

# Ripples

Stories and Poems

by or about Yellow Springs Elders



Volume 5, June 2018

Dear Readers,

On behalf of the contributors to this, our fifth, edition of Ripples I thank you for taking time to read the many fascinating stories and poems by or about elders in the Yellow Springs community. This literary journal is the Yellow Springs Senior Center's gift to our community.

Sharing one's talents through writing has long been an art appreciated by many. The act of writing itself is an art that promises to delight the writer and hopes to inspire the reader. We all hope you will be inspired to write and share your stories and/or poems next year.

Karen Wolford  
Executive Director  
Yellow Springs Senior Center

I want to thank the dedicated volunteers who have contributed their effort to establish criteria, judge submissions, copy-edit, and proofread all the materials in this edition of Ripples. And special thanks to Jane Baker (editor par excellence), YSSC staff members Teresa Bondurant and Karen Wolford, YSSC Director, for their support.

It is an extraordinary feeling opening the envelopes of entries. In each envelope there is surprise, heartfelt expressions, life-long history and a fearless willingness to share experiences. We are grateful to all of our writers and to our readers whose feedback and encouragement fuel our enthusiasm.

We hope you enjoy this edition of Ripples, a YSSC gift to the Yellow Springs and Miami Township community.

Suzanne Patterson,

*Front Cover Photo by E. Stuart (Skip) Leeds*

*South Glen covered bridge off of Grinnell Road was relocated in 1975 from Caesar's Creek to its current location when Caesar's Creek was turned into a lake.*

*Back Cover Photo (Late Snow) by Matt Minde*

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*Our thanks to Matt Minde for help in adjusting photographs and for his permission to include Late Snow in this issue.*

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# *Part 2: My Parents—Meredith and Willa Dallas: My Father the Actor; My Mother the Activist*

by Tony Dallas

*If you missed what appeared last year in Ripples as Part 1 of Tony Dallas's memoir of his parents, you can catch up by visiting Tony's blog site. Tony has since expanded Part 1, so on his blog site, what was Part 1 is now Parts 1 & 2:*

*Part 1: <http://tonydallastheatreviews.blogspot.com/2017/11/part-1-my-fathers-family.html>*

*Part 2: <http://tonydallastheatreviews.blogspot.com/2017/11/part-2-my-parents-albion-union-seminary.html>*

## **Off to Acting School in Cleveland—1946**

In the fall of 1946, at the age of twenty-nine, my father moved to Cleveland to attend Western Reserve University's master's degree program in theatre. My mother, who was twenty-six, stayed behind in Yellow Springs with their two daughters: Barrie, who was not quite four, and Patti, who was around seven months. The decision for my father to go alone, I am guessing, was one of finance and convenience. My parents owned a house in Yellow Springs; my mother was employed as a nursery school teacher; she also ran an infant center, with four or five infants, out of their house. With only a scholarship and a stipend to support him through two years of school, giving all that up must have seemed risky. If my mother and the children went along, she would probably have to

get some kind of work to supplement their income (and who would take care of the children?). Housing would probably be more expensive in Cleveland, and cramped: not conditions conducive to studying.

And where they could afford to live might not have been a safe environment for the children. Besides, my parents had roots in Yellow Springs, Yellow Springs had been good to them, and it was only a three-and-a-half-hour drive away. Digging up those roots for an unforeseeable future could not have been an easy prospect. So my parents, who in their six years of marriage had probably spent half that time apart, would be living apart once again.

My father moved into a cooperative house with other Western Reserve's graduate students. He was lonely, and he was disappointed in Western Reserve's theatre program. It "was really dullsville." He felt he already knew what they were teaching him. But in that first year there was one notable exception: a young instructor in scenic design, Henry Kurth, who, like my father, was new to the program. According to my father, Kurth "was a real theorist" working at the cusp of the new. He had already worked on collaborations with Arch Lauterer and Isamu Noguchi. He had designed sets for modern dancers Martha Graham, Jose Limon, and Erick Hawkins. Designing spaces

through which actors or dancers could move to three-dimensionally illuminate narrative appears to have been his main concern. To quote from *The Encyclopedia of Cleveland History*, Kurth's stage designs were "beautifully pared to essentials, creating a potent space that waits for the actor's movement to bring it to fulfillment." To what extent Kurth's theories of design affected my father I don't know. I do know that as a director my father was especially astute at defining the flow of actors through space in such a way as to illuminate the force of a play's structure. As this seems very much to have been what Kurth was about, and as my father had particularly mentioned Kurth to me, I can only suppose his influence was significant.

My father had not been in Cleveland long when he started having anxiety attacks. "I was feeling really lonely and dislocated. It was on a Sunday morning, I remember, and I felt like something was going to happen to me. And the pacing, the rhythm, kept increasing. . . And I went out walking. And I just started walking faster and faster. I thought something is happening to me and I don't know what the hell it is." Desperation skewed him off his path into the emergency room of a hospital.

The emergency room doctor thought my father might have Malaria. My father told him what he

was experiencing didn't feel like anything physical. He was there a night or two. "I felt unhinged, like something was going to happen, like I was going to fall apart or explode."

The doctor made an appointment for him to see a psychiatrist. A week later, or so, when he went to see the psychiatrist, he had to enter the psych ward of the hospital to do it. Each door he entered had to be unlocked, then locked behind him. "That was really scary. I didn't know if they were going to let me out." Then when he saw the doctor, "he seemed drunk." My father's experiences in Newark and Harlem had made him intimately aware of the symptoms of drunkenness and the efforts to hide them. "If he wasn't drunk, it was something that made him operate like a drunk. . . . I remember he was missing the ashtray with his cigarette. . . . I felt unmoored—like I no longer had anything to hold onto."

It was at this time that my mother's father, Fred Winter, died. He had been diagnosed with cancer and sent to hospital. But as there was nothing medically that could be done, he returned home, where he died a few weeks later. My father went down for the funeral. When he returned to Cleveland, he brought my mother and two older sisters with him. According to him, he talked my mother into the move. Knowing them both, I doubt there was much convincing. And I imagine it was my mother who finagled what turned out to be a joyous employment and living situation in Cleveland. My parents shared a job cleaning two floors of an office building and overseeing the building's parking lot. For this work they were paid a small sum

and given a small apartment in the building. Every evening at 5:30, after the workers left, the kids had free reign: Barrie would ride her tricycle up and down the halls and draw pictures on paper. "It was a neat little playground for them."

As to my father's underlying trauma, "what I did was kind of sit on it to deal with it while I was up there." But what had been going on with him had become clear when I talked with him years later. "I'd left that whole ministerial set. The war came and busted that thing up. Then the prison thing and getting out and trying to fit in." Much of his adult life had been spent in service and solitude. Now, at the age of thirty, with a wife and two children to take care of, he was committing himself to the self-centered, precarious occupation of an actor. The devotee of the sacred was committing himself to an occupation that many considered profane. "I was making the move to do something I wanted to do. . . . So it was a pretty harrowing time up there." But being with the family centered him. And I'm quite certain being with my father centered my mother.

It was either in his second semester of his first year or in his second year at Western Reserve that my father met the man who would become possibly the most influential in his career as an actor and director: Basil Langton. Basil, a guest artist at Western Reserve, arrived in Cleveland in 1947. His mentorship opened my father's eyes to the possible fullness of a career in the theatre.

Basil, who was English and, like my father, had been a Conscientious Objector during the war, had extensive repertory experience, and had acted with or di-



*Basil Langton as Hamlet  
in Stratford, England.*

rected (or, as an actor-manager had done both) with many of England's great actors, including John Gielgud, Alec Guinness, Ralph Richardson, Peggy Ashcroft, Judith Anderson, Sybil Thorndike, Edith Evans, Lawrence Olivier, and Paul Scofield. Basil's wife, Louise Soelberg, had been the prima ballerina with the Ballet Jooss, an important European avant-garde dance company. My father acted under Basil's direction at Western Reserve, playing Banquo to his Macbeth. They became fast friends. Then in 1948 a job opened up at Antioch: teaching public speaking. My father applied for the job and was hired. So my parents returned to Yellow Springs, and my father taught public speaking at Antioch and did speech checks on all the students, and for those who needed special help, he would work with them individually. But his main interest, and where he spent much of his time, was doing theatre—acting and directing.

The G.I. Bill had kicked in, and veterans, many of them mar-





Meredith Dallas as  
Richard II.

ried, were flocking to Antioch. "It was a very high time—particularly with summer theatre at the Opera House." My sister Wendy was born in September of that year. Then in 1949 fire and building inspectors closed the Opera House. The problem, according to my father, and several others I've talked to, was not structural to the building but to the politics of the neighborhood. Neighbors had complained about the noise. Efforts were made to mollify them, but to no avail. Basil had been brought down to direct what became the last play performed in the Opera House, a play he had earlier mounted in Cleveland, a play whose title now seemed ironically apropos, *The Wise Have Not Spoken*. He also acted in it, as did my father. The production was "a sentimental, tearful, and angry end" to the Opera House.

While it was clearly my father who had brought Basil down to Yellow Springs to direct, I have no doubt that my mother bent Basil and Louise's ear to stay here. There have probably been few in the history of Yellow Springs that

have sold the village's virtues as doggedly and effectively as did my mother. But then Yellow Springs must certainly have been more appealing than Cleveland. Basil would, over the coming years, use Yellow Springs as a home base (and he would on occasion direct plays at Antioch), but his professional career took him far beyond the village, and eventually he and Louise divorced, and Yellow Springs became a place he visited, a place where he had several friends, Louise always among them, and a daughter, Jessica. Louise taught dance in Yellow Springs for a number of years, and choreographed dances for several Shakespeare productions. Then in 1959 she threw her considerable energies into her second love, horses. She convinced Antioch College to lease fifteen acres of Glen Helen, a nature preserve, and she founded the Riding Centre, "an educational, nonprofit project dedicated to teaching the love, care, and understanding of horses."

Meanwhile, over the course of the fall of '49, and the following winter and spring, Yellow Springs

Area Theatre (made up of Antioch instructors, students, and villagers) joined with the Dayton Theatre Guild and mounted a season on the stage in the Dayton Art Institute. They rehearsed in the basement of Dayton's Memorial Hall and stored their platforms and props in Arthur and Sara Lithgow's garage at the corner of Dayton and North Stafford Streets. Arthur and Sara had met as students at Antioch in the 1930s. They returned to Yellow Springs in '47 when Arthur—now with New York radio and theatre experience and a master's degree in playwriting from Cornell under his belt—was offered a teaching position in Antioch's English Department.

In the summer of 1950—with the Opera House not yet torn down but condemned—the Yellow Springs Area Theatre did a season of plays at the Little Art Theatre in downtown Yellow Springs, the village's only movie house. Vernon Berg was then the Little Art's owner. They extended the stage in front of the screen. Stage exits were through the emergency doors on either side. When it was raining, someone stationed outside holding an opened umbrella would usher exiting actors into a waiting car.

That winter they performed in Kelly Hall, in Antioch's Main Building. My father remembered performing at least once outside, on a stage built off the Main Building's front steps, and rehearsing in the Dance Pavilion. In its heyday the Dance Pavilion had overlooked a lake on the northwest edge of Glen Helen—which wasn't Glen Helen then, but Neff Park. Before the dam broke and the lake drained, amorous couples would row boats out from it. And its legendary dance floor,

five wooden floors built directly on top of each other, was so popular, on a certain day of the week an extra train car jam-packed with joy seekers eager to strut their stuff to a live jazz band would be added to the passenger train coming up from Cincinnati. But by 1950 the Pavilion was a shell of its former self, a relic with a sound roof and "a very good hardwood floor," used now by the village for roller-skating on Saturday mornings. Because the building had no electricity, my father got a gas generator and hooked it up so they could rehearse at night.

Then in the summer of 1951 (I was born in April of that year), Basil and Arthur co-produced a season of Shaw plays at the Rice Playhouse on Martha's Vineyard. My parents packed the family into their new Plymouth (purchased in Detroit at my uncle's dealership) and drove east. My mother watched over the children; my father acted. "That was gorgeous," my father told me. "The sun. The ocean. That ferry boat. Doing Shaw. And in between each Shaw play there was a comedy." They remounted *Light Up the Sky*, a production they had staged earlier at the Little Art. "The ocean. The seafood. Clams. Acting. And enjoying it all very much."

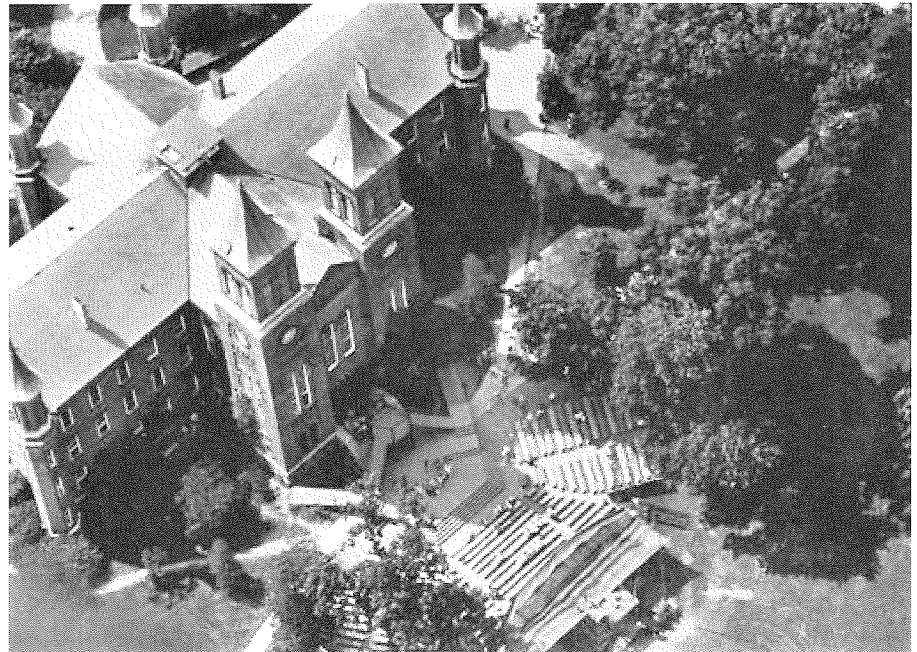
### Arthur Lithgow and Shakespeare Under the Stars

Perhaps it was in the fall of that year (maybe my father and Arthur were still high from that summer of Shaw on Martha's Vineyard) that Arthur took my father out to what was then called Front Campus, the large expanse of lawn that stretched between Corry Street and Antioch's Main Building. Looking up at that

castle-like façade designed by Alpheus Marshall Merrifield, Arthur, with his trademark twinkle in his eye, asked my father if he could imagine all of Shakespeare's chronicle plays performed in historical sequence off the building's front steps—those same front steps where they had mounted a play two summers earlier. While my father wasn't sure what to make of Arthur's vision, it was clear to him it was a vision, and it was a vision that had been brewing in his mind for a while. Then, in the summer of '52 my father found himself with Arthur, co-directors of Antioch's "Shakespeare Under the Stars," smack in the thick of that vision, which, over the course of the summer, became increasingly, exhilaratingly, and, finally, exhaustingly real.

Budd Steinhilber, an industrial designer and graphic artist with Vie Design Studios (who had previously designed sets for more than thirty Area Theatre productions and was known to audiences in the area as a "marvelous comedic ac-

tor") designed a stage with seven levels, including an inner above and an inner below, that could be effectively used for all of the plays. There would be twenty-eight actors for the season: some were professionals from New York (under special contracts with Actors Equity, as they would be working below scale), there were others with professional experience from the area, and then there were villagers and Antioch students. This would be the first time in the United States that Shakespeare's history (or chronicle) plays would be performed in repertory. The idea was novel and ambitious. But novelty and ambition were no guarantees these plays would bring in crowds. As Dorothy Laming, a fine actress with the company, wrote in her Ph.D. dissertation: the chronicle plays, according to a *New York Times* reviewer, "had a three-hundred-year popularity rating about equal to that of Typhoid Annie." This was not London or Stratford. This wasn't even New York, Chicago, or L.A.: this was Yellow Springs, a sleepy college town



Shakespeare Festival Stage

of 2500 in the hinterlands of Ohio, and the interstate highways had not yet been built.

The Festival opened with *King John*, in which my father had a small role. Attendance opening night, my father told me, was fifty. But attendance grew slowly and steadily over the course of the summer. A week later they opened *King Richard II*. My father played Richard and, in the actor-manager tradition, also directed the play. Halfway through the second week they ran *King John* and *King Richard II* in repertory. The third week opened with *King Henry IV Part I*, with my father playing Hotspur. Halfway through the third week they alternated the three plays nightly, with matinee and evening performances on Saturdays and Sundays. The schedule was so tight, with rehearsals during the day and performances at night, the only available time to work technical rehearsals—with lights, which had been rigged on metal scaffolding—was after performances Sunday nights. After a rain, the front legs of the scaffolding, from the weight of the lights, would dig into the earth and lean forward, causing what actors and crew called “crotch focus.” These technical rehearsals often ran until the sun rose, obliterating the possibility of distinguishing stage from natural light.

At this time they ran out of money. Antioch was between presidents, so the question *What to do* fell on the shoulders of the acting president, Dean of Faculty Boyd Alexander.

This was also the time of the Red Scare. According to Scott Sanders, Antioch historian and archivist, there was this fellow, Harvey Matusow, who, in 1952, “began his new

career as a professional red-sniffing, whistle-blowing squealer, a job description couched in the term “Research Assistant for the Ohio Un-American Activities Commission.” Because Matusow had years earlier been a member of the American Communist Party, the commission regarded him “as an expert on communist-front groups, especially youth oriented ones.” Antioch, Matusow told the commission, was a hotbed for them. And, in case they had any doubts, Matusow had numbers to prove it: “6 percent of Antioch’s 1200 students,” he told them, were card-carrying members of the Youth Progressives of America, a group already recognized by the commission as a front organization. Matusow’s findings were, of course, trumped up; his “investigation” consisted of hanging out for a couple of days at the Ye Olde Trail Tavern in Yellow Springs. But his red-baiting commotion had whipped up a bunch of bad press for the college. In contrast, “Shakespeare Under the Stars” had been nothing but good press—good press that was not merely local: it was statewide and national. News of the Festival had made the *New York Times*. So, to save the college, Alexander (who was also a strong supporter of theatre at Antioch) agreed to chip in however much would be needed to see the season through.

Week four opened with *King Henry IV Part 2*. *Henry V* opened the following week: my father directed and played the Duke of Exeter. The sixth week opened with *King Henry VI*. Arthur had combined the three *King Henry VI* plays into one, resulting in a narrative that was, reportedly, confusing not only for the audience but for the actors as well.

Then came *Richard III*; my father played Buckingham to Allan Rich’s Richard. The schedule had been so taxing, with the same actors taking on different roles play after play, by opening night Rich was unable to memorize all of Richard’s lines, so he carried the script with him halfway through the week.

By now it seemed the whole town was involved—on stage, backstage, working concessions, sitting in the audience show after show. Children were following the actors as if they were movie idols in a cliff-hanging franchise. Workmen, who during the day were digging a ditch and laying pipe within shouting distance of the stage, would sometimes corner an actor to ask him or her about their character or a particular moment in a scene. It turned out, after hours on their own time, the men were gathering with their foreman, who was reading the plays aloud to them.

Theatre-goers were now flocking to the Festival, not only from all corners of the state, but from neighboring states as well—Kentucky, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Michigan, Indiana—and from states even farther afield. And they would tend not to come for one play, but return again and again, until they had taken in the entire cycle.

One New York tugboat captain, whose boat was owned by the New York Central train-line and whose trains ran through Springfield, ten miles up the road, would take a sleeper with his wife once a month after work on Fridays, get picked up by someone from the Festival Saturday morning, see all four shows over the weekend, then he and his wife would grab a sleeper back to New York, where they would arrive in time for work Monday morning.



Finally, the last play of the festival arrived: *King Henry VIII*, which my father directed and in which he played Thomas Cranmer, the Archbishop of Canterbury. Since night after night they were selling out, they decided to add two hundred chairs and boost their capacity to 950. For the final few weeks of the Festival, they ran all eight plays in repertory—a different play each night, four different plays on the weekend. My father said by the close of the season, he was afraid to tilt his head for fear that all his lines would fall out.

For the final performance of *Henry VIII*, which ends with Archbishop Cranmer christening the child that will become Queen Elizabeth (a part “played” by my best friend through childhood, Nick Dewey, son of George and Rae Dewey, who had been born in March of that year). My father thought sending Roman candles up from either side of the stage would be the appropriate glorious closing to the season. Antioch, because of its cooperative work-study program, operated year-round. Two Antioch students, who had recently finished the academic term, were employed to launch the fireworks. The first Roman candle, instead of shooting up into the air, flew like an artillery missile across the stage, barely missing the cast, which had been assembled for the christening; fortunately, it gained enough altitude to zip above the heads of the audience. My father at this point was hoping against hope the second student would not launch the second Roman candle. But the thought had barely jelled in his mind before it whistled across the stage from the opposite direction to land in a woman’s lap, burning off her dress



*Dallas Family 1952*

and causing serious burns.

For the rest of the night my father remained by her bedside in the college infirmary, doing what he could to sooth her and hoping she would not sue. The two students who had lit the fireworks (who later claimed the fiasco was not their fault) left early the following morning for co-ops.

But the Festival had been a roaring success. Not only had they presented all of Shakespeare’s history plays, shot them out as quickly as sit-coms, then ran them in repertory, they also accomplished what is almost unheard of in the theatre world: they ended the season in the black. The college recouped its entire investment.

The newly crowned Queen Elizabeth II sent the company a congratulatory letter, and folks from the town of Stratford in Canada, who were planning to start their own Shakespeare repertory company the following year, popped down to Yellow Springs to see how it might be done. And on campus among the students Lithgow, Dal-

las, and Treichler took on the collective moniker of “The Triumvirate.”

Lithgow’s vision—to mount all of Shakespeare’s history plays—had been realized. Since the season had gone so exceedingly well, the next step seemed obvious: keep it going. Over the next four summers mount every play Shakespeare had written, even those few whose authorships were in doubt: “Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more. . . !”

My father was born in Ionia, Greece

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# Memories: My Father, Sadik, and My Friend George

by Rubin Battino

in 1891 and emigrated to New York in 1910. He was a draft dodger since he had been called up to serve in the Turkish army (Turkey controlled Greece for over 500 years, and the Greek Orthodox, Jews, and Muhammadans lived in peace all of that time). The elders got together some money and clothes, and my father left through the walled city with his carpentry tools to do some work outside the walls. He learned carpentry and cabinetry in an Alliance Française school funded by the Rothschild family. (I have some of the tools he was given at graduation.) On the way to the port city of Pireaus he linked up with a group of traveling nuns. At the port a relative got him onto a ship for New York where he was met by others from Ionia. He worked for a short time in the Brooklyn Navy Yard, but left due to all of the anti-Jewish prejudice. Then he linked up with some relatives and got into the garment business, making pajamas and nightgowns and aprons.

The name "Sadik" is one spelling of the Hebrew word *Tzadik*, *Zadik*, or *Sadiq*. It has several meanings: righteous one, one whose merit surpasses iniquity, and one who has no evil inclination. All of my siblings have Hebrew names: Lillian, Raphael, Emanuel, Abraham, and Rubin (Reuben). In Sephardic tradition we were also all named after living relatives. My mother, Anna, also came from Ionia, but a bit later. They met and married in New York.

My father was a practical joker, and also a good provider. His favorite saying was, "I always made a dollar." He was proud of being able to provide for his family. I have three stories about my father.

*The Straw Boater Hat* We lived in the Bronx and my father took the subway to his place of business, a loft in lower Manhattan. Early one summer he bought a straw boater hat of which he was very proud. (A definition is that it is a kind of summer hat worn by men, regarded as somewhat formal, and particularly popular in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.) On the first summer day that he wore the hat on the subway into Manhattan a disaster occurred. In his day there was no air conditioning in subway cars, and the windows were all open. My father had a seat on the platform side when at one of the stops a man reached in and stole his hat from the top of his head! He was furious, and did not know how to get back at the thief. Well, he found a roundabout way to do this. In his shop it was not unusual to find large rats, and one of them had been caught and killed in a trap. He took the dead rat and put it in a cardboard box, wrapped the box nicely in brown wrapping paper, tied it securely, and took it down to the street entrance with him. He left this enticing package there and walked across the street to watch. Sure enough, a passerby picked up the package and walked off with it. My father chuckled

all the way home thinking about what that man would find when he opened the package!

*Sadik and His Sons* My father was marvelously generous and kind and playful with his four sons and other children when they were small. However, when my brothers and I grew up he found it difficult to give us any praise. I recall his telling my brother Manny once that he would never learn how to properly make packages. After my father retired he worked part time with my two older brothers in their contracting business. They dreamed about his joining them, and calling the business Battino & Sons. He never acceded to this.

We were all taught how to play the Mideast version of backgammon which was the family game. I was a woodworker and made furniture among other items. I decided at one point to make a backgammon set for my father as a gift. It was made of walnut and has alternating triangles of two other woods embedded to make the backgammon board. Since I did not know how he would accept this gift (he knew how to be giving, but not receiving), it took me a while to get up enough nerve to give it to him. When I was flying to New York for a family visit I just knew that he would look at this handmade backgammon set and say two things: "Why are you giving me this? I have a set already." And then he would examine the work carefully and point out little flaws. This is exactly what happened! Our younger son, Benjamin, has Pop's backgammon set. And, our older son, David, will inherit the one I made for Pop. (Both sons have the middle name of Sadik.)

In the following section about my friend George you will note that he influenced me into becoming an actor. When I was in graduate school in chemistry at Duke University I tried out for a role in Synge's *Playboy of the Western World*. I had a supporting role as Michael James Flaherty. Apparently, I did quite well in that role since when I tried out for a role in Pirandello's *Right You Are If You Think You Are* I got the lead role of Lamberto Laudisi. The play got good reviews and I clipped them and sent copies back to the Bronx. My father never acknowledged receiving them or commented to me about them. Some time later my brother Ralph told me that Pop carried the clippings in his suit jacket and showed them to customers and others. Ralph was the only son who called Pop by his nickname of Dick. In my forties I asked Pop once if I could call him by his first name. He said, "No. I am the Papa." What a wonderful and remarkable man!

### George

We met as freshman in February 1945 at the Bronx High School of Science, and became fast friends for life. George was born on March 31, 1931, and I was born on June 22 of the same year. We both came from families that were not thoroughly integrated into the communities in which we "grewed" up in the Bronx. Yiddish was spoken in his house and Greek in mine from time to time. Checking in the January 1949 Yearbook I found that neither of us were into sports, but we were both active members of many clubs. Also, neither of us was a recipient of any special award or honor. George wrote next to my photo in the Yearbook, "To the Best Friend A Fella

Ever Had. For heaven's sake! Good Luck! George." Some 68 years later that friendship was still strong and vital.

We both passed the rigorous entrance exams to The City College of CCNY which was a free college founded in 1847. I recall that the students were out on strike when we started school. This was because the semester registration fee was raised from \$3.50 to \$5.00! (They lost.) In addition, we had to purchase our own books and pay lab fees for certain courses. George had been "designated" by his family to be a dentist, and I was similarly "designated" to be a medical doctor. (I did eventually become a "doctor" with a Ph. D. in chemistry.) For George this all changed when he joined Dramsoc, the student theater program. He got thoroughly hooked on theater, and went on to a distinguished academic career in that area. George met his wife, Gilda, in Dramsoc. One day when we were sitting around in the cafeteria George said to me, "You have a wonderful voice and should get into theater." That comment changed my life.

As mentioned above, I did try out for roles when I was a graduate student in chemistry at Duke University, and acted in two plays. I did not get back into theater until we moved from Chicago to Yellow Springs in 1966. I also started writing plays, and have written 17 of them. My wife, Charlotte, and I were involved in Center Stage in its early days. She sang in most of the Gilbert and Sullivan operettas, and I mainly worked on sets and construction. We did one of my plays as a staged reading—it was *August 6<sup>th</sup>* and was concerned with the bombing of Hiroshima (Tony

Dallas had the lead role). I also directed three of their plays including *Right You Are* and *Arsenic and Old Lace*. The set in *Arsenic and Old Lace* was designed and built under Jim Rose's supervision. He also played the role of the minister. The two lead roles of the "weird" murderous sisters who helped lonely old men to their graves were the late Micki Adams and Betty Kline. (The bodies were buried in the basement where their brother dug the locks for the Panama Canal. He thought he was Theodore Roosevelt and famously blew his bugle when he charged up the stairs of San Juan hill.) Among others, Ron Siemer played the detective lieutenant and Ed McKinney was the superintendent of the local insane asylum. Len Cargan was the stage manager: one of his jobs was to get ten older Village men each evening to come up from the basement and take a bow! At any rate, my involvement in theater started with George's comment in a cafeteria.

George and I lived far apart across the country and only met infrequently (although we always kept in touch with each other) until later in life when our son David and his family lived in Cupertino and then Folsom, CA. So when we visited our family we were able to also get together with George and Gilda. From Folsom we met halfway at Lodi for a Japanese lunch followed by a visit to the local Ghirardelli outlet, with endless conversation. It always seemed like we had just been together a short time ago rather than one year. When I called George to set up our annual meeting in March 2017 he told me that he had just been diagnosed with a fourth-stage cancer. So, we kept in touch by phone and Email

until George's death on November 14<sup>th</sup>. His daughter informed me by phone that evening. I had trouble sleeping that night and got up and wrote the following three-line poems in his memory, and in an attempt to cope with the loss of my oldest friend:

George is gone  
how convey the sadness, the  
emptiness  
I write . . .

the director has left us  
his raspy voice talking  
the words filling my soul

that forceful energy  
positive, loving, teaching  
engraved deep within me

always opinionated  
discoursing profoundly  
the director has left us

we were students together  
learners and hikers and dreamers  
and now . . .

my brother George  
is no more  
memories sustain me

Memories sustain us, do they not?

*Rubin Battino is a Professor Emeritus of Chemistry, and a licensed professional clinical counselor. He has many publications in chemistry, published a few three-line poems and written many more, and has published ten books on psychotherapy.*

SUNSET  
*by Robert Paschell*

Sunset.  
Quiet descends.  
In the gray dusk  
white ghosts of sycamores  
rise like rivers of smoke,  
reaching for the stars.

WHAT WE WEAR—AND FORSWEAR  
*by Linda Chernick*

*Doppelgangers* are everywhere  
Clad in black leggings, or dark-wash jeans,  
We dress to conceal bulges and sags.  
With blunt-cut hair "colored" to hide the gray,  
We're not giving in—  
NO, WE ARE NOT!  
We Zumba,  
Bob up and down in "Aqua Fitness" class,  
Practice hot yoga/yin yoga/dog yoga.  
We meditate,  
Get massaged,  
Down multi-mega vitamins, seaweed and soy—  
(No more fries or shakes, alas)—  
Pursuing ultimate Wellness  
And spiritual equanimity.  
We devour best-sellers for book group,  
And engage in "brain training"  
To keep our little gray cells primed and up to snuff.  
All this effort is exhausting, really.  
But we've bought into the prevailing *zeitgeist*:  
"Sixty is the new forty."  
NOT!

*Linda Z. Chernick grew up in Springfield and moved to Yellow Springs in 2015 from Boston where she had lived for many years. She is pleased to have numerous models of vital, graceful aging in the Village while struggling with her generation's (Baby Boomers) ambivalence about the process. She previously published a chapbook, *The Turning: Poems of Love, Loss and Renewal*, and regularly participates in Conrad Balliet's poetry group.*

# Hey, What's Wrong With Me?

by Joan Horn

"What do you think I have, doctor? I nap all the time and feel lacking in any energy," I said.

"Let's check you for anemia, Joan." (Blood tests, and a later visit.)

It's not anemia, it's Mononucleosis, and passed along by viruses, so antibacterial treatment won't help. And most people contract this disease in their teens or early twenties. "It's known as a 'kissing disease,' since it's usually passed along through the saliva or other body fluids," he said. "As an 80+ year old, divorced for 28 years, I don't remember when I kissed anybody," I said.

Returning home, I start taking naps during the day, some lasting several hours. No fever, no muscle ache, no rash, no swollen glands. I was told I should not exert myself very much, and get lots of sleep. This was something I could do, and did. . . .

My life changed markedly. It was a simple change in my *way of life*—for the next *ten months*!!

It meant I hired someone to cut my lawn all summer. And I hired someone else to tend my flower gardens. I had earlier in the summer planned a trip with two lady friends to our family cottage in Ontario on the Severn River, where we could swim, canoe, hike through the forests, and eat well (*and I could cook*, which I love to do) for a week. The only hitch now was that I was carrying the virus, I would be communicable and might pass along my disease to the others, so *they*

would have to do the cooking. The best I might manage to do would be to read, which I love, but why drive twelve hours to sit on the couch and just read? What would be the point of that? So with great regret, I told the friends I would have to cancel the trip. A dismal way to face the summer.

If I lived carefully, I might throw off this disease and be rid of it. But it got tiresome, and increasingly scary as the weeks dragged on, and this didn't happen. I did manage to go to an occasional movie or concert and maybe out to dinner. But there would be no hugging of friends returning to visit. No thanking someone with a quick hug. I managed to plant myself a little distance from anyone, to avoid infecting them. It became my way of life, and pretty dull. A lot of apologizing to friends for seemingly ignoring them, or being abrupt in our conversations and distancing how far I stood away from them. And always explaining about my Mono. My friends kept saying "Why don't you get a second opinion?" I'd respond by saying there is no known cure for this except lots of rest. One time I even broached the idea to my family doctor of going up to the Cleveland Clinic, a place I'd heard about my whole life as a center of many types of doctors who worked on many diseases. I was told it would be impossible to get an appointment for *months* so I didn't pursue it.

Then one evening I got a call from an old boyfriend back home who is a doctor himself, and when

he asked how I was, I told him about the Mono. "I know someone up there in Cleveland," he said. "Let me call and see if he can tuck you into his schedule soon."

That was done, and I got a call not from the Clinic but from the University Hospital, where many other doctors worked. I was told a Dr. Armitage would see me on a date only several weeks away. I agreed to that, and excitedly lined up my brother who lives in Yellow Springs to help drive me up. He was already familiar with Cleveland, having taken his wife up there for eye surgery just a year ago.

As luck would have it, we drove up in a snow storm, and ended finishing it in the dark, to find a hotel we had reserved to stay in overnight, to be ready for an early-morning appointment the next day. So far so good, in spite of the horrendous conditions for the five-hour drive.

The next morning we two made our way through the myriad huge buildings to the right one and fairly quickly found our way to the right spot. The doctor soon came in, we introduced ourselves, and I laid out my problems with the diagnosis and disease which had so greatly affected my life. Armitage listened well, said my family doctor sent him 61 pages of notes and test results in advance, and suggested we do another set of blood tests to corroborate what he thought.

This happened expeditiously and we were soon given the results, which Armitage pointed out showed I had not Mono, but a deficiency of Vitamin B-12, which although I'd taken B-12 tablets for years, had shown no results. In fact, it looked like I had an inability to absorb that through my system and



needed monthly injections intramuscularly instead—a fairly common problem many patients had. He said he would phone me at home later in the week to make sure that was the case. We left, hopeful and somewhat relieved. If a monthly shot could overturn years of lacking of Vitamin B-12, then that would be a wonderful development.

With great expectancy for a happy outcome, we had lunch and headed for home, this time with no snow plaguing our travels. I am delighted to report it was just as was anticipated. Dr. Armitage phoned me at home a few days later and said shots of B-12 would be the answer. I have now had my first shot and within a few hours felt like the proverbial "new woman."

The moral of this is if one diagnosis doesn't seem to do the trick, go for that second opinion, and maybe come up with the right treatment. This had been a difficult call—one "marker" in my blood showed I had had Mono a long time ago, when I was in about fourth grade, had recovered from that, and another marker in the same blood showed I had no signs of active Mono in me now. I was no longer a pariah to my friends and neighbors. I can hug everybody I want to with no fear. I don't expect to live the rest of my life overwhelmed by that image of Mono keeping me napping most of each day.

Thinking about our whole world in the context of my disease, if it isn't too great a stretch, perhaps our various countries are operating on defective information that is causing us to react in a totally incorrect manner. If we truly sought out proper solutions, for correctly identified problems, we'd be far better off. It's worth thinking about!

## EMERGING FROM THE GLEN

*By Robert Paschell*

Emerging from the Glen, I saw a young man carrying something in his arms into the clearing beside Trailside Museum. He had his back to me, so I couldn't see what it was, but his tender attitude and deportment suggested it was some kind of animal. A cat? I thought, perhaps glimpsing (with my poor vision) a dangling tail. Turned out it was a gleaming six-foot black rat snake in its writhing prime, threading through his hands, seeking the ground like a living divining rod descending from the bottom of a fire escape. He confided to me, in all innocence, how, on one occasion he was sitting with it on the ground and it slid in one pant leg of his shorts and out the other. Oh, snaky darling! Today it glided straight between my feet as I stood, as if they were the rubber-bumpered, New Balanced Pillars of Hercules, and it, a sparkling, black coal train, undulating, articulated river barge snake. Plying grassy waters. Sea serpent on land. Viking prow bold, dragon proud. Beautifully contained.

## IN 1987 I RETURNED

*by Robert Paschell*

In 1987 I returned to my hometown of Washington D.C. to see a Georgia O'Keeffe retrospective in East Wing of the National Gallery of art (how appropriate that her work was displayed in a GAL-lery), a beautiful building where the visitor becomes part of a living tableau.

Vast crowds of people showed up to see the retrospective: Long queues waiting to get the tickets of their eyes punched by holy splendor. Inside the exhibit it was a crush, with guards chivvying us along to make way for the multitudes, and people were moving along, by God, and I stood there like a deer in the headlights of her genius, like a rabbit beneath a glowing overarching moon, whiskers twitching in artistic currents (as if her soul had merged with the soul of flowers, with the soul of the earth), bathed in her sensual landscapes—a bleached cow skull floating wraithlike in the composition: death sitting in a love seat with beauty.

Today I took an inaugural walk in the Glen as the world awoke from winter's slumber. As I crossed a footbridge my senses were assailed by deep gurgling, rushing, rippling, sun filling the small valley, dappling it with tree limb shadows, some of last year's hydrangeas in the foreground, their stiff bracts like frozen propellers in a tangled mass of dried blossoms. The stream flowed, the sunlight poured down, and I felt as if I could have stood there forever.

*Robert Paschell has lived in Yellow Springs for fifty-two years and found it a supportive place for his poetry and art.*

# *A Man for All Seasons*

by Michael Hughes

A few months ago, one of our friends, originally from Viet Nam, came by the house with a dozen eggs from their henhouse. It was a gesture of gratitude for some furniture and clothing that we had given them. When I placed the fragile gifts into the refrigerator, I reflected on a previous adventure which I experienced over sixty years ago. It would take me to a magical place which was the life-long home of a gentle man who would help shape my future.

Time spent with my father, the Mayor, on Saturday mornings was rare and deeply coveted. When he asked me to accompany him to the Funderburg farm, on the south edge of the village, I jumped at the invitation. As we turned right after traversing the bridge above the railroad tracks, the fall foliage encroached on the road until a mowed field came into view. When we exited our austere Chevy Biscayne in the barnyard, my senses came alive with the sights, sounds, and scents of the farm; manic chickens scurrying about, cawing crows circling above, and pungent hickory nuts aging. As we approached the barn, we were greeted by a warm, elderly man dressed in coveralls. My dad introduced me to Faye Funderburg who had farmed this property for decades before handing the reins to his son, Bob. It was our good fortune that Bob had grown up with Dad and the connection between our families provided us the privilege of getting fresh eggs from time to time.

Bob Funderburg was a farmer

at heart and a teacher out of necessity. That is not to say he was not a dedicated educator, as he was. But given the choice, he would probably have been happy to provide for his family while ploughing fields and raising livestock. It was fortuitous for a generation of Yellow Springs youth that the family farm was hard pressed to provide for a family of five, which included Bob, his wife, Jane, and three sons.

My first exposure to Bob as a teacher/coach was during sixth grade. Again, it was on Saturday mornings during the winter months that about twenty of us pre-teens gathered in the Mills Lawn gymnasium to learn the fundamentals of basketball while playing 4 x 6 minute quarters. I did not realize until years later that this recreational league was an opportunity for Coach Bob to scout and develop his soon-to-be junior-high-school basketball team. I have always given him credit for forcing me to use my left hand while shooting a layup from the left side and for filling one of the three lanes on a fast break. (These early lessons were instrumental in my becoming a point guard in high school and going on to make the freshman squad at Dartmouth College, coached by Big East legend Dave Gavitt.)

When I tried out for the seventh-eighth-grade team the following year, Coach Bob quickly placed me alongside four older eighth graders whom he had also schooled in fundamentals, including "no-look passes" that tricked most defensive players who would follow our eyes

when we passed the ball in another direction. Our team was comprised of smart, quick players who formed a cohesive unit registering a 16-1 record in the 1960-61 season. The victories included winning the county tournament and an invitational tournament at season's end. Looking back on that team, I realize that Bob had instilled in us fundamentals that lifted us well beyond our years in basketball "intelligence."

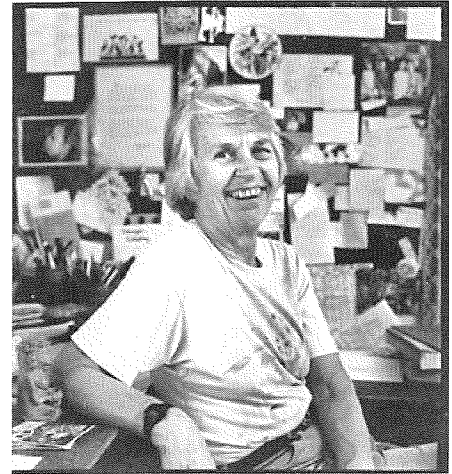
There was also the teacher Bob who was able to endure the raging hormones and obnoxious behavior of us eighth graders who, due to a space shortage, were housed on the second floor of the Municipal Building. (It was ironic for me to be sitting in a classroom, acting out my teenage immaturity, just a few paces from where my father held Mayor's court every Monday night.) Bob exhibited an amazing patience when working out a math problem on the blackboard or delivering a science lesson during the storm created by spitballs, giggling, and adolescent indifference to learning. But those storms never lasted long as he had the commanding presence to restore order without raising his voice.

Bob lived ninety-two years and he retired to live out his golden years on the family farm. In order to mitigate my sorrow when I read his obituary, I travelled in my mind back across the bridge and into the barnyard with the image of Bob as a child atop his pony herding the last few head of cattle into the barn against the backdrop of the setting sun.

*Michael Hughes, one of the third generation of the Hughes family to live in Yellow Springs, has since moved on but continues to hold his hometown dear.*

# Hazel The Peacemaker

by Shawn Leon Tulecke



"Are you ready for a snack now?" Hazel asked, staring lovingly and expectantly from her desk in the corner of her room. I was lying on her bed. I rubbed my eyes, just barely waking from a nap, stretched, and yawned. I was four years old and had never been babysat by anybody before. I had fallen asleep distressed by being left by my mother, Kari, her daughter, who had important business to attend to without me. It didn't make sense to me that my mother would have to leave me. I didn't want food when grandma asked, but I agreed to peanut butter and jelly, and then by the time we filed out of her room, down the hall, and made our way downstairs to the kitchen I was hungry. Before I was done scarfing down her homemade bread, peanut butter and jelly sandwich, and milk, I was playing with one of the toys she kept in her toy corner, and I had completely forgotten my distress. By the time my mother arrived, grandma had taken out her costume box. We were riffling through it, trying things on, and laughing. I was having so much fun I didn't want to leave. "I'll stay here with grandma, you can go," I said to mom. This became a routine. Each time, sitting in grandma's room, mom and grandma would turn to me, and tell me mom was leaving. I would get distressed, fall promptly asleep, and then wake to grandma working away at her desk. As soon as she saw I was waking up she would swivel around in her desk chair and ask, "Are you ready for a snack now?"

For me grandma has always been about action. That's why she was at her desk when I awoke. That's why I always got a snack. That's why there were always toys to play with in her toy corner.

Twister was her favorite game, and mine too. People would twirl a dial, like Wheel of Fortune, and then put their hand or foot on a colored spot on a large six-by-six-foot board depending on what they rolled, taking turns until everyone had their hands and feet sprawled out over the board. She liked to play it with several people. She liked when everyone would get tangled up with each other, work together to keep the game going, and eventually fall into a big puddle together. Sometimes I would play several twister games in a row with her. I was a shy kid, but she always brought my outgoing side out of me. When she gave me the birthday present of gymnastics lessons, I eventually became an outgoing kid because I would do backflips in front of the Antioch School PE class on the golf course, and all of a sudden people wanted to talk with me. She would love when I did handstands in the grass, and tell me it reminded her of her father, Charles Batchelor, who was quite involved with the YMCA culture and taught PE at a boy's boarding school in New York City.

Grandma was always active. When it was a nice sunny day in Yellow Springs, she would be on her roller skates, or bicycle. When it snowed, she would be on cross-

country skis. When it was neither sunny nor snowy, she would be in the Antioch pool. When there was a democratic uprising in Nicaragua in the 1980s, she would be collecting donations of books, clothing, medical supplies, and random things on her porch to bring down to the Yellow Springs Sister Village she started in Jicado (pronounced hee-cah-doh). When Ronald Reagan secretly directed the CIA to sell cocaine to raise money to put down the democratic uprising in Nicaragua she was getting between Jicado villagers and invading US hired guns from Honduras. When a local polluter was poisoning the air upstream from YS, she was organizing non-violent direct action, leading a group of Yellow Springs residents on a march leaving town, and then getting arrested in the parking lot of an important office building surrounded by news cameras and journalists, eventually forcing restrictions on pollution still in force today. When there was a march on Washington, D.C, she was with a group protesting at the Pentagon and getting arrested for crawling under the legs of a security guard, and past him to a restricted area. When the School of Americas, a US-allied Latin American dictator

torture training camp, got kicked out of Panama, and ended up at Fort Benning Georgia, she was one of the people doing several months' prison time, along with her second husband, Bill Houston, for crossing onto the military base as part of a mass protest.

She has always been willing to talk, to a point, and then she wants action, and she has a will as tough as stainless steel. But she is too smart to be abrasive—too witty, and fun.

Many people in Yellow Springs Village know her through her participation in Re-evaluation Counseling, known among the converted as co-counseling, short for cooperative counseling. Essentially co-counseling is the idea that we can support each other, taking turns counseling each other, rather than relying on professionals who are unaffordable to many. She was a co-counseling local trainer. But co-counseling was never just talking about problems, at least not at grandma's house.

She moved to her house in Yellow Springs in 1967 with her husband Walt Tulecke, who was transitioning from research to teaching at Antioch, and they brought their four daughters, Peg, Kari, Heidi, and Kim. It is a big white house on the corner of route 68 and South College Street. There is a big maple tree in the back yard, from which always hung a rope swing in the summers. She would love to have family and friends for a picnic in the back yard, or dinner at her extendable table in her living room with a piano in the corner. There was a big brown sofa she always sat on in the living room, and a round lamp hung low over the sofa from the high ceiling. She would often sit on the sofa, under the lamp, and talk with family or friends in the evenings, or just

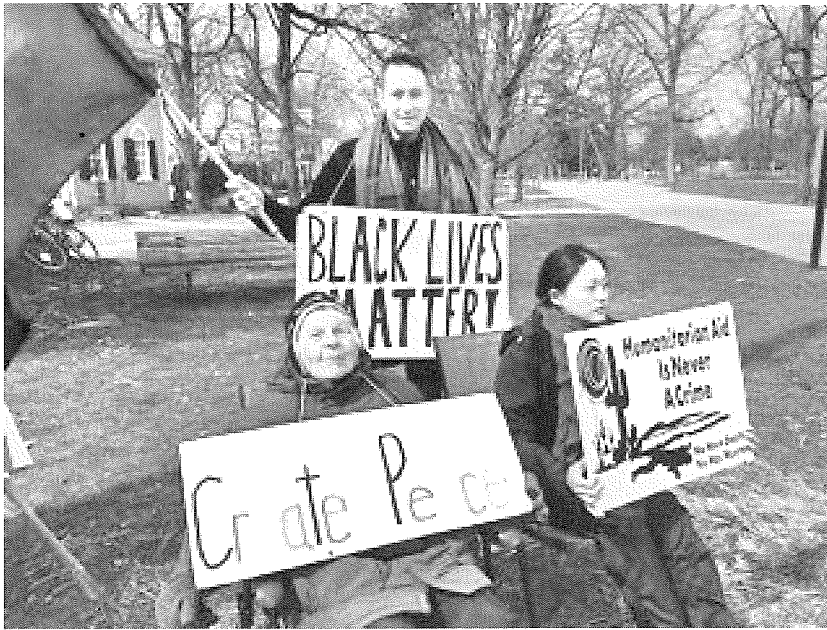
read a book. There always hung an aura of somber content around the house. Sometimes she would put on a record. But when she would have people over for co-counseling the atmosphere was intense. The house has five bedrooms, and after her daughters married and went away to college, and traveled the world, she rented rooms, intentionally below market value. I don't know what it was like for renters when co-counseling was happening, because co-counseling at grandmas house was always very emotional. People would be crying, and then a second later laughing, and then crying again. Then it would be the next person in the circle's turn. I am pretty sure though, at the height of her co-counseling days, if there were renters living in the house, they would be attending the circle, or would have been warned in advance of the meeting. Many renters were students, women leaving bad situations, or people getting divorced. Many ex-renters have told me she became like a second

mother to them. One renter even became her husband, Bill Houston, a mathematics professor at Antioch College.

At six years old I was quite startled to witness grown adults bawling their eyes out, and laughing hysterically during co-counseling, and then being completely composed and elated as they left the house. I don't know exactly what effect this had on me, but I could see adults had problems, too, and that they were figuring things out, too. Perhaps it gave me the courage to share in this article about my own distress at having my mother leave me for the first time when grandma babysat me—my distress was not unusual in this place, but a part of a learning process that grandma helped facilitate in her home with children and adults alike.

Above all I have known grandma to be a peacemaker. And it didn't start with the weekly peace vigil she founded sixteen years ago. Even from those first memories of her at her desk when she babysat





me, and I would awake from a nap, sometimes we would have small conversations about her work, since I was interested in what she was up to at her desk. One time she explained to me that she was organizing a boycott of war toys. It was hard for me to understand at the age of five. I didn't think that just because I stopped playing with war toys they would go away; after all, my friends would keep playing, and buying the toys. But she explained that she felt that the little actions that we take do add up over time, and that if we stop buying war toys, and educate others to do the same, maybe this would lead to a bigger change in how we teach our children, and therefore how we are raised to think. Another conversation I had with her, when I awoke from my nap and asked her what she was doing at her desk, she explained she was ending her involvement in a group based on the east coast, and I asked her why she needed to work on that, why not just stop? She said, "Well, I want to stop, but I don't want the group to stop." I asked her, "Why not?" She

said, "I guess because that would mean the group only happened because of who I was, rather than because of what I thought the group was about." She wanted the idea to live on, even without her.

*Shawn Tulecke-Paulson is a writer, journalist, and professional worker most recently employed in events for Oxford City Council in England. He returned to Yellow Springs Ohio, where he grew up and graduated Yellow Springs High School, to take care of his grandmother, lifelong peacemaker Hazel Tulecke, with his wife Tashi, so that Hazel could remain in her home after the passing of his grandfather-in-law Bill Houston in 2015, a retired Antioch math professor.*

## Carpe Diem

*It's wrong to know, dear heart, don't ask to see  
 What term the fates have fixed for you, for me.  
 Forget the fortunetellers. Learn to live  
 With all the wintry seasons Love may give;  
 Perhaps the very last is now, or more  
 Will break the sea against a rocky shore.  
 Consider: drink your wines and trim your hopes,  
 For so with life's despair the wise man copes.  
 We gab, and grudging summer speeds away;  
 Mistrust the most tomorrow — live today!*

*Horace, Carm. I, 11*

*Tr. M. J. Kraus*

*Scr. Jaimie Wilke*

*Michael Kraus: I taught Latin for 17 years and took a course on Horace's Odes one summer at the University of Georgia.*



# Regarding Ray

by Sheila Filler

I climb up onto my Uncle Ray's lap, and fit perfectly. I trace the lines on his face and stroke his stubbled chin, so different from my clean-shaven father's. My fingertips retain an image of Ray long after the rest of me forgets him.

And forget him I do. On our yearly visits to my father's family in Massachusetts, he is seldom around and on the rare occasions he shows up, he has almost nothing to say.

Years, even decades pass, when I don't think about Ray at all. But then, last summer, my cousin, Todd, gave me a box of Flaherty family photos. Among its many treasures is a sepia photograph of a sturdy toddler. On the back it says, simply, *Raymond*. And somehow that image compels me to begin to rummage through the attic of my mind for memories of my uncle.

At some point in my childhood, I become aware that there is something not quite right about Raymond. My father recalled that his mother had been in labor for days before her second son was born. Perhaps he had been damaged at birth, Dad speculates. He also recalls that Raymond was such a pretty little boy, that women used to stop the family in the street to admire him. Sometimes they would pat his head and give him a penny.

Soon enough, however, Ray became a problem child. My dad was sent out to "find his little brother" who wandered and kept company with boys from "the wrong side of the tracks." He hung out with these

types as he grew older. Perhaps he started drinking then? I know that he became a drinker at a young age. And I know that he couldn't be counted on to help his immigrant family with the milk delivery business. Those duties fell to my father and his sisters.

Rumors, narratives swirl in my head. Did Ray actually steal his mother's wedding ring and sell it to buy alcohol? I heard it somewhere and it sounds like a stereotypical alcoholic sort of thing to do. Did he join the Navy and later receive a dishonorable discharge? I don't know but I heard that, too.

I come upon a letter from my Aunt Madelyn to my father that warns him not to send money to Ray for shoes because he will just use it to buy something else. The "something else" is not stated.

Then I remember that I have a primary source on the subject of Raymond. It is a draft of an undated letter from my father to his Aunt Margaret. (In family lore, she is the "judgmental" one.) He wrote: *I know you get upset at times about Ray. I suppose I too should be upset about him, but I'm not. He was just not endowed with the intelligence and the ambition to make a success of earning a living. As far as I can see he never shall be more than he is and trying to change him is just a waste of time and nervous energy. I just feel sorry for him and for Ma and Pa for the heartbreaks he has caused them. I am not trying to defend him. He is just one of many of the World's unfortunates but I would never criticize Ma and Pa for his actions or for what they are or are not doing for him. They have a feeling of responsibility for him that you and I can never have because he is their son.*

I look again at the studio photograph of my uncle and examine it

closely. He appears to be about two or three years old. A rimless cap sits atop his curl-bedecked head. He is standing on a chair clutching the ornate back with his small hand. The other hand grasps a teddy bear. He is wearing a short-sleeved dress with a pinafore, stockings, and boots. He is clearly a beloved son for they spent precious resources for a record of his childhood. He looks resolute, and, yes, normal, capable of standing still long enough for the camera. His future looks as promising as that of any other little boy from Holyoke, Massachusetts. I don't know what went wrong with my uncle. Was the alcoholism—the Irish Virus—the cause or the result of a life that confounded him? The question is unanswerable. It always was.

Still, I am not quite able to let go of my curiosity about the life and times of Raymond. I decide to write to my cousin Todd and ask him what he knows. Todd grew up in Massachusetts and frequently saw our uncle. This is what he wrote:

*Regarding Ray—it was my opinion he had the "virus." He was a nice enough guy when he was sober which seemed like about half the time. He didn't always live with Grandma and Madelyn. Although I can remember a few times finding him in the cellar "sleeping one off." He was married to some Irish (born in Holyoke) lass who probably had a lot in common with him. Not sure, but I think that was not too long before he died. As I recall, I believe they met in rehab and it didn't last too long. I remember taking my mom and Madelyn to visit Ray as he was wasting away at the TB hospital in Westfield. That was after I got out of the service, probably about '64 or '65. I think he was about 58.*

*(continued on next page)*

# The Night that Martin Died

by Joyce McCurdy

The Human Relations Committee invited all social studies teachers to discuss integrating the curriculum. The absence of African American accomplishments sent a message that nothing worthy of recognition had been achieved. The NAACP of Greene County and professors from Central State and Wilberforce were attempting to erase the omission. This was a crisp, cool April evening and changing spring weather was as unpredictable as the gathered group. The commonality was that we wanted to do the right thing. However, the multiple approaches, varying backgrounds, and levels of expertise made the decisions more arduous to determine as well as fulfill. Of course, many definitions existed of what the right thing would be.

This was the first political meeting that I had attended in Yellow Springs; I was perhaps the youngest person in the group. Introductions had been made and the meeting scheduled for 7:00 was just beginning with opening remarks.

## *(Regarding Ray, continued)*

But the last sentence of Cousin Todd's letter more than pleases me—I find that it comforts me. He wrote, *He sure had his faults (don't we all?), but I really liked him.*

*Sheila Filler, an Antioch alum, has called Yellow Springs home for more than fifty years. She belongs to two writing groups and finds writing to be a path to self-discovery.*

Rushing up the creaking oak steps urgently, taking two at a time, a panic-struck young man burst into the room. Those chairing the meeting huddled together, listened, gasped, and held one another tightly. Turning to those present, to include us, the moderator sadly said we should leave. The meeting will be at a later date. With difficulty, he explained that a shooting had taken place at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee; Dr. Martin Luther King, shot while standing on the balcony, had been taken to St. James Hospital.

Silence so still, the people left slowly filing out of the meeting; their somber faces revealed pain, with eyes withdrawn as if mesmerised by what seemed strange and incomprehensible. This was something many suspected might happen sometime; yet, grasping the reality was difficult. Going down the steps the only sound was the shoes' soles tapping the stairs and this quiet procession foreshadowed a funeral. Driving home, our minds wandered to what if or perhaps he'll survive; how will the nation respond, and will violence ensue?

SCLC events flashed through the mind: King's dismal Chicago visit, his speech given at the Riverside Church in NYC, the planning of the March against Poverty, the stagnation of Viet Nam War, and the anger of the crowds confronting the recent non-violent marches.

Presently the combination of a fair wage for garbage workers both black and white showed the move-

ment merging with the poor, now protesting economic injustice as well as civil rights.

Perhaps, King had broadened his base, making him more threatening. The nightly news lamented his death, and whirled through angry crowds in the streets in Chicago, Detroit, and New York. I wondered what the families in Yellow Springs who knew King personally would be telling their children. What would be their reactions tomorrow and what could one say, except why.

Years later, I visited the museum in Memphis and stood in the room where James Earl Ray waited a long, long time to take the shot and the horror of this senseless crime became more tawdry, grizzly, and even more bizarre. 1968 had been a time of terror so bewildering.

As in all tragedies, closure is needed. Textbooks funded by parents were purchased, a course developed, a teacher assigned temporarily for the high school. These solutions were a band-aid covering a gaping wound. King's death left a void in leadership; his recent speeches revealed his evolving concerns when he had addressed not only civil rights, but also poverty, and the Viet Nam War. His own awareness that he may not make it to the mountaintop was given the day before his death and this message still haunts supporters, especially those who remember the night that Martin died.

*Joyce McCurdy: The joy of knowing people, writing, teaching, and chatting with them is why I see Y.S. as a comfortable place to be. I reside six minutes away but it is not the address that matters; it is the state of mind: it seems like Bolinas, Calif., in Ohio.*

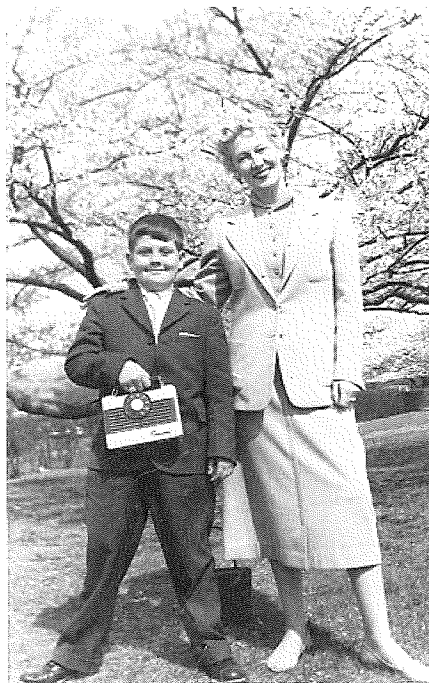
# My Mother's Trip to San Francisco

by Peter Whitson

Did you ever meet my mother, Nancy Politan? She loved to visit us in Yellow Springs. She said it reminded her of West End, New Jersey, where we lived. Yellow Springs reminds me of West End, too—but that's another story. This story is a family story told many times around our kitchen table, involving an incredible mass murder drug trial and the horrible politics of judicial death-penalty sentencing. There are also elements of truth, bravery, and strength. It is a true story. I know . . . I was there.

There are several people in the story. First is my mother, Nancy Politan. She is one of three character witnesses for the defense. How this happened will unfold. Paul and Lou are my brothers and sons of Nancy. We have the defendant, who has already been tried and convicted of mass murder. Mr. Paisano, the defense lawyer, is a perfect copy of Columbo. You remember Columbo, don't you? There is Mr. Cuchillo the prosecuting attorney. He reminded me of a wolverine. The presiding judge, Honorable (but a little sleazy) R. Boyle. Finally, the woman dressed in black. She is possibly a relative of the victims (I'm not sure). But she was present and knitting at the trial every day. Names were changed to protect the guilty.

Just so you know, this all began with a phone call in early October. My brother Paul called to ask me a favor. There was a mass murder trial in San Francisco. The defendant, who was convicted and found



guilty, had volunteered about four years ago at the senior center Nancy supervised in New Jersey. Paul said Mom has been asked to come out and testify as a character witness. To be brief, my brothers Louie and Paul could not go. That left me to go with her.

"Will I go with Mommy?" He explained that I would fly in from Ohio Sunday morning, meet up at Newark airport, and then we would fly to San Francisco to testify. All expenses paid—who wouldn't go? "Sure," I said, "you gotta be kidding . . . where was that we meet up again?"

Sunday morning Nancy and I were bound for California. The flight was good. The arrival was well managed. We were greeted at the airport by the defense team and escorted to the beautiful San Francisco hotel—this was not their first

rodeo! I'm dreaming right? After a wonderful dinner, we sat around the table talking. Mr. Paisano, attorney for the defense, explained that the defendant was found guilty of murdering three victims—on mostly circumstantial evidence. However, the death sentence part of the trial is now the issue . . . the *only* issue. (At the time California still had the death penalty.)

The defense goal—avoid the death penalty! Both judge and prosecutor would benefit politically from a death-sentence conviction. The prosecutor was running for district attorney and the judge for state attorney general. Both had a "tough on crime" platform. Another death penalty conviction would help their cause. Our task was to be prepared for anything!

"And what do we do?" asked my mother.

Mr. Paisano patiently explained again that we are basically trying to prevent a death-penalty sentence. "You are not testifying about guilt or innocence; that has already been established—although, I will say, rather circumstantially. What you are testifying about is his character—so far as you can know it."

He added, "I understand the defendant volunteered and worked at the senior center you ran in New Jersey."

"Yes, for several years. He left about four years ago. He helped regularly and worked hard. The staff and seniors all liked him. It is hard to believe something like this has happened," Nancy said.

Mr. Paisano was reassuring. "Remember, what you and the two other character witnesses are testifying about is his character—so far as you can know it. I thought to myself, *"And yes, this could be a take the stand and be terrified moment."*

I could tell the anxiety was growing in my mother. Sensing this also, Paisano, trying to reassure her, pointed out the only thing that might be a bit of a problem would be Cuchillo (the prosecutor)'s cross examination. With that, my mother flashed me her "I gotta go pee" look. Whenever she was stressed or anxious, she "had to go pee."

Picking up on her alarm, Paisano continued, "Nancy, I'll be with you every step of the way through your testimony," adding, "and you will get a chance to see how the other witnesses handle the situation because I have you scheduled to testify last."

*"And sometimes you have to be careful what you ask for,"* came into my mind.

Mom would be last to testify—a well-thought-out defense plan indeed! However, Cuchillo, the prosecuting attorney, had other plans. Cuchillo did not want to discuss the defendant's character; rather he wanted to "put on trial" the character witness's belief about capital punishment. And as with most skilled attorneys, he was deftly able to confuse and befuddle the witnesses to the point their testimony completely lacked any credibility.

On the beginning day of testimony, the first character witness was sliced to pieces by Cuchillo's cross examination. The witness stood his ground but Cuchillo was relentless, all of which was witnessed by my mother, who frequently turned to me whispering,



"Peter, I have to pee."

The next day the second witness experienced a similar fate except Cuchillo had to be even more ruthless. The woman was a worthy opponent, but in the end Cuchillo just wore her down. As he finished his cross, Cuchillo looked over at my mother as if to say, *"Just wait till I get my hands on you, Mrs. P!"* Again my mother whispered, "Peter, I have to go pee." The woman in black—totally unfazed—continued her knitting.

After witnessing the two previous days' cross-examinations, my mother was clearly very upset. Paisano, of course, was understanding and patient with her. They carefully went over the material for her testimony in the morning, which seemed to help. But it was plain to see she was dreading Cuchillo's cross-examination.

Dawn came as expected. The time of terror drew nigh. My mother put on a brave front, but it was clear she was worried about the path ahead. Paisano had gone over her testimony and questions very carefully the night before. He again reminded her to stay close to the outline and she would be just fine.

The actual defense testimony

went just as planned. My mother performed like a trooper—she followed the script to the letter. But the clock was running and the time of terror was approaching—Cuchillo's cross-examination!

You know the old adage *"Never ask a question you're not prepared to hear the answer to?"* Well, after a perfectly led character witness testimony, Mr. Paisano, in summation, politely asked, "Mrs. Politan, do you have anything you would like to add?"

"Yes, I do, Mr. Paisano," she said. Paisano dropped his notes to the floor. (Just like Columbo!)

"Please, go right ahead," he said to her with noticed hesitation. As he fumbled to pick up his notes, it was hard for him to hide his worry.

Nancy started off faintly, "Well, Mr. Paisano, it just seems to me"—she took a deep breath—"it seems to me, if that were my son sitting over there—"she pointed at the defendant and looked right at me! I thought, *"Ma, What did I do?"* She continued, "If that were my son sitting over there, I would pray that somewhere, somehow, in this world there might be *some, some tiny bit of . . . of compassion to spare*

*(continued on page 24)*

# A Bridge of Song

by Janeal Turnbull Ravndal

Returning from the gym I see the letter in the mailbox, and my heart sings.

It's from David who started his now-sixty-some years here in Yellow Springs where his father taught at Antioch. I met David eight or so years later in New Hampshire. We, like his parents, were faculty at a new, experimental Quaker high school on a commune, a working farm. Still in our early twenties, we were the youngest couple. Some years more than a dozen small faculty children shared our rural campus with the six to eight teenagers in each of the five faculty homes.

David was one of the older of the "little" kids growing up among us. I don't know if he was among the band whose mischief included sneaking into houses—maybe during faculty meeting—and doing a good deed. I think at our house I found a laundry load of diapers already hung out on the line to dry.

Likely David helped his father in the big, organic garden. He also played the violin.

His father, a fine pianist and choir director as well as our small school's Russian language teacher, wrote lots of the songs we sang together in community gatherings. Young David wrote some music, too. I love his rousing, three-part round to the old verse: "Engine, engine, number nine / Sliding down Chicago line / When-she's polished she will shine"—and I'll gladly teach it to you.

David's family left The Meeting

School before we did. It was years before I knew him again. I remember learning, perhaps at his mother's memorial service, that he was supporting himself largely on what he collected by playing his violin in the Boston subway. He'd discovered some of the coins people tossed were worth much more than face value and offered us some of those. Decades later, at his father's memorial, we talked with David again. David sang at that service, and told us afterward that singing would be his new calling. Perhaps he no longer owned a fine violin.

His is an unorthodox career. David lives now somewhere between Brattleboro, Vermont, and West Chesterfield, New Hampshire, under a new bridge. And it is often under that bridge that he sings. He is camping out there, bikes to the friend who gets his mail, to the Christian Science Reading Room, Quaker Meeting and other faith groups, and to whatever work he finds. Recently one job required biking more than a dozen miles to help replace shingles on an old violin repair shop.

Today's letter, like many others, is written on the back of a McDonald's receipt for coffee. I approve of this frugality. My grandmother always wrote to me on the inside of old envelopes. I mail my letters in envelopes I make from old magazine covers.

Besides frugality, David's letters bear testimony to his kindness, curiosity, determination, high stan-

dards, and a serious commitment to his strong, religious faith. In them he's told me his memories of Yellow Springs and asked to know my favorite songs.

I sent him "Not So in Haste, My Heart," a hymn I learned on the piano bench beside my father; and the library helped me find David music and all the verses to the Scottish ballad "Lord Randall, My Son." In today's message David offers to help in improving a new sonnet I sent him and says he disapproves my including the word *shit*, even if it does rhyme. The envelope contains a present, too: three, with stamps, postcards he made for me.

Always I am thankful for my new friendship with David. I note his lack of "success," what might seem to be our busy world's loss of his musical genius, but I'm also proud of him. Almost old enough to be his mother, I of course often think of him with concern, especially on cold, winter nights. David warms my heart, and I choose to believe him that in a sleeping bag under a bridge he can be warm, too. Could it even be that David is exactly where he belongs, making not just the woods around him and that occasional hiker on the bridge over him, and me, but somehow all of us, richer for his perseverance, his presence, and his song?

*Janeal Turnbull Ravndal has lived in Yellow Springs for more than eleven years now. In Rockford Chapel on Sundays she and those gathered sometimes sing, from the Quaker Hymnal, songs written by Joel Hayden, David's father.*



AMERICAN ARCANA

by F. Stuart (Skip) Leeds

My surround is a tableau of small towns  
of haycraft and minor museums that  
come with pungencies: a nose of cloves  
cinnamon and old apples hold the top note with a floor of  
formalin and bleach beneath

It's a gift shop from end to end  
of patriotic sweatshop art and apocalyptic novelties  
and beaded feathered tributes to our  
very own race  
of vanquished natives

There are postcards here with  
windy cartoon lines signifying motion  
but nothing else feels  
much like moving

I've thought to quit this ambering arrangement  
But momentum is like every other damning thing in this  
place  
conserved

*Author's Note: Yellow Springs is a small town, surrounded by  
small towns—so much like us, and so little like us*

SOL EVICTUS

by F. Stuart (Skip) Leeds

Year by year the sun in fall and winter  
Keeps peering lower, prying  
Underneath my canopies, my  
Shuttered gaze, my mystified  
prevision and I know the world's unwinding  
and it knows that I'm unwinding  
call it  
seasons, but there is  
always one that must, at last  
be last

Into that sun I'm cycling—if light is all and all I  
see then how can I be blinded? I cannot send  
word forward faster than such light I'm told, so  
Knowing is for nothing—still I know for sure the leather  
of my mount and the pedals cuffed onto my feet  
the excavating cold of the wind in my lungs  
and this gyroscopic miracle—the vertical benediction  
that keeps me upright is  
sufficient unto this solstice  
the least of days

*Author's Note: Written mid-ride on the Yellow Springs bike  
path last year*

*Skip Leeds: I am a Yellow Springs elder  
(as you define it) with several published  
poems, although these works have nev-  
er appeared elsewhere.*

THE CARILLONNEUR

by F. Stuart (Skip) Leeds

The carillonneur took me  
up the bell tower  
I think to kiss me  
On the First after Leap Day  
But first she taught me  
on bells of the Netherlands  
and the Brussels World Fair  
One perfect song of Joy  
as she raised her fists, as bell-players do,  
but sweetly

And brought them crashing gently  
On the soft edge of my shore

And waves of all that joy  
Pealed and broke across the green, and more  
a message for that afternoon  
in code too plain to break

For anyone about the college wondering, the  
Bells were awakened  
just suddenly awakened  
by two lovers in the tower  
Where she took me  
To kiss me

*Author's Note: An improbably biographical love poem,  
from this Yellow Springer to another*

YOU GO WITH IT

by F. Stuart (Skip) Leeds

It's not just you gone  
It's you and your world gone

It's a gone red convertible with  
ice cream vanilla-seat leather the  
buckle-belts orphan-lost, tossed to the gaps  
the seat-cracks—in a dress fancy taffeta blue  
and a shrug with a fountain of daisies in damask  
you wore to the show there's

A dance dinner supper club  
turn to the twist to the band of a man  
who is named: The Les George Sammy Brown Xavier  
Skitch  
orchestra, come cut a rug in bare (nylon-scabbarded)  
feet

on a runway of oak planks  
and sugared with talcum  
His bow ties came butterfly-cut or in thistles and  
batwings of linen and satin  
the man had some class they were  
never but white

Tumblers are friendly and tinkle with booze  
on the rocks, Manhattan for you but his  
neat scotch and soda your  
fingers in ashes and other Manhattans  
your poppy nail polish smears like  
fond memories failing, this

Isn't a movie but ever so often *your* movie  
so bankrupt of mortals

still your world will go missing and everyone also goodbye  
you go with it

*Author's Note: for my grandmother, who loved her life, but could  
not bear its impermanence*

## DEATH AND STUFF

by Barbara Krabec

Do you ever worry about what will happen to your stuff when you die?  
Not the big stuff, that might enrich your heirs or comfort your church,  
But the small stuff, like your favorite necklace:

Oh, she'll throw this away?"

Or your book collection:

"My son wouldn't know a real book if it fell on his head!"

People say our stuff does not define us, but in some ways it does.  
If we've made it ourselves, or searched for years to complete a set,  
We feel the attachment of time, the pride of creativity.  
We mourn our things, if we lose them.

Maybe the answer is to be buried with a hoard of grave goods,  
like an Egyptian princess,  
Or to burn on a pyre of possessions, like a Viking king.  
People say, "Make memories, not things."  
Collect friends, not stuff."

That is no comfort, when the friends leave you behind,  
When the memories die before the body.  
It is more painful to be left than to leave,  
I would rather let stuff be my legacy than love.

*Barbara Krabec: I am a retired computer software tester, and have lived in Yellow Springs for twenty-five years. I'm a regular attendee at Antioch Wellness Center and downtown coffee shops.*

*(Whitson story, continued from page 20)*

his life." She ended there—nothing more, nothing less. The silence was deafening! The woman dressed in black stopped her knitting.

Everyone waited for what was coming next. Mr. Paisano composed himself just enough to say, "Thank you, Mrs. Politan." Then turning to Cuchillo, he said, "Your witness."

"Mrs. Politan, I'll bet you're shaking in your boots, aren't you?" bellowed a voice from the prosecutor's table. Mr. Cuchillo had been leaning back, almost coiled in his chair, in his shiny Gucci shoes and dazzling Armani suit. He paused, slowly sat up erect, and as threatening as ever, began to ascend to an upright battle posture.

Then he paused for the longest

moment, sat back again, and said, "Mrs. Politan—I have no questions for you." (*I swear to you, I thought I heard the whole courtroom sigh.*)

*And with a mother's love for all,* Nancy replied, "Oh thank you, Mr. Cuchillo!" Her voice started to crack ever so slightly but she added, "God bless you, Mr. Cuchillo."

Cuchillo softly spoke back to her, "Thank you, Mrs. Politan."

I rose and walked over to help her down from the witness stand. "I got to go pee," she whispered to me as I took her hand to help her down the steps. "Momma," I replied, "so do I."

*Peter Whitson's early path was in counseling. Then in 1989 his daughter, Leanne, started a medical training center affiliated with The American Heart Association and asked him to work with her. He has been doing so ever since. Writing has always been a hobby and now that he is mostly retired he finds more time for it.*

PAEAN

by Joan Champie

we live among giants, you and I,  
giants older than we'll ever be  
and towering over our houses

Trees

all trees have the same structural components  
branches, trunk, and of course roots

pause a moment to raise your eyes and  
observe the variations on these simple parts:  
roots hidden in the ground  
trunks slim or stocky,  
branches emerging horizontally or bending upwards  
or even contorted into twisting curves,  
intricacies obvious only during winter  
without leaves

tree bark may vary from thick and crusty  
to delicate smooth grays  
tightly embracing the trunk or  
peeling off in curls from the birch  
or puzzle pieces breaking from a sycamore tree

leaves are green, you say?  
green is a puny word to describe the variations  
from tender spring green maturing into multiple hues  
which become muted by heat and dust of summer  
until the sun's angle signals the tree about autumn

leaves discard their green in favor of gold, orange, purple, red  
lemon yellow of a ginkgo tree's unique fan-shaped leaf  
a subdued yellow is worn on the unusual tulip poplar leaf  
(talisman of Glen Helen)  
the most vivid fire colors claimed by maple trees  
colors combined in star shaped sweet gum leaves  
even the Japanese maple leaves turn from burgundy to bronze  
and oaks generally content with faded brown

overnight, it seems, the trees become barren  
a few stragglers linger on the limbs  
most carpeting the ground beneath  
long after its leaves drop, black walnut clings to the nuts  
which are suspended from bare branches  
like green golf balls waiting to drop on passersby

to me scuffling through dry leaves is the music of autumn  
and prelude to long dark months  
when bare branches are limned with snow  
and the giants wait for the air to warm  
sap to rise  
then a green haze envelops the trees for a day  
until leaves unfold like emerging butterflies

the cycle begins again  
and our giants are renewed.

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

## MORNING MUSIC

*by Patti Dallas*

*illustration by Libby Rudolph*

Every morning, just as the Sun is making its way  
Up to the horizon to shine for the day,  
An orchestra of music, beautiful sound  
Welcomes each day, for miles around.

On one particular morning in May,  
There was an emptiness, a hole in the day.  
A sound was missing, it couldn't be heard,  
For one had stopped singing, one frustrated bird.

"No one is listening to us," he said,  
"Look, look around you – everyone is in bed!  
And those who are up at this time of day  
Are too busy to listen to us anyway."

"So why should I bother, why should I sing?  
If no one is here to appreciate the ring  
Of music and song and all the good things  
That have welcomed the mornings for all of the Springs!"

And that was the last anyone heard,  
The very last song from that little bird.  
And soon others were joining his silent plea,  
Until nothing was heard from a single tree.

It was awhile before people realized  
That there was a definite change in their lives.  
For folks were busy, they just weren't aware  
That each morning was orchestrated with such loving care.





Little Paloma, a child just three,  
Was the first to notice the silence and see  
That something was amiss, something was wrong  
Her favorite creatures had silenced their song.

For a long time she wondered and cried every day,  
Because she thought her bird friends had all flown away.  
Until one morning, before anyone awoke,  
Paloma went outside and softly she spoke . . .

"Little Birds, Little Birds, come listen to me.  
I'm so sad, can't you see?  
Please let me hear you sing your song  
Then all will be right and nothing will be wrong!"

And so it was, that morning in Spring,  
All at once they started to sing.  
Just one child's humble plea  
Restored morning magic for you and for me!

SILENCE  
by Pat Stempfly

SILENCE is the sweet sound of nothing.  
SILENCE is the space between words.  
SILENCE is a blade of grass growing.  
SILENCE is when eyes speak.

SILENCE is the wonder of a starlit sky.  
SILENCE is the quiet of a snowflake.  
SILENCE is the beauty of a rainbow.  
SILENCE is the journey from acorn to tree.

SILENCE is the heart loving.  
SILENCE is the brain thinking.  
SILENCE is the body sleeping.  
SILENCE is the mind resting.

SILENCE is possibility.  
SILENCE is golden.  
SILENCE is lonely.  
SILENCE is relief from the sounds of a noisy world.

SILENCE is the power of quiet miracles.  
SILENCE is being still and knowing.  
SILENCE is the soul's wisdom.  
SILENCE is needed.

*Pat Stempfly: I learned from my elders that older is better if you Keep Movin' your body, mind, and spirit! Now that I am one I love putting my hand to the pen, my mind to the task, and my spirit to the joy of sharing thoughts and ideas from the common life experiences we share.*

*Patti Dallas: In addition to her musical recordings for children ([www.gold-englowmusic.com](http://www.gold-englowmusic.com)) and community videos, Patti enjoys writing poems and songs in celebration of nature. She hopes to publish a children's book of Morning Magic, illustrated by Libby Rudolf. More of Patti's work can be seen at her website: <http://www.pattidallas.com>.*

*Libby Rudolf started painting beside her Grandma Lil as a child. After raising three kids here in YS with husband Dan, she has dedicated herself to watercolor and art. She is a member of Village Artisans in YS. You may see her work at <http://libbysart.blogspot.com> or at Libby Rudolf on facebook.*

DEBORAH (Off Cornwall)  
*by John Blakelock*

Swells drawing towards shore  
sweep strands of copper hair  
past her closed lips, and eyes.  
Crab pulls himself from a crevice  
upon armor legs—  
his shell splotched green  
with blue spiked  
'round the edges like a Buddhist temple.  
Water rushes down the rock face  
blowing the meadow of leather plants:  
maroon seaweeds waving gloved hands,  
long kelp streamers.  
Periwinkles huddle  
in clusters,  
waiting on the tide.

*John Blakelock: I work as a substitute in YS schools. My main focus is still my garden/fantasyland/habitat. The poem was inspired by this lovely redhead who was very un-happily married and whose heart was filled with sadness.*

P. DUKEMAN MENZIES  
*by Karl G. Koehler*

P. Dukeman Menzies went  
out for a walk:

He never did dabble.  
He never did talk.

With legs kicking and  
flying he seemed in a race.

And as day turned to night,  
He kept up the pace . . .

Though soon the road led  
to an old covered bridge,

While high in the rafters,  
lived an owl named Midge.

Seems Midge was entertaining  
a gentleman friend,

When P. Dukeman Menzies  
flew round the bend.

Now Menzies didn't know  
about Midge and her beau,

And could only cry out  
when hit smack in the eye,

By the gentleman friend,  
who was now on the fly!

These days Menzies walks  
at a much slower pace . . .

You might say he's acquired  
a certain grace.

For Menzies has learned  
that hurry makes worry.

And it might cause his eye-patch  
to drop off his face.

*Karl Koehler: My wife and I came to the Village in the mid-1960s. I had taken a copy writing job with Odiorne Industrial Advertising. My wife, Nancy, was an elementary teacher in Clark County. I am convinced Yellow Springs and Antioch are like no other place.*

# Our Teachers

## Teaching Dancing With Parkinson's Disease in Yellow Springs

For people with Parkinson's Disease and their  
caretakers.

The class has been a source of delight to me as we have all gotten to know each other, sharing a sense of humor and lighthearted play. New members join, and that always brings new energy. The participants are curious about each other, sharing info about strategies, classes, doctors, and medications.

We stretch and strengthen the body, move rhythmically to music, play with balls to foster hand-eye coordination and balance, practice falling in slow motion as a way to learn not to go rigid when it does happen. We also work with our voices, doing actors' vocal warm ups to have good breath support and articulation. Above all, the class is communal and fun!

*Jill Becker was trained to teach dance to people with Parkinson's Disease by members of the Dance for PD Program, a program of the Mark Morris Dance Group in Brooklyn, NY. She is also teaching T'ai Chi for Balance through the Greene County Council on Aging. She teaches dance programs for children as well as college students at Ohio Wesleyan University and Antioch College.*

*Ms Becker was the recipient of the National Endowment for the Arts Choreographer's Fellowship and Artists Fellowships through the Community Arts Partnership (Ithaca, N.Y.). She directed Jill Becker and Dancers, Inc. in New York City from 1980-1986, and has toured extensively in Holland, Germany, and North America with Portraits of Women, a solo evening of dances about contemporary and historical female figures. She holds a BA in Dance from the State University of New York at Brockport, an MA in Performing Arts from American University in Washington, DC.*

## Tai-Chi

Dee Rockwood teaches an evidence-based Tai-Chi Cha'un For Health, Wellness and Self-Defense on Thursday at 6:30 (ages 13 and up) and Tai-Chi for Balance, Fall Prevention, Arthritis, Breathing, and General Health improvement on Friday mornings @ 11:15 a.m. Dee began studying Martial Arts in 1958, earned a Black Belt in 1962. Dee has sixty years of learning, teaching, and competing and has been awarded many high honors. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Theology (ordained minister) from Cumberland Presbyterian Seminary and a Bachelor's of Science Degree Mechanical Engineering from the University of Cincinnati.

Dee says, "The Yellow Springs Senior Center has given me the opportunity to get to know and be a part of deep and rich community of amazing people."

*Master Dee A. Rockwood, a sixth-degree black belt, was recently recognized by the United States Martial Arts Hall of Fame's Hall of Heroes as a Platinum Inductee, for sixty years of learning, teaching, and competing.*



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