

A black and white photograph of a frog in a pond. The frog is in the lower-left foreground, looking towards the viewer. The water is rippled, with several concentric ripples emanating from the frog's position. The background shows more of the pond and some foliage.

Ripples

Stories and Poems

by or about

Yellow Springs Elders

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*Our thanks to Matt Minde for help in adjusting photographs
to Kate Carrigan for technical assistance
and to Scott Sanders of Antiochiana for providing photographs*

Ripples is published by the Yellow Springs Senior Center
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*Cover photo: Glass Farm Wetland by
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printed by Clint's Printing

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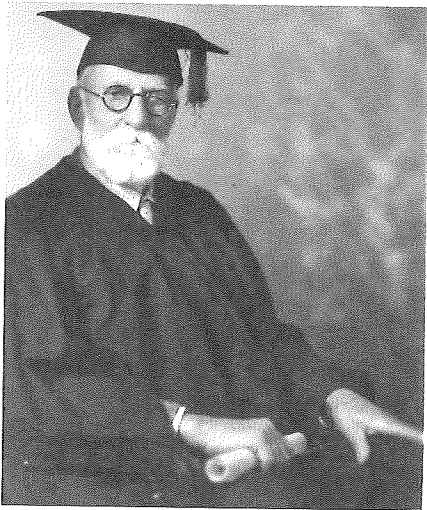
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Hugh Taylor Birch & My Family by Lucia Livingston



Hugh Taylor Birch, Antioch College class of 1869, receives his diploma 50 years after the fact. Photo by Axel Bahnsen courtesy of Antiochiana, Antioch College.

My mother, Hilda Mayes Livingston, was a very accomplished woman, but I most often remember the stories she told me about her life.

In 1927, when she came to Yellow Springs to head the women's physical education department at Antioch, Arthur Morgan was president. At some point he asked her to befriend a prominent citizen of Yellow Springs.

Hugh Taylor Birch was a very interesting man. He had escaped the Great Fire of Chicago. Some years later he went down to what is today Miami but found it too crowded—six families were living there. He then went to where Ft. Lauderdale is and, since it wasn't crowded, bought beach-front property for ten cents an acre. He brought in the expertise and equipment to shore up the land and eventually sold the land for ten dollars a front foot, thus making a fortune of millions.

Despite his great wealth, he was a very sad man. His wife

died as well as his only child, Helen. Yes, Helen, for whom the Glen is named. Mr. Birch would spend his winters in Florida and then come to Yellow Springs in warmer weather. Sadly, one winter he left his beautiful collie at his home here (later the home of Antioch's presidents). Robbers broke into his home and shot and killed the dog. He told my mom, "They could have had anything they wanted if they just hadn't killed my dog."

Anyway, he lived alone and invited Mom to have lunch with him one Sunday. He had a very large, formal dining room with a long table and my mother was seated at the opposite end from him, making conversation very difficult; he'd shout to Mom, "What did the old dromedary say?" in response to an inquiry from his housekeeper. So Mom picked up her place setting and moved next to him which pleased him very much.

In 1938, when Mom was pregnant with my sister D. Lynn, Mr. Birch told her he had a dream that she had named the baby Huella. Mom didn't care for that name and she countered with "What about Huette?" Mr. Birch was not to be appeased and responded, "That's not what I dreamed." Two years later, my brother was born and named Hugh Taylor Birch Livingston in honor of Mr. Birch. I would tease Mom that she probably cost us an inheritance of millions, simply because she wouldn't name D. Lynn, Huella.

As you probably know, Mr. Birch did many things to help Antioch. During the depression

it was hard for Antioch to keep faculty, so Mr. Birch offered each faculty member a gift of a lot in town or five acres in the country. My dad, Max Edward Livingston, had come to teach at Antioch too and he and Mom chose five acres on John Bryan Park Road. There was even a small cabin on the property where they could live.

Mr. Birch decided that little cabin wasn't sufficient for them and so one day, there came a house he had moved from his property. By the light of lanterns and headlights they eventually unloaded the house onto the property.

After I moved back to Yellow Springs in 1988, an acquaintance told me that house had been Mr. Birch's mistress's house. I was shocked. I didn't know if it was true, but I certainly thought that my very upright mother would never have accepted the gift if she had known that. I'm awfully glad that she never heard such a rumor. Aside from this, one of the nicest things that has happened since moving back to Yellow Springs is hearing other stories about my parents from residents here. One lady told me she had been in Mom's Girl Scout troop. A gentleman told me how my dad had helped him build a bird house, and still another lady told me that everyone thought my dad would marry my mom's housemate, not Mom!

I love being in Yellow Springs. I was born here and left the village after one year at Bryan High. I returned to Yellow Springs twenty-eight years ago. I am a retired licensed social worker.

THERE IS A SILENCE

by Sandra Love

There is a silence in night crawling over earth
that wraps wide and full around you. If you're awake
it's kind and deep, and fear hovers in a corner, afraid.

There is a silence in the grass stuffed with the blinking
of bugs, undiscovered worms the birds have left,
dropped seeds from all manner of plants and other quiet things
—little firefly lights, the leftovers of locusts.

There is a silence in every room in every building—
while the one who is to speak struggles to the microphone,
adjusts it, sucks air, stands still before delivering a thought.

There is a silence in the gray house in early dawn
when light is still in its womb,
half-awake, escaping slowly from the sun.

This time before time holds the quiet power of creation.

Sandra Love is one of the local writers who restarted the Antioch Writers' Workshop more than thirty years ago. In addition to directing the workshop and serving two terms as president of the AWW board, she has published four children's novels, as well as poetry and short stories in literary magazines and an edited story collection.

Curbside Treasures by Joan Horn

A recent local informational session emphasized the difference between reusing and recycling. I learned a lot, and it got me thinking. Since the piece I wrote for *Ripples* for the June 2015 issue was on "Downsizing," it seems important to demonstrate how reusing has had a positive impact on me over the years. Let's hope this gets you thinking, too.

To set the stage, I have been walking two miles a day with a good friend for the past five or more years. We alternate between her neighborhood and mine in Yellow Springs. It is only natural to notice things along the berm of the roads we traverse. And it is impossible for either of us to ignore interesting "stuff" that might have some usefulness to us at home.

One of the very best of these chance encounters was a large 9'x12' rug that had been tossed on the grass in front of one of the houses we passed regularly. My friend and I unrolled it enough to see the Aztec designs on it, and to see that it seemed unblemished. My friend, Sue, said she'd go home and get her car, take it back to her place, and see if it needed cleaning. She looked forward to having it in her house if it was in tolerable shape.

The next day she reported she and her visiting grandchildren had unrolled it on the grass, hosed and scrubbed it down, and found it in great shape. Unfortunately, it would not fit in her house. I said I'd like to try it. I did, and it has been a thing of beauty in my living room ever since.

Another much smaller item was a large brown leather purse with squares of brightly colored

leather stitched all over one side. It, too, lay on the curb grass of another place. I took it and have been using it almost constantly ever since, glad for the number of pockets and hugeness of the entire thing. It could almost pass for an overnight bag.

Even smaller were the four matched but variegated colors of wine glasses I found on another walk. I've used them for company for years, with no breakage or dissatisfaction.

On one day we happened upon a large box of mini-bags of tiny carrots. Someone must have had a party and simply overestimated how many might be needed. Sue and I loaded our pockets at that stop and enjoyed munching on them for several weeks.

One other enormous benefit of meandering and noticing things along the way was the woman Sue and I bumped into one day who was herself walking toward us, just back from walking the Appalachian Trail and in need of continuing the exercise. Though Orton Road is a far cry from the famous eastern hiking trail, we introduced ourselves and we have been walking together ever since.

It has been very gratifying to watch the various garden beds we pass on our warm-weather strolls and to notice different flowers or shrubbery that is particularly beautiful. There was a day when Sue couldn't walk so I went alone for only a mile, to stretch my legs and breathe deeply of the late summer air. With no conversation to sidetrack my mind, I began noticing the roadside wildflowers. Among the masses were vines of brilliant orange and gold



bittersweet berries, my favorite item of fall, although declared by horticulturists as "not native" and thus a pest that should be eradicated; I am always happy to find a strand that has escaped the clippers or spray of the purists. I managed to snap off a bunch of these berries and they now adorn my coffee table.

One final and thoroughly delightful development in my outdoor rambles has been noticing my neighbor across the street who once brought back my trash can that had been emptied on an early-morning trash truck route. He dropped it beside my garage, then took his own can back to his house. The next week I did the same for him. Since then he and I have alternately carried each other's cans back to our respective houses. Our trash cans have made us friends.

As for the items I have salvaged, I am reusing those glasses, that rug, that purse, and am always on the lookout for other useful treasures that someone else no longer needs or wants. I'm reusing and loving each item.

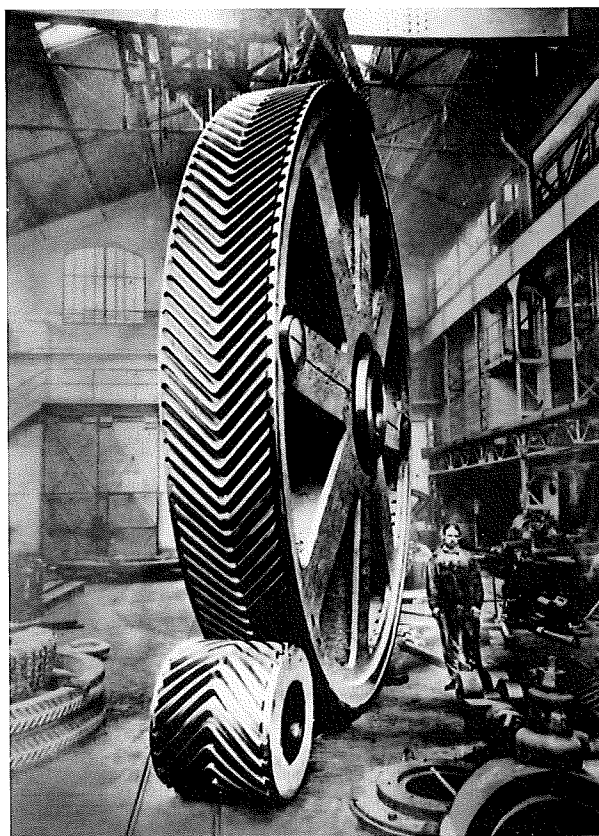
TIN MAN

by John W. Blakelock

Still dark, but some promise of dawn is seeping in.
In the Summer foliage creaking machinery
is stirring, as the feathered descendants of dinosaurs re-tell songs
passed down through a hundred million years of ice ages and tectonic drift:
the warbling trills of Cardinals
perched on the highest twigs
hoping to snag the first ray when Sunrise
spills over the horizon. Their pitch is twisted by Doppler
and varying volumes denote territories
spaced as regularly as cell towers across the treed-terrain
broadcasting frequently
and sounding more electronically-synthesized
than the Robins,
whose plaintive interrogatories plead with their mates
and fledglings awaking from roosts somewhere off in the branches:
please call back
and verify no Raccoon snatched you in the night.

Masters in Biology, cyanobacterial taxonomist. Multi-media performance artist, gardener and stone mason. Employed by the US Census Bureau, and existing by my wits. — John Blakelock

A resident of Yellow Springs since 1955, Joan Horn was a Mills Lawn teacher for ten years, and the director of the Glen Helen Outdoor Education Center for eighteen. She authored a book about Walter Anderson, former music director at Antioch College, Playing On All the Keys. She has served on the Village Council and Antioch College's Alumni Board, and been active on many other Yellow Springs committees. Her latest efforts were for Home, Inc. and the Senior Center.



*Machinery of the Morning
Photo by Michel Annemarie,
Citroen Communications, 1926
provided by John Blakelock*

Yellow Springs Center Stage Remembered

by Dinah Anderson

I participated in the Yellow Springs Center Stage enterprise in the late '70s. Jean Hooper cast me in *Godspell*, and I came to respect her as a force of nature. Her leadership, I believe, was responsible for the superior quality of productions. She was not always adored but was respected for her knowledge of every aspect of theater and her talent as an actress and director. In *Godspell*, I was assigned to sing "Turn Back, Oh Man," undeniably a sexy "vamp" piece. Lynn Hardman, my daughter's best friend, said she was aghast when her best friend's MOTHER came down from the stage and strolled up and down the aisles in fishnet tights and a wicked 'fro!

In my experience a play's cast and crew, whether professional or school or community theater, interact with each other daily for four to six weeks or longer. One gets to know those folks intimately; most you love and some you vow you'll never work with again! When the relationships work, it is magical. When they don't, one's professionalism is called forth. Despite our all being volunteers, we demanded professionalism of ourselves. When an Antioch student in the ensemble cast of *Godspell* failed to show for too many rehearsals, I lost my cool and addressed that failing on her part. Jean was not too happy with me as the kid was a cutie and definitely needed to round out that cast.

In 1978, I directed a "meller drammer," *Pure as the Driven Snow*. I arrived at the theater

one Saturday morning when every square inch of the theater was buzzing with activity. Danny Schiff and Julie Steinhilber were painting the olio acts curtain. Pat Ronald, Joan Evans, Becky Eschliman, and others were working on costumes. All the Livingston family, all the Rose Family, two Peyroux children, Millard Mier, and others were working on the set. Jimmy Rose was tech director for that show and remarked that there couldn't have been a busier, happier place in town that morning.

Walt McCaslin reviewed *Pure in the Dayton Daily News*. While he gently panned the play, he was enthralled with the olio act performed by Winkie Mullins, Hadley Kenton, and Medusa (a big old boa constrictor in residence at the Antioch School) doing a belly dance together! Nearly 100 villagers of all ages worked in that show, and we wondered if there would be any left for an audience. It turned out to be no problem as the kith and kin of that "cast of thousands" swelled the house to full for most performances and stayed for the whole thing!! It ran way too long. I have a photo of the "Petite Chou Chou Girls" in front of the olio act curtain singing "Don't Bring Lulu." All the olio acts were ador-



Terry Ronald and Becky Eschliman in *Playboy of the Western World*

able and I hadn't the heart to cut a single one.

I had played Pegeen Mike, the female lead in John Millington Synge's *Playboy of the Western World* in 1961 at the Menlo Park, California, Community Theater. I was delighted when my application to direct that play for Center Stage was accepted. Bill Ferrell was assistant director and Judy Rose was stage manager. Approximately seventy-five good souls were involved in *Playboy*, which starred Terry Ronald, Leon Holster, Olivia Gladman, and Becky Eschliman as Pegeen. Becky's magnificent curtain speech was: "Oh my grief. I've lost him. I've

A WIDOW'S SONG

by Martie Jensen

lost the only Playboy of the Western World!!!!" as she sank to her knees, facing the audience, downstage left (with feeling). Terry, an Englishman, helped us all with the Irish accent. Because he was on stage for most of the show, the audience heard him and reckoned the rest of cast's Irish was good enough. *Playboy* got rave reviews. It helps to have a great script and a great cast.

Jim Pierce took on building and dressing a perfect set for *Playboy*. It was two nights before opening, and that set was still mighty bare. With only a slight edge of hysteria, I said, "I'm just wondering, Jim honey, if we're gonna have a fully dressed set for this play?" And he replied, wistfully, while twirling a lock of his curly hair, "Dinah darling, do not worry yourself. It will evolve—" And, as always, it did, principally because he was willing to stay up all night working on it. It was that kind of devotion that made Yellow Springs Center Stage a remarkable example of community theater.

Having lived in YSO in the 60s and 70s, Dinah and her husband, David, decided to retire to YSO in 2007. She is about to take a role in Much Ado About Nothing, produced by the YS Theatre Company this summer in between work in her dahlia garden.

If someone loved me,
I would wake up and sing.
If someone loved me,
I would smile in the evening.
But I am old,
And my lovers are dead.
My children love me,
And my cats sit with me;
So why complain?
But if someone loved me,
I would sing in the morning
And smile in the evening
And love him.

CHOKA FOR THE BLACK CAT

by Martie Jensen

It's too early, Max;
The birds have barely started.
You want your head scratched.
Sitting beside me, purring,
With your big green eyes,
But I want to sleep some more.
Oh well, come close. I'll do it.

Martie Jensen has lived in Yellow Springs since 1952 except for a few years in California. She raised four children in the Vale. She was a nursery school teacher and a medical technologist and now lives in town.

LOCAL LEVITY
by Joan Champie

There was an old lady from Xenia
Who thought she had osteopenia
Her doctor said, "No,
I don't think that's so
It's merely a touch of anemia."

Glen Helen doesn't have brown bears
The trail won't be crossed by white hares
But I know
When you go
You really (sigh) will notice the stairs.

A handsome young fellow named Harry
Applied for a job at Young's Dairy
He worked for a week
But left like a streak
Having eaten four gallons of strawberry.

In beautiful old Clifton Mill
The menu is delightful still
If someone takes
Buckwheat pancakes
His tummy will certainly fill.

When Jill was a student at Antioch
She treated her toes to Birkenstock
No more flip flops
Or black high tops
But she kept her fine purple crocs.

(Disclaimer to the reviewers):
I tend to think in limericks
For this there aren't any tricks
If I take the time
For rhythm and rhyme
The verse immediately clicks.

I could drive ten miles to Target
Or walk five blocks to Tom's Market
It's not very far
No need for a car
And none of the bother to park it.

I am a retired professional oboist, deaf educator, pilot, juggler. As a two-year resident of Yellow Springs, I keep busy with volunteer work, knitting, music, reading, and walking (not at the same time). On my 60th birthday I made a parachute jump, on my 70th I flew a Stearman, and on my 80th did a bike ride in the high Rockies. I look forward to celebrating the next decade with a hike in the Glen.

Reflections by Karen Wolford

A Sled Ride by Marguerite Heston

When I accepted the position of executive director at the Yellow Springs Senior Center I was a bit apprehensive, I have to admit. Apprehensive because I didn't live in Yellow Springs and I had never worked at a Senior Center before. My first few weeks were interesting. I remember standing in front of Tom's Market and a villager looked at me and said, and I am paraphrasing, "I cannot believe the Senior Center hired someone who does not live here." I constantly heard, "You're not from here?" I found myself replying: "I live only fifteen miles away and it takes me only twenty or so minutes to get here." Or, "I just live on the other side of the Air Force base." I left each day wondering if I'd made a mistake.

However, much to my delight I found the membership of the Senior Center very welcoming. Without the elders who welcomed me with open arms, I think I might have just gone home and stayed there. Eventually, I think others came around. Why? Because today, almost three years later, I can find myself in front of or in Tom's Market and I am greeted by name and I can greet others by name, too. And the questions about where I'm from are practically nonexistent. Now people just want to know when I am going to move to the village.

Karen Wolford has been the executive director of the Yellow Springs Senior Center for three years. She lives in the Huber Heights area and enjoys the drive to and from Yellow Springs each day, even in the snow.

Everyone has a favorite uncle who tells great stories to the youngsters. Mine was Uncle Auggie. Uncle Auggie reminds me of Santa Claus without the beard and the red suit. He sits in a hunting jacket and a ball cap cocked crooked on his bald head. Under his blond eyelashes his blue eyes twinkle, and when he laughs, it's a soft laugh that travels down to his man-sized tummy and shakes it.

He leans back in his chair as he laughs and he feels the fun of it all through his body. Sometimes at the height of this fun he slaps his knee. He is nearly eighty-five, but he has the humor of a teenager. He makes the people in the stories come alive, with his enthusiasm and colorful descriptions. This particular story is when Auggie is young and takes place in the coal-mining camps in south central Iowa during the prohibition days in the 1920s. The miners' houses were one-room tarpaper shacks, arranged in mud road streets built around a coal mine with a huge slack pile, a company store, a saloon, and a dance hall. Augie's family, the Dernovichs, lived in a house with a hill in back with neighbors on either side and across the street. Mother and Father Dernovich had around nine children at that time—Mary, Eva, Anna, Agnes, Vance, August, Frank, Catherine, Julia, and the baby, Vera, made ten. The hill behind their house that winter was packed down with snow. Auggie was given a brand new sled (probably a red racer) not for the frivolous purpose of sledding, but to haul

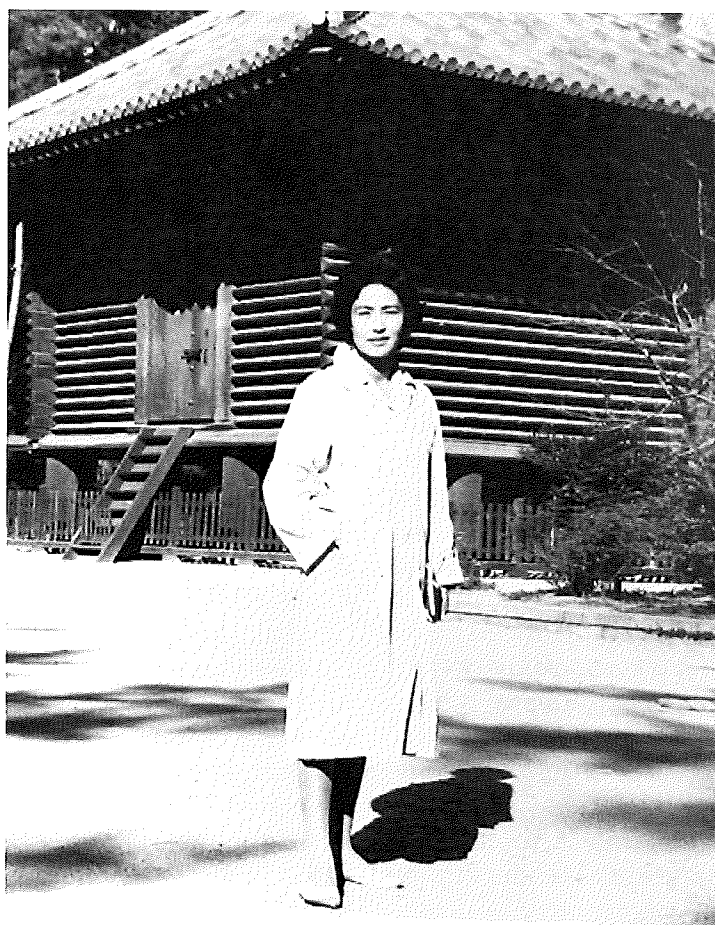
coal from the slack pile to use in their stove to heat the house and cook the meals. After he stowed the coal inside Auggie could not resist that snow-packed hill. As he headed toward the hill he passed by the clothesline, two poles about fifteen feet apart, holding two wires stretching between the two poles. Seeing him start up the hill his sister Julia came running out of the house and followed him up the hill. As he took a slam with the sled going down the hill, Julia jumped on back. It was a very steep hill and Julia was prone to get scared. Auggie, of course, was guiding the sled with a hand on each side of the holding bar. When Julia got scared and yelled "Don't run into the clothesline pole!", she grabbed the metal bar in front of the wooden guide bar. If Auggie was to turn the guide to miss the pole he would squeeze her hand; so he yelled "Get your fingers out of the bar!" As they whizzed down the hill only seconds from the pole, Julia screamed as Auggie tried to turn, only to squeeze her fingers. She pulled them out just in time and rolled off the sled. But Auggie couldn't turn fast enough. He flew off the sled into the clothesline pole, conked his head and passed out. Julia got up, coolly brushed the snow from her coat, and walked away.

I am eighty-five and have lived in Yellow Springs for three years. My husband and I moved here from Hartford, Ind. to be in the same town as my daughter and her family. I am active in the Y S Senior Center.

Iko-san by Harold Wright

Long time YS resident Ikuko Orimo Wright passed away April 28, 2015. Known to many as "Iko" or "Iko-san" she was one of the original owners of The Winds Café. Later she opened another restaurant, called Iko's Harmony Café, in the Oten Gallery of Yellow Springs. Her final days were spent near our daughter Larina Wright Benson of Midway, Utah. The following is a translation of an interview in Japanese I did with her years ago in Kyoto where we both lived at one time. I asked her to share some of her memories of WWII.

Iko: "When I thought of the war, I felt that it really had nothing to do with me. Maybe it was started over a hatred of China or something, but I really felt that I had nothing do with it. I felt it had nothing to do with Christianity. We grew up Christians. We were supposed to love everybody, to love each other. Maybe I was the only person to feel that way. I had no feeling for the nation or our nationality. So when the war started and everyone was saying 'Oh it is terrible. This country this, and that country that. . .' I just felt that the war needed to be over. It needed to be over! Then the war started with America. I still felt that it had nothing to do with me. The thing that concerned me most was that those young men that went to our church and sang in the choir, those fine young men were being drafted. The Japanese government took them away. That was sad. The thing that I regretted losing most, the most important thing to any young girl, was my youth. The boys were all drafted and we were not permit-



ted to wear nice clothes. That was the time we Japanese were supposed to be falling in love, even kissing, but our hearts and our feeling were taken from us. This is what I mean by 'lost youth.' Every night, and I do mean every night, there was the sound of sirens going off and during the day everyone had to go do some kind of a forced labor job for the government. Every night the sound of sirens! And then we had to run to the air raid shelters. There in those deep dark holes we young girls would sit.

"But it was there I would tell them the story of Schubert."

HW: "Schubert the composer?"

Iko: "Yes, Schubert. There was this movie called *The Unfinished Symphony*. I loved that movie. And everyone in the air raid shelters kept asking me to tell them the story, and I would. I'd even hum or sing all the music. Now Schubert was so poor that he even had to take his violin to the pawn shop. Now this pawn shop owner had a daughter who fell in love with Schubert. So when he would be walking to school, where he taught, past the girl's window there would be something drop! A note! And then he would turn and look, and there she was! It

was then he composed the song 'Hedge Roses' and I would sing the song in German, 'Sah ein Knab' ein Röslein seth'n. Röslein auf der Haiden' (Once a boy spied a rose in a hedge row growing . . .)

"Now Schubert was a teacher in the local school and was supposed to be teaching math, but he would get confused. He would write '1/4' on the blackboard, intending to present an arithmetic problem, but it would turn into the score of a song and the '1/4' would become a quarter note. So he would end up teaching the song to his students. Now the kids that were doing the singing for the movie were the Vienna Boys Choir. They were great! *Sah ein Knab ein Röslein stuh'n, Röslein auf der Haiden.* [Iko would again sing the German.] Just then the principal would be rushing in, glaring at Schubert through his glasses and yell, 'What is going on in here?'

"About then the siren would sound 'All Clear' and we could go home. But then the children in the bomb shelter were disappointed. [laughter!]

"Then that day we had to go off and do our jobs, oh those stupid useless jobs! But then the next night the air raid sirens would sound again and we would run to the shelters. The kids would shout, 'Go on! Go on!' and I would have to continue telling about Schubert. Then finally at the very end, I would sing 'Ave Maria' in a sad voice. And the picture would end with the couple walking past a statue of the Blessed Virgin to the music of 'Ave Maria.'

"The next night again the air raid sirens and the kids would shout again 'Schubert! Schubert! Tell it from the beginning again!'

"So I would start. You see, the movie opened with the frame

of the film tilted, and the image would rock, back and forth, back and forth, this way and that. Then you could see that it was actually a picture of a framed painting that was being carried on a person's back. The picture was moving because the man was walking. The man was Schubert, and he was taking the painting to the pawn shop. I would then sing the bouncy music to accompany the walking scene. I loved that movie and you know I saw it five times! My whole family loved music so we went to see that Schubert film a lot. Now in Japan at that time there was no TV or anything so if you liked a movie you went to see it a lot. So I knew the story well, and do you know I told that one story over and over again, night after night, until the end of the war. Oh, it took a long time to tell it. I would add all the music, even the symphony 'dah, dah, dah' [she hums].

"I was about fifteen at the time and I wanted the children and my friends to have a good memory of the war. I didn't care what the teachers said. I would teach children hymns and even English songs. Kids were supposed to be singing war songs! Why, I even taught them 'Church in the Wildwood.' I guess I was really naive, but I didn't get punished. I learned those songs at the mission school I attended. So when I went to our regular school I taught the kids all the songs I knew. But in the air raid shelters it was Schubert."

P. S. World War II came to an end on August 15, 1945, in Japan. The date is remembered by many Japanese living at the time since everyone was ordered to listen to a radio address by the Emperor announcing acceptance of the

defeat. A published translation of his spoken words begins with:

"To our good and loyal subjects: After pondering deeply the general trends of the world and the actual conditions obtaining in our empire today, we have decided to effect a settlement of the present situation by resorting to an extraordinary measure.

"We have ordered our Government to communicate to the Governments of the United States, Great Britain, China and the Soviet Union that our empire accepts the provisions of their joint declaration. To strive for the common prosperity and happiness of all nations as well as the security and well-being of our subjects is the solemn obligation which has been handed down by our imperial ancestors and which we lay close to the heart. . . ."

Most Japanese could not understand anything he said since he spoke in a stilted language, used only in the Imperial Court. It was the first time Emperor Hirohito ever spoke to the people on the radio! Iko-san, listening at the time, like many others only knew the long and awful war was OVER! She often told her friends, "My only thought was 'Now I can wear nice dresses and wear make-up again.'"

Harold Wright is Professor Emeritus of Japanese language, literature, and culture at Antioch College. A poet himself, he has received awards for his translations of both ancient and modern Japanese poetry. He and his wife Jonatha continue to be active in the world of storytelling. Harold's former wife, Iko Wright, featured in this story, and their daughter, Larina, lived in Yellow Springs for many years. Rose Wright, Larina's sister, currently lives in Yellow Springs.

Side by Side by Joyce McCurdy

As the stage manager in Wilder's Our Town describes the streets and businesses in Grover's Corner, so too, I am laying out Yellow Springs mid twentieth-century. The village is both practical and radical.

The Practical Village

Yellow Springs was a very practical open-air strip of 1950-styled shops inclined on Dayton Street and Xenia Avenue. My father-in-law owned The Mart, a ladies' clothing boutique. Individually owned shops provided daily needs and services. Two dry cleaners, several barbershops, salons hinted that not all businesses were welcome to all. In the movement for civil rights, the segregation issues remained present. Resistance to the Little Art barrier had long ago been removed. However, this action, along with the successful barbershop protest, hinted that the understood restrictions were crumbling.

Furay's Variety Store, Erbaugh and Johnson's Drug Store, Miami Deposit Bank, Deaton's Hardware, and Luttrell's met all practical needs in one-stop shopping with no need to go out of town. Several eateries competed for the lunch trade: Glen Café, Dick and Tom's, Ye Old Trail Tavern, Gabby's Barbecue. SO-HIO and Bonded provided gas and air. John Ott's Imports from South America and India was the only shop singularly different, with a strange ambiance. Paisley bedspreads covered the walls; incense wafted; merchandise scat-

tered here and there allowing the customers to search in barrels filled with Indian thonged brown leather sandals never mated or rummage in the box of brightly colored scarves. Shopping was a journey offering an exotic lure at a time when travel was not as pervasive and far-reaching as now.

More traditionally, the Epic Bookshop's mustiness transfixed any bibliophile who vicariously could while away an hour or so. The Masonic Lodge was next door above Luttrell's and the Odd Fellow beyond the Little Art, where the kilted manager, always with his small dog, provided foreign films for one dollar. In Kieth's Alley was the newspaper office where the Champney family, friends, and Keith Howard hand set the presses and printed weekly events.

Near the Post Office with its WPA mural, on Dayton Street, Baldwin's car lot and dealership lay across from Shelly's Party Store. This was small town USA but it was also a microcosm of a larger metropolis, hence the nickname, the village.

The Controversial Village

At lunch the downtown benches' occupants and their spontaneous conversation were definitive. Antioch Bookplate workers discussed the politics of the day; brown bags or large shiny metal lunch boxes lined the walk. The conversation was as jaunty as their attire: head bands, bandanas, overalls, individualistic

beards, very working class. Almost all employees were vocal believers in a cause so entangled in their resume that the likelihood of working elsewhere was impossible. The vehemence toward McCarthy still tormented some; the scars were still visible. Others recently had returned from the Mississippi Project, some were members of SNCC. The older persons were WWII pacifists or internment camp and holocaust survivors. Their present concern was to educate all the young men of Y. S. seeking deferments or CO status before being drafted for Viet Nam. Many employees were carefully selected by Ernest Morgan to provide job security to those who fought for social justice. The employee assortment was a candy box of controversy. The conversations were an essential part of the daily schedule. This was politics in action. At a time when not more than fifteen minutes of media news was broadcast, reading was essential. The accuracy and speed of information was sluggish by today's standards. Organizational skills were public forums announced on purple mimeographed leaflets. Thus, conversation was a hub of the community which swayed between the left and the right yet listened to all points of view. This dialogue began on the benches and continued in formal debates. Bookplate was first amendment in action, so enlightening. Now this building is Bonadies, where the stained glass, too, gives radiance of sunshine to the soul.

In his book *Dealing Creatively*



The Antioch Bookplate Company, Xenia Avenue, c. 1956. Courtesy of Antiochiana, Antioch College

with Life, in the chapter “The Human Side of Business,” Ernest Morgan explicitly stated that “The purpose of a business is to serve human needs.” He confided what he found most challenging, rewarding, and creative was the unfolding of relationships with people with whom he worked in his business. His doors were open to all, the homeless, the needy, Native Americans, artists, refugees, and protesters; he embraced persons who were barred from employment elsewhere. Some slept on the desks all night; others were mentored by Morgan.

Learning about the Bookplate’s open hiring practice, I recalled how frightening was the list that the college department of education gave us during student teaching. It stated if anyone either consciously or unconsciously joined any of the listed groups, he/she would jeopardize his/her’s license and forever be unemployable. This fear, a carryover from the television series *I Led Three Lives*, starring Herbert Philbrick, in the nineteen fifties, was stuck in my mind like a benign cyst, a fear not threatening

but still present. Former associates rolled their eyes, looked askance, and questioned my sanity when I began working in Yellow Springs. After all, HUAC of Ohio and later McCarthy had questioned several Antioch administrators and professors. The falsifications of Harvey M. Matusow, Antioch’s educational principle of an open forum, and demonstrations for peace—all contributed to the community’s “pinko” label. Although President MacGregor assured us that the investigation proved that the college was a forum for academic freedom, relatives and friends whispered to me that perhaps job reconsideration would be advisable. I countered these remarks by pointing out that many students’ parents worked at WPAFB and quite a few farmed and raised hogs and livestock.

At my former high school, the principal had told the social studies department that no mention of communism could be made unless the comments were unfavorable. A teacher had been fired for teaching a banned book, and the student-purchased copies were

collected and dropped into the incinerator by the principal. With these prudent examples stamped on my mind, I saw that this controversy was present everywhere: Yellow Springs, Springfield, and the nation.

Across from Bookplate, a short-lived business with a red door, now the window at Earth Rose, was the Big Bill Haywood Bookstore. The radical pamphlets, Red Books, and IWW literature fascinated my sense of history but the fear of losing my livelihood for a seventy-five-cent membership in the IWW was so threatening that I avoided entering the store. This paranoia had been internalized during the Cold War and the McCarthy hearings. Therefore, the bookplate workers and the radical bookstore stood out so dramatically. This observation almost fifty years past showed that an openness existed that had been squelched elsewhere. The community did not pigeonhole information; ideas were relished by some, tolerated by others, as well as vigorously disclaimed.

The town was an anthology—so many viewpoints, so many stories, so many beliefs. As I became familiar with Yellow Springs, I understood the variety of ideas complemented each other. Conformity homogenizes; openness liberates.

Joyce McCurdy taught sixth through twelfth graders during what she considered peak times of Yellow Springs. She taught for forty-four years and used stories like this in the classroom as examples of community life.

Finding a Home with Lot 11

by Jean Payne

In 1827, when the forests were still dense with unscarred timber and a two-day travel was needed to reach the Ohio River, Elisha Mills took his family and moved to Greene County. Known as an area for its beauty and waters, it had only 780 people who lived in Miami Township. A colony of Owenite Society members had abandoned their dreams of a utopian life so the land and cabins were resold to Elisha. The Millses worked hard to expand their holdings. In time they developed other businesses as well.

By the 1840s Elisha and his son William became one of the wealthiest families in both land holdings and influences.

In 1845, William persuaded the cash-strapped Little Miami Railroad project to be completed, thus connecting Sandusky to Springfield to Cincinnati (with new funding and a slight change in plans to swing through Yellow Springs). Deciding in 1853 to subdivide some of his property into streets and lots, William sold the lots from \$150 and up. Yellow Springs' population in 1850 was 138. By 1856 it reached 1,000. The price of lots, if you could find an empty lot for sale in town, skyrocketed. Fourteen parcels of land (one of these lots, Lot 11 Parcel 23, we'll see about later) were sold by William and Ann Eliza Mills to John Wharton for \$6,121.75. Wharton sold off most of the lots, but held on to a few, including Lot 11.

Sold to John Wharton on August 3, 1854, but not yet developed, Lot 11's frontage aligned

with Xenia Avenue. It remained an empty lot until 1860 when tax records show the value of the property jumps up to \$1100. John Wharton and then Sarah Wharton owned the property and Federal style brick house until 1876. From then on it was owned by Mary B. Conover (1877 for \$2511), Lillie May Porterfield (1913 for \$1150), Eugene C. Porterfield (1936), Mary H. Young (1937 for \$1350), Norwood L. Young (1941 for \$1350), Frank Leo DeWine (1942 for \$1350), Belle DeWine (1946 for \$5680), Thelma Chenault (numbers from tax records).

The Senior Center originally resided in the Yellow Springs Opera House. On January 20, 1959, a Senior Citizens Committee, including Chairman Arthur E. Morgan, petitioned Yellow Springs Council to withdraw plans of demolishing the Yellow Springs Opera House on Dayton Street and allow the recently formed group to use the seventy-year-old building for a social center, workshop, and classroom. Classes in embroidery, refinishing furniture, weaving, quilt making, and wood working were announced.

By September of that year, the state fire marshal declared the building unsafe. Repairs and updating the heating system would be too expensive for the village budget. The Senior Center would have to find a new home. Luckily there was some space in another lot once owned by William Mills and then John Wharton. It was downtown and on Xenia Avenue.

The Senior Center moved to

Lot 7 on March 31, 1960 at 231-½ Xenia Avenue. It shared other retail spaces with the Elsewhere Bookstore and rental apartments (now the Emporium) until after 1977.

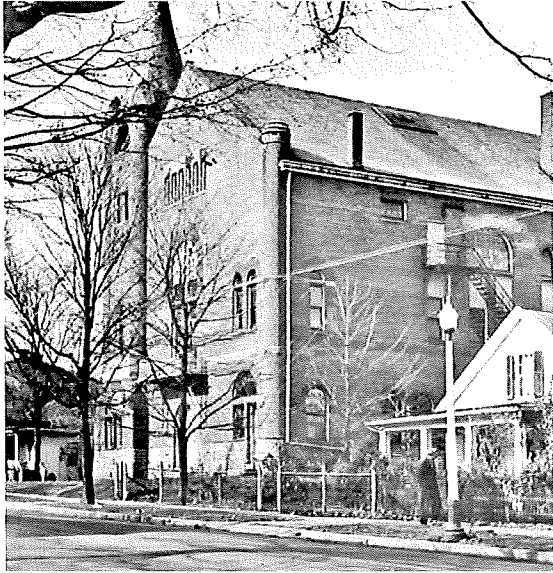
Next door to the Senior Center is Lot 11, the residence and shop (Casa Peru) of Thelma Chenault. After Mrs. Chenault's death in 1976 Lot 11 seemed only fitting to be the permanent home for the Senior Center. Surveyed and numbered by William Mills, a witness to the growth of a small town struggling up out of the forest, it is a place to stop and rest . . . and to share some histories.

Part of a poem, written by Louise Peale, in the June 1978 Senior Center newsletter:

A THOUGHT FOR OUR FRIENDS

Faith, hard work, and courage
Has made our dream come true,
We now have a new home
The former Casa Peru.

Jean Payne, daughter of Mildred and John McConville, is a member of the Yellow Springs Historical Society. Now retired from the Fels Longitudinal Study as a senior data collection specialist, she spends her time documenting cemeteries and researching genealogies.



Yellow Springs Opera House, Dayton Street
 Photo courtesy Antiochiana, Antioch College



Lot 11, 227 Xenia Avenue
 Greene County Auditor Web Page

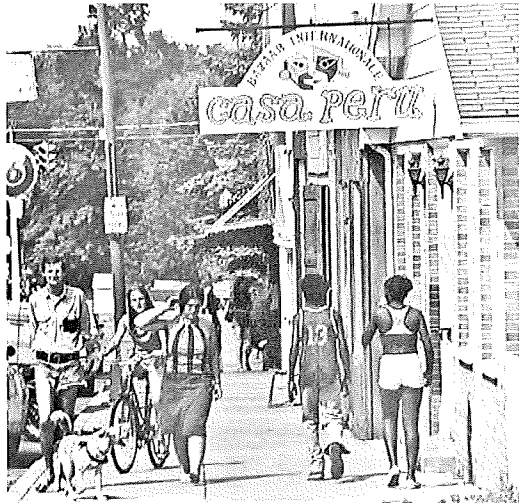
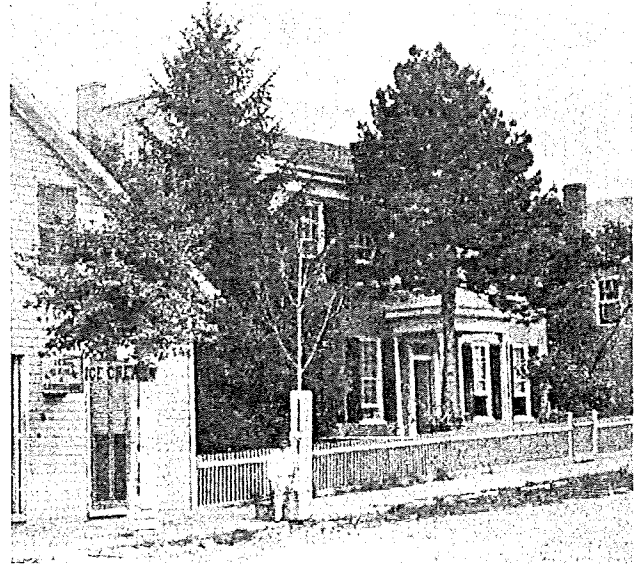


Photo courtesy of Antiochiana, Antioch College



227 Xenia Avenue Kahoe Glass Negatives Collection



Lot 7 Greene County Auditor Web Page



225 and 227 Xenia Avenue J. M. Payne

Two Police Stops circa 1957 by Joyce McCurdy

East High Street Police Stop

Leaving Evans Stadium in the robin-egg-blue and creamy white Chevy, we shivered in the autumn chill of early November. Turning on the heater, we were warm and glad that we were not walking in the frosty chill, more noticeable now that we were no longer hunched in the stadium seats, drinking hot chocolate and shouting the rhythmic responsive Wildcats chants shouted by the gold and blue cheerleaders. How adult I felt driving home with "him" while others were taking the bus or walking. My so-special smile shined as we pulled slowly out of the parking lot and joined the traffic on Clifton Avenue.

At the corner, Pat swayed to the curb and rolled the window down slightly, shouting at three young men, "Do you want a ride?" Their quick acceptance was followed by Pat's welcoming "Jump in." Using the back door, they slid over the cold leather seats. With a quick introduction, I learned they had gone to St. Joseph School and played with Pat near Mill Run and the RR tracks along East Street. We turned left to Limestone Street and soon were in Springfield's downtown.

As we turned right on East High, we noticed a cruiser behind the car. Passing St. Raphael's Church, the flashing reddish, glaring light and startling siren made my stomach tighten in cold fear and questions swirled randomly like a finger painting in my mind. What had we done? What was wrong—a light out, a

low tire, a curfew issue, a probation violation? Why? Pat was not speeding. He did not irregularly swerve. He did not go through a yellow light. He made the proper hand turn signal. The lights appeared to be working. The reason was non-existent.

The two officers recognized Pat by name and asked him to step out of the car. Reese and Swords were juvenile detectives and were as well known to Springfield youth as Officer Krupke in *West Side Story* was to the Sharks and Jets. They asked Pat to get in their cruiser not acknowledging any of the passengers. They shone a light through the car to get a better look, but nothing was said.

The four of us were silent, but I thought that the three friends wanted to get out and walk, but they knew that would be too suspicious. Tension and nervousness forced us to remain as silent as the officers had been. The traffic stop seemed endless. Each minute passed so slowly as we waited for the cruiser door to open. By this time, my armpits were damp with sweat, and my mouth parched. I was convinced that Pat was being tested for something unknown. My mind methodically listed possible crimes he might have done, whom he might have angered, and then I visualized the imminent court case. With the sentence rendered, I wanted to weep; my eyes moistened. The fear swiftly turned to rage. I angrily thought that this police stop ruined a beautiful evening. Now Pat would be taken home to face his parents. Just as these mad rev-

eries were capturing my sensibilities, the sound of a door returned me to reality. Looking through the rain-smearred window, drizzling with icy frost, Pat appeared without a ticket in his free hands, without a smile on his face, but also without contriteness. By the time he opened the door, he was actually showing annoyance as he said, "They were just making a check." Laughing, he said, "They thought I was on probation."

"Bet you were frightened," his friends said.

"Hell no, I was not scared, I knew everything was ok. Stupid; they just had nothing else to do."

After dropping the guys at Mound Street, Pat confided what had happened and began apologizing to me. "I'm sorry. I couldn't say why I was stopped. The police told me that I did not treat you properly because they said, 'no self-respecting white boy would let a nice girl ride in a car with three black boys.' If you were not a tramp, it was dumb for me to compromise you."

Police Stop on Corry Street

In 1957, a robin-egg-blue and creamy white Chevy belted down Corry Street at a high rate of speed in a drag race with a 1930s truck with a rebuilt engine. Its body was not the traditional black; now its brilliance, especially in the sun, was a vibrant turquoise blue sheen, hand waxed, glistening like a polished silver heirloom. After hours in a garage revamping this truck, the earnest mechanic, Michael, now wanted

to challenge a contemporary vehicle to test his effort. No bets, no loss of title, just a test to show that this older truck was competitive with GM's finest. The race was just competitive, but a winner would have bragging rights. The crowd, fascinated with James Dean movies and *Hot Rod* magazines, watched the race hoping their pick would be the victor.

Before reaching Allen Street, a siren was heard, and an older, large black cruiser appeared with lights flashing. As both cars halted, the officer stepped out and cheerily asked, "What are you doing?" No ire, no gruffness, just an inquiry that seemed self-explanatory. The garbled group explanations were neither well-thought-out responses nor articulate ones. Shaking his head in bewilderment, the officer almost laughed at the confusion. Yet, his dignity, his height, his authority commanded respect without coercing it. He in turn remained open, made no assumptions, treated the group as if we were at a family picnic. Succinctly, he softly said, "This is not the way we do things in Yellow Springs."

No ticket given; no parents called; no stern rebukes rendered. He suggested that we drive carefully and reminded us that racing was against the law. That was the first time that I met Jim McKee, a kind, capable man who gave respect to others. When I pass Forest Glen and see his flag waving, I feel he's still on duty caring for the village he served for many years.

Several years later, now police chief, in fact the first black police chief in an Ohio community, McKee's demeanor was constant; his behavior was open and objective. His planned reaction was to not overreact to the demonstrations as he had shown

earlier at the Gegner barbershop. The newspaper remarked that what could have been ugly, like the violence later in Birmingham and Selma, was orderly and balanced.

McKee's oversight made the non-violent protest an example nationally. He upheld the rights of protesters both for and against integration of the business. His personal views did not interfere with his official duties. Nearby youth filled with spite and hatred came looking for a fight and these bullies met McKee, who likely asked them the same question we heard in 1957: "What are you doing?" This inquiry was followed by an explanation of what they could do and pointed out the line where they could stand as supporters of segregation. The looking-for-a-fight "tuffs" shook their heads, quite shocked when he countered their bellicose remarks with calmness and respect. The Clockwork Orange mates were bewildered when he said, "We do not do things like that in Yellow Springs" and considered his comment as a brain game to deflate their lust for violence. They stood behind the line, no longer inciting and poking at the protesters, and now they resorted to chanting the brittle words of prejudice. Chief McKee's courageous ability to verbally defuse an angry crowd was as skillful as a specialist's who disables aimed explosives or clears mine fields.

Several years later when I was teaching eighth-grade U. S. History, the class did a local history unit to parallel what happened here with the nation's history. Chief McKee gladly held an open forum with the students, and he continued to do so annually until his retirement. His family-like demeanor was not intimidating;



*Police Chief James A. McKee.
Photo courtesy of Karen McKee.*

his sense that his work was worthwhile was understood. However, he emotionally remembered cases sometimes overwhelming and often sad. His patience, compassion, and simplicity was steadfast and rendered respect without coercing. After retirement, his fatherly concern for the village evolved into forming the Men's Group, later renamed James A. McKee Association, with the intent to provide opportunity for young black men and women. His concern for excellence recognized principles of his strong faith and love of the community. He fostered black men and women to run for offices locally, and to be informed voters. Community policing was his model and he encouraged others to travel the community with conversation, a pleasant nod or handshake. A local poet captured this image; while walking in the snow late at night, he was greeted by name

(continued on page 18)

Dog Days by Dee Krieg

Well, you see, I'm here three days a week. She drops me off on her way to work and picks me up around three when she's finished. Yeh, I kind of like it here, lots to do, the people here give us balls to play with, they feed us what they call Rainbow Pellets Canine Nutrients of all kinds, and we each have our Pooch Cubbies. Those are little boxes where they put our doggie sweaters or raincoats if we wear them and guess what?

There's even a Pooch Safe where, you guessed it, that snotty poodle Princess Patricia Powderface out of Horace the Powerful has her diamond, Yes! collar carefully removed and stashed when we all go out for Puppy Play in the morning and afternoon. I, as a matter of fact, don't go near her, I heard her whisper to that tiny critter, Camilla Louise Chihuahua, that she doesn't think much of us Labs and I'm mixed to boot. Yep, that's what they say, mixed up with an Alaskan Husky, now that makes me proud and frankly, that's why even though I have a nice rust heavy coat with curls on

the back my face is Black, Gray, and White and I look like a Wolf! Honest, I'm kinda proud of that and I know the people I live with like the way I look, they hug me and slip me Puppy Patties sometimes before suppertime.

Oh, her name is Jolandy with a Yo and he calls her Jazzy YoYo and his name is Joshua and she calls him Jumping Jack. Don't Ask! I have my own Puppy Cushion in the living room and another in their bedroom and man, it is cozy. Then on Saturdays we all go to the Pup Park, I know, you think just because I'm 102 pounds I'm not really a pup but I'm still growing even though Jazzy and Jumping Jack sometimes roll their eyes and get the furniture glue out again. Anyhoo, we go to the Pup Park and it is all kinds, big, little, skinny and fat, teensy, playing with balls, racing, you can watch a few who are shy, just like people, really, they hang back but it is fun and good for our pup circulation and hair quality, that's what I hear and ya' know, what I also notice is these people sorta' hang out in twos and threes and I hear them discussing which are the pest pup obedience classes to go to, is the neighborhood preferable, and then, after obedience, what doggie day camps should we go to, will they train us pups in Best Pup Practice and Pup Socialization and train us to wear Puppy Panties if we, uh, you know, all over the house, and especially, they decide who we should play with when we come to the Pup Park because, well, I guess they think of the fu-

ture and then, if any pup has a birthday we are sure to get invited and not be left out, although I myself sorta' like just making friends with whoever races past me except, of course, that Princess Powderface, got here this morning and she had a diamond earclip on, I kid you not, and she was prancing around in front of that big black poodle Happy Harold out of Thor Thunderburg and I just pretended I was busy snuggling up to Mitzie Muffet that cute floppy-eared pup who seems to take a shine to me so we run around together and grab the balls although I know I heard them muttering something about "spade" when we pass by but I can't imagine what gardening has to do with us and so, you can tell I lead a pretty good dog's life, don't I?

After fifty-two years of living, learning, and loving in Yellow Springs, I moved to Seattle in 2005 and live next door to my family, Pip McCaslin, Rebecca Sikes, and Marley Sikes-McCaslin. I've continued to host informal writers' groups in community centers, bookstores, and bars/restaurants. These are not workshops; we read, gently critique, and laugh a lot.

Two Police Stops, continued

by Chief McKee walking the beat near the Miami Deposit Bank.

Both police stops were in 1957; yet they reflect values and actions that are relevant today. The media attention now to race-related stops and policing styles prompted me to write this story, as well as honoring Chief James A. McKee.

RAIN

by Pat Stempfly

I love to be alone under my umbrella while the world gets
wet and rain pounds every step

I love to slop the puddles as my shoes become boats and
my socks take a swim

I love the gentle early morning rain at my window

I love the pitter-patter of rain on my head

I love the late night rain on the roof

I love the rain smell before it starts

I love the earth smell after it stops

I love the rain that refreshes and renews me

I love the rain that grows gardens and waters trees

I love the rain that puts a rainbow in my heart.

KITES

by Pat Stempfly

Kites in the sky skimming through space

Reckless, carefree, on target, or without a plan

Soaring up, falling down, flying high, bending low

Reaching for a rainbow

Touching a garden in final descent.

Pat Stempfly is fairly new to Yellow Springs and to writing but is enjoying both very much. She likes to write about real stuff in her books (most recently Keep Movin' Your Energy for Body, Mind, and Spirit) and simple poems. She feels Ripples is a good way to get acquainted with this great community.

Natives by Deborah S. McGee

The day before Christmas her job at Waldenbooks ended. They had found no other work. But money arrived from cashing in the last insurance policy and they wanted to celebrate.

They had been living for two months in a campground up Boulder Canyon. Even with chains it was difficult to scale the icy slope to the highway. And although they lined the van with cardboard and put in a kerosene heater, it was getting harder to pull entwined bodies from beneath the quilts, to remember to leave a window cracked.

They liked to eat Chinese. Their favorite Chinese restaurant beckoned as the scene for today's festivities. They hadn't splurged on a full meal in weeks but ate out a lot—the cheapest food on menus. Guacamole and chips, salsa and chips, baked potatoes, french fries. Waitresses were nice to them anyway.

When they parked off Pearl Street and walked to the Great Wall, it was pouring down rain—near-to-snow. At four in the afternoon no other customers were in the place. Tea was all they wanted at first, just to float in its jasmine waves. The waitress brought it to them promptly and they warmed themselves, studying the *I Ching*. Sitting side by side, knees touching, holding hands except when he turned pages of the book.

He asked the question today, wondering what he needed to become one with the Tao, the way of his life. After he threw the coins, they calculated the answer was Hexagram 56, "The Wander-

er." That fit. Both had started out from different cities in Ohio, and they had been wandering together for a year.

But back to the restaurant, the perfumed tea on a Colorado winter day. And now a tureen of Bean Curd Soup. Tender inner leaves of Chinese cabbage, cubes of fresh tofu, and bamboo shoots smooth as butter. After soup they shared Szechuan Vegetables. Hot! Chinese! Food! They used chopsticks and sent praises to the chef, the waitress's husband, whose head and feet were visible in the kitchen behind a swinging door in the rear.

When the food was gone they sipped more tea and chatted with the waitress, who called herself Lisa because no one here could pronounce her Chinese name. Five years ago she and her husband came from Taiwan, and saved until they bought the restaurant. Lisa was bemoaning the economy and lack of customers.

An older man entered the restaurant and took a chair one table over from theirs. Although he could have chosen a dozen other tables, he seated himself in their direct line of vision. He held his head down and to the side.

Lisa's face stiffened into an angry mask. With heel-heavy steps she walked briskly to the new customer.

"I bring you no food," she said, stressing each word equally. "Last time here, you walk out. Not pay for food." She projected her voice to vacant tables, as if a proclamation to past and future guests would strengthen her in-

tent. She held notepad and pencil behind arms crossed tightly over her chest.

"Bring me . . ." was all the couple understood of the man's reply. English was not his first language. Nor sobriety the state of his bloodstream. The female customer wondered if he also was Chinese. He was stockier and taller than most Asians and softer of belly, but there was a trace of the Orient about his cheekbones and in the blackness of his thick hair. He wore denim Levi's and a navy knit shirt with a tiny Lee's tag on the pocket edge. A dingy triangle of long underwear showed beneath the unbuttoned top part of his shirt.

"You pay first, I bring food," Lisa said. Okay, okay, he agreed and after more garbled argument made her write down his order: egg roll, bowl of rice, glass of Coors. Then he gave her dollar bills and she went for his order. The big man stood up and wavered from foot to foot before walking to the restroom, fumbling with its door handle and banging the door behind him. The waitress came back quickly, placed his food on his table, then turned to the couple. The three shook their heads gently, puzzled by the man's behavior. Lisa apologized for hers: "He sneak out back door. Not pay. Several times. We have to make a living." Then she returned to the kitchen.

Soon the man wobbled back to his table and sat down heavily, spilling a little beer when he reached for the glass, and leaving a redder wet circle in the red

paper tablecloth. He drank half the beer at once with eyes closed. The two could not help watching him.

"You happy?" the newcomer asked in their direction. They nodded, said yes with open eyes and smiles, glancing at each other and pinching hands beneath their table. The other guest did not smile. He downed the egg roll in two bites while the couple sipped tea. All three were aware of sharing this space, this moment. The only sound was of tight-stringed instruments from piped-in Chinese music. Soon the only movement was that of the man's right hand and arm. Dousing the white rice with bright pink bursts from a plastic bottle of sauce, he stirred the mixture with his fork, took one bite, then jerked the salt shaker over the dish several times before digging in.

While he ate he scanned the room with eyes that bounced around to every angle. A pendulum of flesh hung below each of his eyes. His right eyelid drooped lower than the left and the right side of his face sagged. Sweat glistened on his forehead and nose. He spoke again when the food was gone, looking directly at the couple, his words now clear.

"I am Sioux," he said, lifting his head slightly. "From South Dakota. There is no work there." He paused, drifting off in thought, then went on. "It is very hard for my people. I am sorry to say this but you whites have made it hard on our people. Will you give me some money?"

"No," the younger man said, "we're in the same boat. We're on food stamps. Can't help you. Sorry."

The man kept looking at them as he finished his beer, then wiped face and mouth with his red pa-

per napkin. "Yes, you are happy," he said, nodding and lowering his head. Then, looking at the couple again with focused eyes, he said in a strong voice, "I want you to know the Indian is never lonely. The Indian is never sad. Every day when the sun comes up it cleans everything away. It is a new start. Sure you can't help me out? I been here eleven years. Wanna go home. Bus fare."

Again the white man said no. They were out of work. It was difficult in a town where everyone like them wanted to live, too. They were surprised at the man's use of "Sioux" and "Indian," which they thought were improper. They got up to leave. Lisa came out and they paid their bill. As they started for the door, the older man spoke directly to the younger.

"Come here," he said, beckoning roughly with his right arm. "I want to sing you a song. Will you let me sing you a song?" The white man looked at his woman, said sure, and seated himself at the red man's table. The white woman pulled up a chair behind her mate.

The two folded their hands in their laps, breathing slowly as the Indian tilted his face to the ceiling and sang aloud right there in that Chinese restaurant. His deep voice didn't crack much. His words shifted vowels mid-syllable, carrying the call of wide-open spaces with many miles between things. The song rang with the howl of coyote, filling the air with memories of nights out under stars and the warmth of a fire circle. The owners watched from the back at the start of the song, but returned to the kitchen as it wound down, leaving the three Americans facing each other.

As the song's echoes faded,

the Chinese music took over again while the man from South Dakota explained the meaning of his song. It was about horses, he said. A horse is very important to the Indian. An Indian loves his horse and that is why he sings to him. Because he has his horse, the Indian is never lonely.

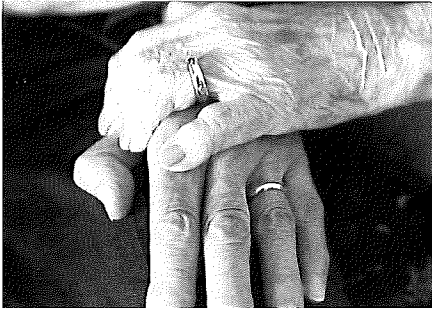
The young couple felt a pull to stay and hear more, but did not want to explain again why they could not give money. They thanked him. But he would not let them go. Now he wanted to pray for them.

The Chinese man and wife came back to the kitchen door. The Native American closed his eyes and offered more lines of his language. His body did not move except at the end when he raised his hands together, palms down, fingers separated, toward the sky. Man and prayer became one, like an ancient tree, deep of root, with branches beyond sight.

"Om shanthi," said the white man at the end, and his woman whispered, "Peace be to you." They waved to Lisa and walked out into the snow, the dark. On the drive home they sang a chant learned at a commune in Oregon. The next morning they mounted the campground slope once more, then headed south to Raton Pass and westward to Arizona. They spoke of that meal—and of the man who sang to them, prayed for them—many times on their journey.

Deborah lives in Yellow Springs with her husband, Douglas Klappich. A Columbus native, she has two education degrees from Ohio State, and is retired from administrative work in OSU's Department of Physics. She lived out West for twenty years, in Colorado, Oregon, and New Mexico.

My Fair Lady's Little Fingers by Ross L. Morgan



Dear Reader,

My hope for you—and for me—is that, as you read “My Fair Lady’s Little Fingers,” you will read it slowly, preferably aloud. You see, I write slowly, often talking to myself. Like now, I envision myself talking—with intent—just to you—just us two.

My “fair lady” is my wife, Philomenia, or just Phil. We first met “long ago and far away”—when we were young, in the very beautiful and very rural Elkhorn River Valley in the Sand Hills of Nebraska—a vast “Sea of Grass” with very few people, all of whom are free, open, dependable, and friendly. Between us, we knew them all—or at least felt as if we did. It was home—a heavenly place—for her and me, then and now. Wherever we are, that place and that life are always with us.

When I first knew Phil, she was young, cheerful, vibrant, active, and alert. She loved life and people, and a wide spectrum of people admired and appreciated her. She remains the same; but, of course, she is older. Now, she is eighty-eight, white haired, and has a troubling disorder, much like extensive arthritis.

We married others and enjoyed long and successful marriages before death intervened. We re-met, remembered; and married. We fully expect to “live happily ever-after.” This house is built on a firm foundation.

Thanks, and love, Ross Morgan

Frail and fragile little fingers; once a young girls’ delicate and facile little fingers; now shadows of the past.

Mother’s loving little fingers; comforting and soothing the baby to sleep - without a peep. - Pride and joys of the past.

Fingers that pointed the way - and stayed alert both night and day - when Dad had to be away. - Duties of the past.

A life fulfilled - for strong and busy, caring little fingers. - Achievements of the past.

Then, arthritic, crooked little fingers, lonely and alone. Dark and cloudy days for painful little fingers. -Badges of the past.

Memories of a touch - a gasp - reflections of a giggle, a squiggle or a squirm - as a child with a wonderful, wandering, woolly-worm. Whispered blessings of the past.

Now, linger, linger - linger longer; frail and fragile little fingers - my Lady’s little fingers - Fingers of the past.

Flashes of a silver lining; reflections of a laugh - and, love - along life’s sweet remembered path. - Whispered blessings of the past.

Flashes of a silver-lining; reflections of a laugh - and, love - along life’s sweet remembered path. - Light and love from the past.

Out comes the sun - with a shout. Hopeful little fingers, upbeat little fingers. All are all-about! - Little fingers with a healthy shout.

Happy days. Life behaves - as it should - in the Light, the Light of Love - that stays and stays. -A Wise One prays; he prays for thee.

Frail and fragile little fingers; strong and artistic little fingers; “forever” little fingers. - All thanks to the Past.

Dear frail and fragile little fingers; my lady’s little fingers; I pray that you will last, and last, and last - happy to the last. Amen.

True Confessions of a Thief

by Janeal Turnbull Ravndal

This is a confession that I stole something—something worth a hunk of cash—from my feisty friend Pat Olds. I haven't done a lot of stealing in my life. In fact, in the pretty prim preacher's family where Sue Parker and I grew up, not only regular stealing, but any kind of lottery, even "a game of chance" like Bingo, was beyond the pale gambling.

The setting for this sin was eight or so years ago in Yellow Springs High School gym, at that now traditional holiday party where students graciously welcome and indulge the town's non-student "seniors." We'd each been handed a numbered lottery ticket, and now Santa's stand-in was calling out the numbers, and teenage elves were delivering prizes. There would be a winning for each of us oldsters.

Already we'd heard a kindergarten choir, the middle school orchestra, plus a teenage duet, and we'd consumed our three-course, festive, free meal. Pat Olds was ready to go home. She presented me with her lottery ticket, asking me to bring her her prize.

What my loot was that day I don't remember, maybe a small stuffed animal, but Pat's was a coupon worth weeks, if not months, of exercise at Curves. I suppose I asked somebody what Curves was and concluded it would not be appropriate for wheelchair-bound Pat Olds, but at any rate I stole her prize. And I didn't even tell her that when I delivered to her, in its place, my cute little bounty.

I had always hated exercise.



With the exceptions of one Interpretive Dance course Louise Soelberg taught while I was a student at Wilmington, a brief "Delicious Movement" class here with Jill Becker, and my walks to town, I avoided any exertion. But, even more than their repugnance of gambling, my forebears disapproved of waste, so, of course, I used that Curves coupon. When I didn't immediately lose weight, as I'd hoped, Lynn Hardman explained to me that muscles are more dense than fat. Muscles! And what a friendly place! I kept going for years after my coupon wore out.

Then our generous neighbors, Jim and Jean Nealon, invited us to go with them to the Cedarville Fitness Center, which at that point was free to "seniors." Chris took them up on it, and, warmed up by Curves and not able to resist another bargain, I switched to

that gym's track and generous assortment of workout machines. I thought I'd be freaked out by the huge facility and all those machines, but there, too, they were warmly welcoming.

Still now, three days a week, I faithfully pump and pull and stretch in Cedarville. I fill out the record of activities card with my times and weights for each day. What I lift may be barely half what the college student before me did on a machine, but every month, when I start a new card, I try to add one pound, and mostly I succeed. So I know I have improved muscles.

This morning I realized Pat Olds gets credit for my new muscle power. Chance played its part, of course, but I would not be pedaling at the Cedarville Fitness Center if Pat had not had me, a thief, as her neighbor.

Pat Olds, who let us tour her house ten years ago, the day we were deciding whether to build an Independent Living apartment on Aspen Court in Friends Care Community, wrote us a letter of welcome before we moved in.

When we got here I was delighted to discover that she and I shared an almost out-of-control enthusiasm for Scrabble, and I give her activism credit for the smoother sidewalk on my walk to town. I'm thankful for all that, but most of all, grateful for my better, if questionably obtained, muscles.

Janeal Ravndal and her husband, Chris, moved to Yellow Springs and Friends Care Community almost ten years ago after many years of living in Quaker educational communities. Her career as social worker, journalist, or cook now past, Janeal writes poetry and enjoys stretching her new muscles on walks to town.

Shirley Wexler Fondly Remembered

by Mary White



Shirley playing at Robert and Rebecca's wedding.

I had heard about Shirley before I met her—that a violinist/violist from the Houston Symphony was coming to live in Yellow Springs, with her husband, who was a founder of Houston Friends of Music (now Chamber Music Houston). Wow, I thought, who could these people be? I knew Houston from my graduate school days—my Texan stereotypes included very large men with alpha personalities and women who love big hair. Imagine my surprise and delight when I met Shirley—tiny, elegant, with a radiant smile—sitting behind me in the Yellow Springs Chamber Orchestra. She had gotten there on her tricycle with her viola in a basket on the back. (In fact, that is how I like to remember her—on a huge tricycle, cruising around town, always in some classy out-

fit topped by a perfect hat.) She played in the orchestra here for five or six years, ever gracious and cheerful, always making her fellow musicians feel good about what they were doing. But who would have thought that at home, Shirley was a painter!

Her house is a gallery of her paintings; they remind me of Chagall—moody, with a bold use of color, brushstrokes, design, and images, suggesting a complex interior behind those warm smiles.

Shirley shared almost seventy years of her life with her husband, Seymour. A retired jeweler, third in line from his Polish grandfather, a Houston goldsmith, he has a keen intellect, dry wit, and passion for chamber music, archaeology, and Shakespeare. His stories of how certain

paintings came to be, or how they came to own this music or that instrument, offer glimpses of a marriage rich with travel, family, friends, and shared cultural interests. Their son, Robert, lives here in town with his wife, Rebecca, and violinist daughter, Merida, who I can already see will make Shirley proud.

Shirley lived well and long, creating beauty and happiness wherever she turned. I am grateful that I knew her, and miss her now.

Mary White is a Yellow Springs resident who plays in the YS Chamber Orchestra and teaches at Wright State University in her spare time.

Teachers by Corinne Whitesell

A MEMORIAL DAY MEMORY
by Joyce McCurdy

I am always amazed at the creativity some people come up with to solve problems with some new and "out-of-the-box" way. For example, I have met two elementary school teachers who approached some elementary school learning problems with unusual methods.

I met one teacher while our family was living in New Zealand. The native population of new Zealand is Maori and the Maori Polynesian people were there thousands of years before white people arrived. In the USA children coming into our school system all know that they will be taught to read in the first grade. My husband enjoyed spending lots of time reading children's books to our five children. They could hardly wait to learn to read for themselves. My oldest son came home from the first day in school and asked me if I would teach him to read. "She didn't teach me to read today," he said. So I did, with the Dr. Seuss "I can read it myself" series of books. Such was my son's eagerness to learn to read.

The Maori population of New Zealand had no such background of reading to children since it is relatively recent in their culture that their language was put into writing, and the Maori language is still being spoken today. Story telling was (and still is) the dominant method for passing on their culture to the next generation. This was causing one teacher difficulties in getting children to be interested in learning to read. She changed her approach. She asked each child to tell her a story. She wrote each child's story on the

board as it was being told. Now children were curious and eager to read what they had just said in telling the story. It was their story and they wanted to be able to read it. Success in teaching Maori children to read improved dramatically when based on their own unique cultural norm.

Another teacher I met while living in Alaska told me her story. She was teaching in a school district of native Alaskans on the Aleutian Islands. That school district had the worst success record in the entire state of Alaska. Poor attendance at school was the norm. Heading out to fish was more important than school in the subsistence lifestyle of the native population. In addition, the teacher discovered that the way of learning in their culture was to learn from their elders. The teacher began to have the older children teach the younger children, and invited parents and grandparents to attend school to teach the children. The whole community got behind this and attrition disappeared. This teacher could hardly get everyone to go home after school hours. It had become a community center. The district's success rate, as measured by state testing requirements, rose dramatically.

The saying "This is the way it has always been done" might not always be a reason to continue.

I moved to Yellow Springs in 1963. My husband and I raised five children here. I have been a professional musician for a number of years, playing in symphonies. I am also a weaver.

The dark and light pink
Ruffles upon ruffles
A delicate tutu
Balances as a ballerina
Gracefully on a stem
From tightly coiled balls
velvet blooms erupt
Fragrance, so distinct
Beauty, so ephemeral

The ant marching
across the feathery layers,
its winding journey
intrusive, like an imposter
to the blossom's grandeur

Now the short-lived beauty
writhing, swaying, dropping
shimmering petals
white, pink, fuchsia
striking the ground
covering the graves
Its fallen pageantry
Introduces summer

Author's Note: Tending the graves was a task learned from my grandmother and mother. We cut the flowers, peonies and flags, and soaked them in large tin cans. We went to several cemeteries at least four times a year and made the same comments: "He was a great runner" or "He died so young, pneumonia at age 12." The temporary brilliance of the blooms seem in keeping with each life. This year, a cousin in Florida asked, "Who is tending the graves?" I assured him that I am, keeping a chain unbroken and knowing from whence I came, who I am, and, of course, where I am going.

To My Brother, Widgie

by Peter Whitson

The moon was just a tiny piece of light. It came out from behind a cloud and then it disappeared again, like it was playing hide-and-seek with me. I can't really recall if we ever played that together when we were kids. I do remember I thought my father actually liked him better than me. That was until we grew up and then both of us kind of agreed . . . our father probably didn't like anybody very much.

Anyway, as I was walking down Aullwood Road by the river, I was struck with how bright and clear the early evening had become. The rain had been coming down all day and had ended a couple hours ago. It was still wet but very clean. It was almost warm, much warmer than expected for October. I was thinking about my brother Paul. The family called him, "Widgie." His daughter, Joanna, had phoned me earlier in the day.

"Uncle Peter, my father has passed away." The words struck and bounced off. I heard her but they didn't immediately set in. "It was earlier this morning. I went into his room and found him there. He must have passed in his sleep. I had spoken to him when he woke up in the night. We even made a bowl of macaroni with some butter like Na-Na used to do. The police are here." Her words were beginning to set in. We talked some more. She was getting another call. I spoke to her again several times the rest of the



Widgie Politan

day. The rainy weather expressed my mood . . . and sense of loss.

So, I was walking and the moon was out. The weather had cleared. The early evening sky that was dim all day somehow . . . at this moment . . . brightly lit up the trees. They were gold and red and yellow of autumn. Their luminescence truly railed against the night. My brother walked along with me for a while. We talked of things we remembered when we were kids. We laughed, we cried, and we hugged each other. His body now had strength. His limp was gone and he didn't have any trouble with the stroke-limited side of his body. He looked happy and he said he was.

He told me that he loved me. I told

him that I loved him. We hugged one last time. He told me he had to go and was looking forward to the turn of the page. I told him I would watch out for his family as best I could and that I would catch up with him later.

I continued walking down the road . . . alone.

My early path was in counseling. Then in 1989, my daughter, Leanne, started a medical training center affiliated with The American Heart Association. She asked me to work with her and I have been doing so ever since. Writing has always been a hobby and now that I am mostly retired, there is more time for it.

LOVE

by Shirley Strohm Mullins

Until years have passed
Until true beauty is understood
Until joy, loss, separation, anger
and conflict have intertwined
Until then . . .
Love is confusing.

Then suddenly something
happens and you know,
though decades have
passed as in a dream.

Holding his head, his mouth bleeding
I start squeezing, pressing gauze
against the wound.

Watching his breathing
shallow, so shallow
no sound at all
Watching his hand
Twitch-twitch-twitch

His life passing
His breath, his blood flowing
never stopping
"Bite down, damn it
Bite harder, harder"
and he did.

The gauze held
his chest rose and fell
The twitching stopped.

My heart
My love
My soul.



Bill and Shirley Mullins moved to Yellow Springs in the summer of 1963. Both parents began new teaching assignments—Bill at Antioch College and the Antioch School, and Shirley at Central State University as an adjunct music teacher. Between them, they have devoted fifty years each to educating children and young adults in the village. It is their continuing and expanding form of love in action.

Grandma by Dee Lynette Krieg

11/14/15 PEACE VIGIL, YELLOW SPRINGS, OHIO
by Janeal Turnbull Ravndal

I remember Bopci, my Polish grandma, looking at me and asking, "Lynette," in her thick Polish-American accent, "what do you want to eat?" It was early afternoon; naturally I was thrilled at the chance to eat after lunch!

Before I could collect my five-year-old thoughts Bopci whisked us out to her dovecote, climbed a short ladder, planted herself in front of the lowest curved opening, reached in, and pulled out a lovely feathered creature.

Then, as I watched, she broke its neck with one sure twist and, motioning to me to follow, went back into her kitchen. She took a large kettle of boiling water off her stove and poured it into a big metal pan, carried it into the backyard, and tossed in the tiny bunch of limp, gray feathers.

After a few minutes she reached into the hot water, her gnarled farm hands immune to its heat, lifted the bird onto an old table and, sitting down on a rickety chair next to her array of plants and flowers growing in pots and tin cans, began to pull off feathers. In an amazingly short time the diminutive corpse was pink and naked.

As I watched, fascinated, she slit open its belly, pulled out guts, chopped off feet, head, and wing ends and then, beckoning to me, went into the kitchen. She placed the tiny morsel in a little baking dish, covered it with butter, lightly salted and peppered it, and popped it into her oven.

We waited. I had been enchanted with the whole process, always full of love for my Bopci

They take love to the streets today,
four corners of our village thoroughfare
well held in place by elders bundled for the cold,
all bearing memories of former wars,
and signs, not only of age, but hope and humor
plus the cardboard ones and world flags, signs pleading
that all troops come home, all folk be friends.
One is a veteran without an arm, another comes to
sing out sweet and struggle songs. Traffic is mostly friendly
on this day of shudders from the news of Paris tragedy.
Some drivers honk or wave, one trucker shouts a loud
"Thank you" that lessens the November chill.
Nine old folk holding up: *Peace Please* or *Standing on the
side of Love*, or *Sisters and Brothers All*. A worn sign,
Peace is Patriotic, seems to plead for sense.
With signs, nine elders bundled for the cold take on the world
in their own way, stand up for peace as best they can
in one small town, on one cold day.

who seemed so certain of her place in that old house and of her prowess as a bringer of festive freshly killed roast chickens and luscious gravies smoothed with sour cream to her assorted eight sons and daughters and their families. She was stern, in a European way, but we grandchildren knew always loving, so long as we kept our places and subdued our behavior when necessary.

Suddenly she went to her oven, opened the door, pulled out an aroma-laden tiny roast, placed it on a dinner plate on her kitchen table and said, "Lynette, eat." I remember the first buttery taste of that squab, so good, so meltingly tender in my mouth and at the same time I was so overwhelmed at her attention to her granddaughter that I almost forgot to take a second bite. I rallied and ate slowly. I shall always remember that kitchen, the late summer afternoon sunlight, my

grandmother watching me, her hands in her lap and I, munching away, so aware I was a special, loved grandchild for those magical moments.

Twenty years later I found myself in a Paris hotel room with my mother, awaiting our breakfast. A young waitress arrived carrying a napkin-covered tray. We sat down and poured steamy frothing milk from a white china jug, at the same time pouring steaming coffee from a white china pot into large cups. There were hot croissants made with real butter upon which we layered fresh unsalted butter curls lying in tiny white dishes in a bit of ice water. And then we spooned orange marmalade onto these delights and et 'em.

I have never been able to duplicate the taste and sensuousness of that lovely simple breakfast, nor the taste of that butter roasted squab of so long ago.

Comments from Our Members

Nancy Hirsch

I moved to Yellow Springs about eight or nine years ago and am living with my daughter and grandchildren. I'm alone a lot because my daughter works every day in Columbus, and the kids are teenagers and are in school and have activities. Everyone is busy.

Thank goodness, I have the Senior Center. What a great group of people! Lots of things to do; I eat lunch there twice a week with friends and talk; I cover the front desk three times a week for a few hours each time, and any other volunteer work that needs to be done, mailings, for example. I have made new friends, gone on a lot of the Center's trips, heard speakers, seen movies—a lot of things I would not have done if not for the Senior Center.

It's a great place. The staff is super and very caring and helpful with anything. Since I volunteer there, I see it from both sides, and it is truly a sincere bunch of great people.

Julie Sine

I started coming to the Senior Center just before retiring from The Winds Café almost ten years ago. The "Great Room" sign got my attention! Over the years I have participated in many activities such as chair volley ball, Monday and Wednesday lunches, field trips, and Lunch Bunch. I have been making friendships all along.

I have taken advantage of all the services, starting with Caroline Mullin, SC social worker, who in 2008 went with me to Xenia to work out Social Security Disability benefits; transportation services are very important as I do not own a car, and homemaker services are very valuable to my home life.

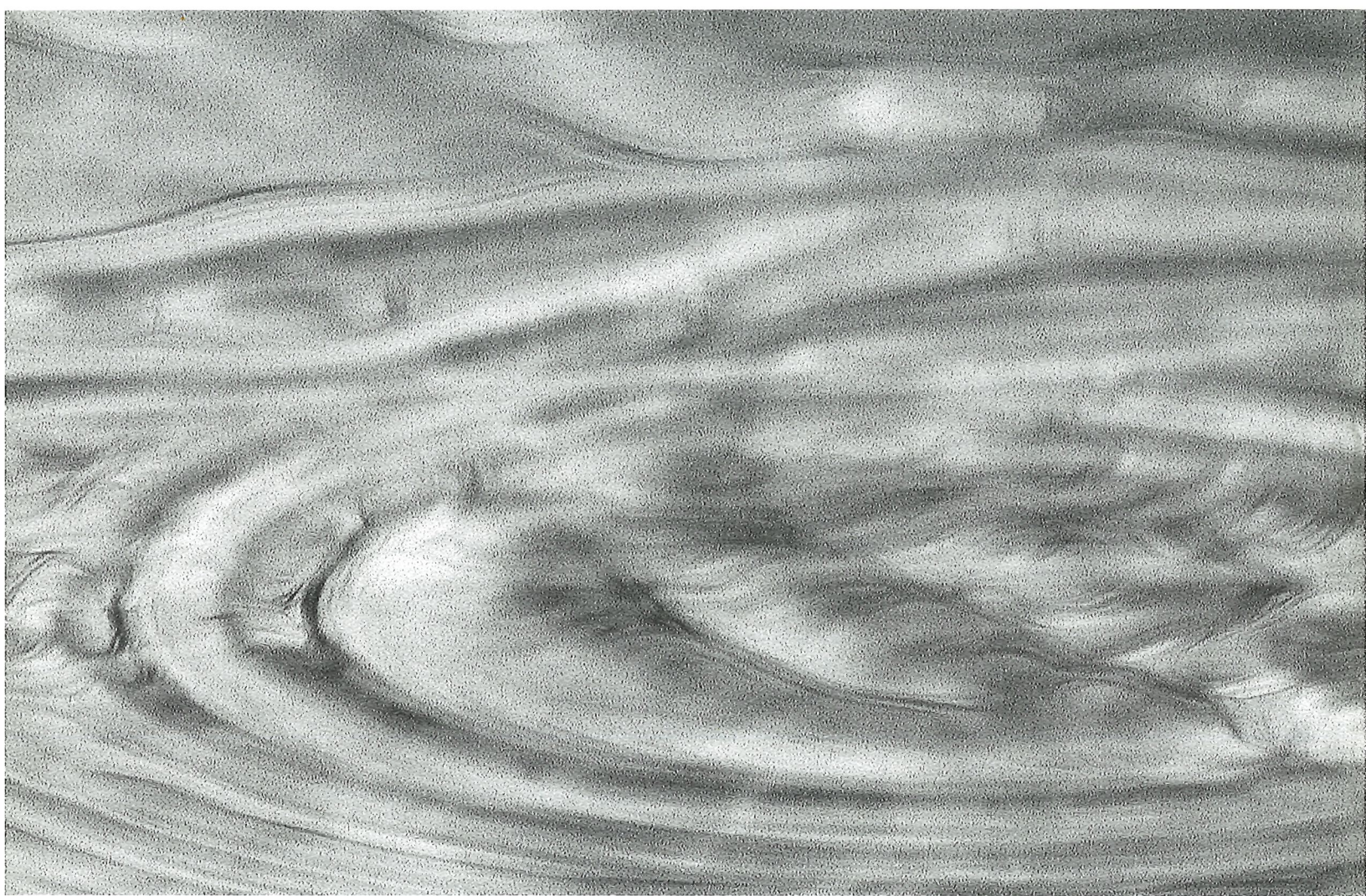
The Senior Center gives me reason to get up and get out.

Dr. Carl Hyde

I was aware when Rev. Matthews and his wife, Pat, said, "We need a senior center." They started the YS Senior Center in 1959.

My family has been involved. My daughter Sarah used the transportation services, my daughter-in-law, Susan, takes advantage of the exercise programs, and my wife borrowed various personal equipment from the large collection in the basement. I have taken part in the Monday and Wednesday lunches until I moved to Friends Care Assisted Living and I sometimes attend Third Thursday Potluck Lunches.

Yellow Springs has been my home since I was sixteen years old. My life work has been in Yellow Springs providing medical care as a family physician, best known as a family practice.



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