut friend, who stays current with paramilitary-oriented web sites and those sorts of things, and asked, exasperated, “who in Great Caesar’s ghost is buying up all the 22 ammo?”

He chortled. “It’s Obama, man! The rednecks are buying up all the

ammunition because they think he’s gonna take their guns!”

“But it’s 22 ammo,” I cried. “What do they think they’re gonna do with a bleeping 22 if they come in with tanks and helicopters?”

“I think they think that they have to get it while they still can,” he replied. “It happens every time a Democrat is elected—the rednecks buy up all the ammo and there are massive shortages. That’s why prices are so high too.”

Now, it should be noted that there are competing theories about the real cause of the present shortage. One might think, for instance, that the protracted wars in Iraq and Afghanistan

popular among weapon hoarders, is that the government is deliberately restricting the manufacture and sale of ammunition and cartridge primers (the cap-like thing on the end of a cartridge that, when struck by the gun’s hammer, detonates the gunpowder). The idea here is that Obama (and the United Nations, in most versions), knowing outright firearms confiscation would be a tough go, figure that if there’s no ammo, then mission accomplished.

An intriguing argument to be sure, but one that, like most nutty right-wing conspiracy theories, doesn’t hold water. That we’ve been in the midst of

latest Cabela’s catalog carries a bold-print notice about “unprecedented demand” and “limited availability.” And Hornady, another ammunition manufacturer, on its web site claims that they are “breaking their own production records in an attempt to keep up with customer demand.”

So a certain group of people, when a Democrat takes office, becomes so convinced that the new regime will ban some combination of guns (or types of guns), bullets, and reloading components, *and* possibly attempt to retrieve existing guns from their owners, that they are compelled to squirrel away mounds of ammo—22 ammo, even—at a record-breaking pace.

Well, it makes sense to them. Of course, the Supreme Court has recently and repeatedly demonstrated that it has no intention of restricting gun ownership, and in fact this summer seems poised to strike down Chicago’s 28-year-old ban on handguns, having already struck down a similar statute in Washington, D.C. in 1998. What’s more, the upcoming Chicago decision *could* mean that states and municipalities would be unable to make any laws restricting firearms ownership at all. These aren’t the moves of a Supreme Court friendly to any legislative or executive attempt to grab guns, and unless Antonin Scalia, the patriarch of the Court’s political right, retires or dies in the next seven years, the Court’s stance won’t change.

So I canceled my order, on account of those gun owners who are both fiercely protective of the Second Amendment and utterly distrustful of their system of government, and whose inability to distinguish real threats from the only perceived is making it more difficult and expensive for the average hunter or shooter to enjoy the very pursuits the Second Amendment guarantees. Turns out the “Stingers” showed up last week at Wal-Mart anyway.



have hampered some manufacturers’ abilities to provide for both military and retail consumers. Yet this cannot be the case, for the two rifle calibers most used by the U.S. armed forces, the 5.56 and 7.62 NATO cartridges, are among the easiest to find both online and in brick-and-mortar outlets. Another possibility, one especially

a nationwide shortage of most types of ammunition is clear; for months the shelves at the local Wal-Marts have been nearly barren of anything but a few scattered boxes of the less-popular calibers. But it’s no conspiracy—just a whole bunch of folks buying a whole bunch of bullets, and manufacturers are struggling to keep pace. The

I'm not from here by Kenn Minter



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Making a film (cont.)

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white couch were orange. But, because fate sometimes smiles on us, it was all perfect. The focus did its job when Jim’s comments were most poignant, and the color was, inexplicably, ideal. It couldn’t have been planned.

We were learning all the time. The Final Cut Pro software offers all kinds of tools, most of which I had no idea how to use. In many ways, the program is brilliantly intuitive. Whatever seems the easiest is usually the way to go. However, just beyond the horizon of drag-and-drop and scissors is the byzantine mystery of compression, color balance, and sound. Ignorance ruled.

What I had was instinct. I knew when something felt right. I knew my subject. I had help and I was willing to be wrong and wrong again. Paradoxically, hunches, failings and weaknesses became the steps necessary to make my first real film.

Elbow of Light *premieres Friday, April 30, 2010 at the Black Box Theatre in the Downtown Arts Center at 141 E. Main Street, with a first screening at 5:00 P.M., a reception at 6:30, and a second screening at 7:30. Tickets are \$6 (pay what you can). The screening is being sponsored by Lexarts Fund for the Arts and the pay what you can tickets are being sponsored by PNC Bank, through Lexarts.*

Frugal Fisherman (cont.)

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early in the season when fish are less aggressive, or don’t own a boat or kayak, or simply don’t have the time or resources to make a trip to a larger body of water, then try your luck at a local pond or small lake.

Once there I recommend you go with what you know. If you’re a live bait fisherman then use live bait. If you like spinnerbaits then use them. Same goes for whatever else you’ve got in your tackle box. If you feel it will work, it probably will. Let’s face it, confidence in a lure is half the

battle. If you don’t think a lure will catch a fish then why use it in the first place.

Lastly, be patient. Sometimes it’s about the time you want to give up that your closest to striking gold. And if you’re like me you need several casts to get into a rhythm and to start to work a lure properly. So commit to a lure and work it. You just might be surprised by what decides to give you a bite.

If you have questions or suggestions for the Frugal Fisherman e-mail me at: frugalfisherman@hotmail.com.

Bike polo (cont.)

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year’s tourney when the book finally came down from Price Ave early last week (nearly hitting even odds in the first frenzied betting rush), but since news leaked out three days ago that the threesome would be heading to Lexington straight from a couple nights camping, the team has pretty much settled in at 7-2, about even with a number of much-sSpeculated Lexington team combinations, one of the Dayton teams, and a couple others.

So come on out and root, root root for our home teams (and everyone else, too). And have burgers. Bring your crackerjacks and other things, and enjoy a couple days watching some great live action. The public park is free to anyone stopping by.

The Lines

Part of the problem Price Ave has had in setting precise odds has been attributed to the relative lack of formerly announced Lexington teams. This paucity of information has

contributed to what were initially fairly volatile and irregular betting patterns as fans feverishly speculated whether, for example, Tripple Lexxx might reunite, or whether Winter Regular Season champion Hallelujah Holy Shit would stay together for the tournament—or even if surprise regular season runners-up the Shit Squad decided to push on through for another go at it together.

After the public realized that the question as to which Lexington bike polo teams would form come next Saturday would not be resolved anytime soon, the lines softened and things have held pretty firm since. Ultimately, until the Lexington teams are formally announced, the lines will stay as they are.

Though the guess is that showing up to Coolavin Park around noonish on Sunday April 4 (and 2:00-ish on Saturday April 3)—and staying through dusk—will get you to some great bike polo action, best bet, though, is to check out the “forum” section of lexrides.com.

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