

RAPID RIVER

Arts & Culture Magazine

December 2008 • Vol. 12 No. 4



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Holiday Family Fun

Performances by the Asheville Ballet, Lyric Opera, and Choral Society. Plus Gift Ideas, Auctions, Banquets, and other celebrations beginning on page 5.





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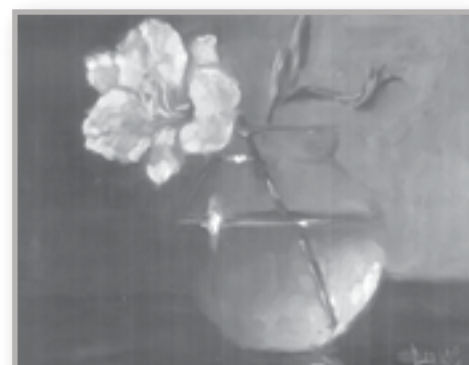
ART TALK

"Shelf Life"

on Display at the FW Front Gallery at Woolworth Walk

For the months of December and January the F.W. Front Gallery at Woolworth Walk will feature oil paintings by local artist Susan Luke in the show Shelf Life.

Susan is inspired by the simple beauty of still lifes. She chooses objects such as flowers in vases or glasses and bottles of wine, often drawn to them for their reflective qualities. Susan feels that still life subjects offer her a "perfect stage for exploring the drama of light and shadow; the light reveals forms while the shadows conceal and create mystery."



BY MEGAN STONE

Come meet the artist Susan Luke at the opening reception on December 14, from 2 to 4 p.m.

**IF
YOU
GO:**

Paintings by Susan Luke, on display December 12 - January 31, 2009. Woolworth Walk Gallery, 25 Haywood Street, in Asheville. (828) 254-9234

Hours: Monday-Thursday 11-6; Friday & Saturday 11-7; Sunday 11-5.

Tour of Expectant Gaze – Art from the Eye and Mind

BY KIM ZDANOWICZ

Join us at the Asheville Art Museum for a tour of Expectant Gaze – Art from the Eye and Mind from 12 to 1 p.m. on December 5.

Art Breaks are a great time for visitors to learn more about exhibitions, the Asheville Art Museum and art in general. Then, come back with a friend and impress them with your new knowledge! Or just bring your friend with you – Art Breaks make for a great lunch date. And, Art Breaks are free with Museum Membership or admission.

This conversational tour of Expectant Gaze – Art from the Eye and Mind features new selections from the permanent collection, including recent acquisitions. To inspire audiences and showcase its unique collection in limited gallery space, the Asheville Art Museum regularly invites distinguished colleagues to curate special exhibitions of the permanent collection.

Roger Manley, a North Carolina based filmmaker, curator and author of the books *Signs and Wonders: Outsider Art Inside North Carolina* and the re-

cently published *Weird Carolinas*, joined us to curate the latest installation in this provocative series.

Manley's exhibition "Expectant Gaze – Art from the Eye and Mind" presents works from the permanent collection that probe arts two oldest and most essential functions: rendering the visual world and envisioning new possibilities for experiencing it.

**IF
YOU
GO:**

Each Art Break is from noon to 1 p.m., at the Asheville Art Museum. Free with Museum membership or with admission.

All smArt Speak programs are part of the Museum's 60th Anniversary Celebration continuing all year.

Centrally located in downtown Asheville on Pack Square, the Museum is open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday. The Museum is open every Friday until 8 p.m.

Admission to the Museum is \$6 for adults and \$5 for seniors, students with ID and for children 4-15 (children age three and younger are admitted free).

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Message from the Publisher



Harrison Graham Ray,
son of Dennis Ray.

As a small child my friend's father, Marty, told us many tales about the Telamogone and his encounters with him just before Christmas Eve 1953, deep in the jungles of South Korea. These stories ranged from the comical, to the tragic, to pure horror. As children we could never get enough of these tales. And Marty always seemed to have more.

So what is a Telamogone? I don't know. And I doubt Marty knows. As far as I can tell, the Telamogone is a mystical figure who long ago began fighting to destroy Christmas. A Telamogone is a deformed figure (loved by none and feared by many) who wears

a top hat and walks with a cane and travels mostly by night. He tricks small children into disobeying their parents and following in his wicked ways.

This creature is believed to have originated in English folklore but no records have been produced showing this to be certain. Some believe that the Telamogone first arrived in Spain in the late 1700's and went by the sinister name of Count Desmodo. What we do know for certain is that in the early 1900's Telamogone showed up again, this time transformed into Santa Claus's number one enemy. Although still a trickster, he became a nuisance, doing silly things like switching presents for the good children with those of the naughty children.

"Why," he says in a dark, wet voice, "it's a cool cruel world out there and someone needs to look out for us. I'll help you if you help me." It was never made clear what sort of help he would give the children. However, the children continued to give him money and jewelry and valuable art.

In the background of this month's cover, you'll see a Telamogone standing by a group of trees. He has just frightened Santa's poor reindeer into taking flight, leaving Santa behind. He manages to pull this joke two or three times each Christmas before the reindeer wise up and scare him away.

For now I leave you with a special warning – beware of the Telamogone. If you happen to come across this nasty creature don't talk to him. Keep your head down and your thoughts happy. He has no defenses against happiness. None at all. That's why Santa always win. But what does it say about the reindeer?

*Wishing Everyone a Safe and Happy Holiday,
and a Prosperous New Year*

~ From our family to yours, Dennis Ray, Publisher,
Rapid River Magazine

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Cover illustration by Dennis Ray.

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COVER STORY

Taking Cues from One of Opera's Greatest

There are the opportunities to be in the presence of a master. In January, Asheville Lyric Opera will present our community with several such opportunities when they bring us Sherrill Milnes, the international leading Verdi baritone for over 40 years and an opera legend. For anyone with an interest in music, theatre or performance, you will want to make your way to at least one of these events

On Friday, January 30 during Asheville Lyric Opera's Anniversary Concert at the Thomas Wolfe Auditorium, Milnes will be honored by the Opera and the City of Asheville for his career as an American and world class opera singer. Prior to the concert, there will be an intimate fundraising reception with Milnes at the historic S&W Cafeteria downtown.

The following day on January 31, Milnes, who has retired from performing, will give a guest lecture at AB Technical Community College where he will discuss his career, share video highlights and give personal insights into the world of opera.

Immediately following the lecture, six of the region's top college student performers will participate in a master class. Lecture attendees are invited to watch as Milnes coaches these young talents and shares expertise in the field of opera that is held by only a handful of people.

To put this in perspective, this experience is like an amateur architect having the opportunity to sit down with Frank Lloyd Wright and ask for input on a new design, or a local city park designer receiving feedback from Frederick Law

Olmstead. There is something very satisfying about receiving the thumbs-up from a person who has seen and accomplished so much.

Milnes has conquered the great opera capitals of the world, sung more than 650 performances at the Metropolitan Opera, received three Grammy awards, and performed for every United States President since Gerald Ford. His remarkable voice, artistic integrity, commanding stage presence, and rugged handsomeness have made him a favorite for all audiences.

"I marvel at what Sherrill Milnes is doing," said David Starkey, General and Artistic Director for ALO. "He has stepped off the stage and is dedicated to sharing himself and his knowledge with other artists. His era is passing on and it is wonderful for aspiring opera artists to have the chance to work with a master."

Milnes brings a unique expertise on the arias the students will perform as he has heard or performed each of them many times over, and he has done so in the greatest opera houses in front of some of the most demanding audiences.

"His expertise is much different than the teachers the students usually have," said Dr. Julie Fortney, Voice Division Coordinator at Mars Hill College, who is encouraging her students to vie for one of the six spots. For students on their way to becoming career performers, she knows Milnes' input, direction and challenge will resonate as no one else's can. "When you have it from an authority, it is something that is very concrete. This wakes up their self confidence."

Each of the six singers will have approximately 15 minutes with Milnes. The singer will perform an aria on stage and from there Milnes will have a conversation with the student about the piece that may range from understanding the translation of the words being sung, what actions preempted the song, what is the underlying mood of the character and stage positioning.

"He will engage them in the artistry of the performance," said Fortney. "It is very much about interpretation of the character and using body attitude and characterization to work beyond the language."

For anyone interested in music, the master class will offer insight to one of the most challenging performance arts. "When you see someone work with individual artists and what goes into making a quality performer, there is a greater appreciation for the singers," said Fortney. "Music comes alive in a different way."



Sherrill Milnes, the leading Verdi baritone.

BY BETH CARTER

Anniversary Concert Gala Details

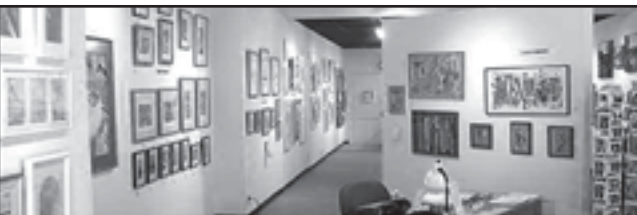
The Anniversary Concert Gala will feature members from both the Lyric Opera Orchestra and the Asheville Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Robert Hart Baker and will be held at the Thomas Wolfe auditorium. Soprano Angela

Brown, Baritone David Malis, and Tenor Tonio DiPaolo will perform favorite selections from their repertoires.

Brown made her Metropolitan Opera debut in 2004 to rave reviews. Her appeal is broad and she has appeared in

'Opera' continued on pg. 8

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Ring the Holidays... But Why a Ring?

In 1477 the Archduke Maximilian of Austria gave Mary of Burgundy a diamond ring. He married her the following day. How could he know the tradition he started with the first documented engagement ring?

Christmas and New Years are two of the most popular days of the year to become engaged, but where does the custom of giving rings came from? Actually today's wedding and engagement rings have a long and interesting history. We can trace the first rings back to Ancient Egypt about 4800 years ago.

These early rings were made out of reeds and rushes and were braided and twisted into circles for fingers and wrists. Circles symbolize eternity as they have no beginning or end. The circle shape also relates to the sun and moon which was greatly worshipped in this era. Even the hole in the center was important as it symbolized the gateway or door to the future.

In the spirit of symbols it wasn't hard to jump from these concepts to being associated with everlasting love. Even the finger they wore the ring on was full of meaning, as they believed the vein of the third finger led directly to the heart. This belief was also held by the Greeks when they conquered Egypt led by Alexander the Great in 332 BC.

This same belief was later passed on to the Romans who called this *Aúvena* amons, *Aú* which means vein of love. The Romans made a significant contribution to the evolution of rings as they introduced rings made out of longer lasting materials such as leather, bone, and ivory.

It wasn't until the 1500's when King Henry VIII's son wrote *The Book of Common Prayer* which spelled out what the wedding ceremony was to include and the specific vows that were to be exchanged along with the symbolic ring. This writing also detailed that the wedding ring was to be worn on the third finger and made out of longer lasting metals such as iron which symbolized strength.

Early iron rings were crude and encrusted with gemstones such as rubies to represent the heart, blue sapphires as the sky and the most prized diamond signifying indestructible love. Eventually rust became a problem with the iron rings and so silver and gold became popular metals for rings.

Silver was the preferred metal for a

very short period of time in England and France in the seventeenth century.

These particular rings were called posey rings; the word posey meaning love poems. Often these rings were inscribed with the words, *Aúfaith*, *Aú*, and *Aúhope*, and were referred to many times in the works of William Shakespeare.

Finally gold rings made their way to the forefront aided by legends and folklore which would suggest that anything but gold was bad luck. A common practice then became to give a silver ring as the promise ring (later to be called the engagement ring) and replaced by an exact replica in gold during the marriage ceremony.

During the ceremony the man would slip the wedding ring on the thumb of his bride, then the index finger, the middle finger, and finally the ring finger, representing the Son, the Father and the Holy Ghost and finally mankind.

Most of continental Europe put the ring on the right hand but the Protestants and in particular the American Puritans started using the left ring finger. Some historical references cite this as another example of how the American Puritans wanted everything to be different from England and Europe, even in the smallest details.

During Colonial times in America ring giving became taboo when jewelry was thought to be proof of moral worthlessness. For this brief period jewelry was prohibited and a more practical thimble was given during the ceremony instead. This didn't last very long because women started removing the round edge from the bottom of the thimble to wear as a ring anyway, and so by the early 1700's rings were very firmly established as the norm.

It wasn't until World War I when wedding rings finally became popular for men. It was said that when men were separated from their new brides, they needed a heartfelt reminder and a ring on their finger was a small bit of comfort when they were so many miles away from



Asheville Lyric Opera presents it's 10th Anniversary Concert

with Special Honorary Guest Sherrill Milnes

Friday, January 30 at 8 p.m.

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Asheville Symphony's Holiday Pops Concert

The Asheville Symphony Orchestra will continue its annual Holiday concert tradition on Saturday night, December 20 at 8 p.m., at Thomas Wolfe Auditorium in downtown Asheville.

The concert will feature the Asheville Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Matthew Kraemer, the Asheville Symphony Chorus, directed by Dewitt Tipton and the Asheville Symphony Children's Chorus will also perform with Susan Hensley directing. The guest soloist for the concert is Roberto Flores, who has performed with the Asheville Lyric Opera.

Matthew Kraemer is the Associate Conductor for the Virginia Symphony. He begins his second season with the Virginia Symphony holding the Bruno Walter Associate Conductor's Chair. Mr. Kraemer has led the Akron, Canton, Pacific, Pittsburgh Youth and Richmond (IN) Symphonies and the Reno Chamber Orchestra. He has served as cover conductor for the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra and has appeared in Europe



**Asheville Symphony
Orchestra Conductor
Matthew Kraemer**

BY STEVEN R. HAGEMAN

with the Vidin Philharmonic and the Orquesta de Cadaqués.

The Asheville show will offer a wide variety of holiday and Christmas favorites such as *Sleigh Ride* by Leroy Anderson, *Silent Night*, *We Wish You a Merry Christmas*. The audience will also get to participate in a Christmas carol sing-a-long. Other selections include, *Joy to the World*, *Deck the Halls* and excerpts from Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker Suite*.

**IF
YOU
GO:**

Tickets to the Thomas Wolfe concert in Asheville are available through the Asheville Symphony or the Asheville

Civic Center box office, and range in price from \$53 to \$19 (with discounts available for students).

Call (828) 254-7046 for further information on this and future concerts of the Asheville Symphony, or visit their website at www.ashevillesymphony.org.

'Opera' continued from pg. 5

The New York Times, Oprah Magazine and Ebony. This year her performance schedule will take her to South Africa, Barcelona, New Zealand, and many cities across the United States.



**Soprano
Angela Brown**

Malis, the first American to win the prestigious Cardiff Singer of the World Competition, began his operatic career with the San Francisco Opera, followed by 12 years as a leading

baritone at the Metropolitan Opera. DiPaolo has performed throughout North America and Europe on the stages of the Metropolitan Opera, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Canadian Opera Company, Houston Grand Opera, and Lyric Opera of Chicago. A rich tenor with comic gifts and sheer acting ability, DiPaolo is a

popular figure on concert stages in many metropolitan areas.

Fundraising Reception

Friday, January 30, 5:30 p.m.

S&W (Steak & Wine, historic S&W Cafeteria building downtown), \$100 per person.

Anniversary Concert Gala

Friday, January 30, 8 p.m.

Thomas Wolfe Auditorium, For tickets and additional information call (828) 251-5505 or visit www.ticketmaster.com

Sherrill Milne Presentations

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PERFORMANCE

Feel the Spirit - from Magnificence to Mirth

The Asheville Choral Society's Holiday Concert

BY JOHN CLARK

“Ten Lords A-Leaping” in 19th Century Italy? How about “Twelve Drummers Drumming” in the U.S. in the 19th century?

It's the Mirth part of “Magnificent Christmas” – the Asheville Choral Society's holiday concert. Craig Courtney's clever work “A Musicological Journey Through the 12 Days of Christmas” takes the traditional holiday song and wittily turns it into a fun learning experience about the different styles of music.

For example, the opening “Partridge in a Pear Tree” is written in the musical style of sixth century Rome. Other movements include “Two Turtle Doves from 15th century France,” “Five Gold Rings from 18th century Germany,” “Ten Lords a-Leaping from 19th century Italy,” and “Twelve Drummers Drumming from 19th century United States of America.”

Mirth is one of four themes Music Director Lenora Thom uses to craft an engaging Christmas program. The others are Magnificence, Light, and Joy, and Ms. Thom has selected music to fully exploit the character of each sentiment.

The concert opens with a section titled “Season of Magnificence” and features works by major composers in the canticle form ‘the magnificat.’ The canticle or “Song of Mary” is often sung in Christian services and represents words spoken by the Virgin Mary to her cousin Elizabeth in the Book of Luke. Composers represented in this section are Mozart, Bach, Pachelbel, Pärt and others. The section concludes with two stirring works: Welsh composer William Mathias' Ave Rex and Sir William Walton's Jubilate Deo.

The section “Season of Light” is highlighted by Hymn to the Creator of Light by well-known English composer John Rutter, and also includes Lux Aeterna by Eric Whitacre.

The Seven Joys of Christmas by American composer Kirke Mechem comprises the section “Season of Joy.” Samples of the movements are The Joy of Love: This is the truth, The Joy of Bells: Ding Dong! Merrily on high, The Joy of Children: Patapan, and The Joy of Dance: Fum, fum, fum!



In conjunction with its Magnificent Christmas concert, the Asheville Choral Society will be holding a food drive for Manna FoodBank, a local not-for-profit service organization that works with 331 partner agencies across Western North Carolina to distribute food to those who need it. The ACS singers are urging concert-goers to bring any non-perishable, unopened items to place in the MANNA FoodBank bins, which will be available on both the Saturday evening, December 13, and Sunday afternoon, December 14 performances.

According to MANNA FoodBank, the “most wanted” food items are:

- Canned meats
- Peanut butter
- Canned tuna
- Beef stew or Meal-in-a-can
- Chili

IF YOU GO:

“Magnificent Christmas” will be presented Saturday, December 13 at 8 p.m. and Sunday, December 14 at 4 p.m. at Central United Methodist Church, 27 Church Street in downtown Asheville.

The adult ticket price for the ACS holiday concert is \$25; for students, \$15. Tickets for groups of ten or more are \$20.

It's the perfect time for long-time fans and newcomers to the ACS to receive a subscription to all three concerts at a significant savings – 20% off the single concert ticket price. Student subscriptions will save even more.

The season subscription for adults is \$60; for students, only \$35. All tickets may be ordered at the ACS website www.ashevillechoralsociety.org or by calling (828) 232-2060.

Asheville Savings Bank is sponsoring the Saturday evening performance; SunTrust Bank is the Sunday afternoon concert sponsor.

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STAGE PREVIEW

Global Playback Theatre Has Its Home Here in Asheville!

“Some ways of communicating lead us to put things in boxes intellectually or think ‘Do I agree with that or not?’ when we hear ideas different from our own. Communicating through the arts leads us to engage with other people’s emotions and identify with their experiences. I am passionate about Playback Theatre because it is designed to create theatre out of the experiences and true life stories of people.”

So says Mountaine Mort Jonas of Asheville Playback Theatre (APT), an improvisational theatre company in its fourteenth season. It is part of an international network of companies that use the Playback form of theatre, in which people from all walks of life tell their stories in a public forum, and have them honored in the “playing back” using words, music, and movement.

Asheville Playback Theatre’s Managing Director and co-founder, Raphael Peter, says, “What sets us apart from other theatre is that our mission is to truly witness and then honor people’s stories.” In addition to public performances at many theatre venues around town, APT has brought the magic of honoring

BY JAMES A. MURRELL

stories to schools, colleges, community centers, prisons, as well as organizations, businesses and many special events. APT is now focused on youth around issues of reducing violence and increasing empowerment. APT is beginning a new workshop in January called “Heroic Choices - A Playback Theatre Experience for Youth as Super Heros.”

There are Playback companies and groups all over the world. Many communities have used Playback to creatively respond to the trauma of disaster and injustice and to transform it. For example, one of the newest companies formed in New Orleans to bring about healing in the aftermath of Katrina.

Four years ago, Raphael was inspired to tap into and unite some of this great power worldwide by organizing a simultaneous Playback performance event. Jointly presented by multiple Playback theatre companies in multiple locations around the world, it focused on themes of justice, human rights, and human compassion. Along with long time APT members, Mountaine and the



Photo by Paul M. Howey

company’s artistic director, Deb Scott, launched the first Global Playback.

“It was during a time of public outcry about the Iraq war. It occurred to me, what if Playback companies around the world stood together in solidarity around a life-affirming theme – that would make a powerful statement.” The first Global Playback event took place with the theme of human capacity for compassion and kindness, in conjunction with the Random Acts of Kindness Foundation. “It was a rousing success! Playback companies on six continents participated. We received emails from all over the world about meaningful stories being shared by people whose voices were being heard perhaps for the first time, and about people’s hearts being opened,” says Raphael.

The Global Playback event has been held annually since, with over 90 Playback companies around the world participating. It is helping to open up ever more venues and spaces for people to discover and experience this potent form of storytelling, created by Jonathan Fox 34 years ago. It also caught the attention of the United Nations, including the UN Undersecretary of Non-Governmental Organizations, and the co-chair of the UN committee on education. Playback has been added to the 2009 initiative on human rights learning as an example of how this unique form of personal story-based theatre is being used.

“I am very excited about our developing relationship with offices of the UN. They are beginning to recognize what a tremendous tool we have in using the arts and forms of creative expression in creating a better world,” says Raphael. “I see this as the beginning in shifting people’s perspectives about what is going on with

our planet – seeing the importance of respectful listening, compassion, and gratitude in transforming our lives.”

The Fourth Annual Global Playback Theatre event will be held on Wednesday, December 10, celebrating the 60th anniversary of the United Nation’s Declaration of Human Rights and in collaboration with the UNCA’s Amnesty International and WNC Chapter of the UN, USA. The theme is “Stories of Freedom - Our Traditions/Our Future” and takes place at the UNCA Highsmith Center, downstairs in the Alumni Hall beginning at 7:30 p.m.

2009 Performances

Friday, January 2

Playback Alchemy - An evening of Interactive Experiment & Performance. At NC Stage, 8 p.m.

Saturday, January 3

Kids Know It All! For kids and everyone else too! At NC Stage, 2 p.m.

Saturday, January 3

Forbidden Stories - For adults only. At NC Stage, 9 p.m.

IF YOU GO:

Doors open at 7 p.m. Admission is \$10 at the door, \$5 for students/seniors. No one turned away for lack of funds (if seating is available).

For more information please visit www.globalplayback.org. International Playback Theatre Network: www.playbacknet.org
FREE PARKING – Give yourself enough time to get to the Alumni Hall, downstairs in the Highsmith Center.

Asheville Community Theatre

“The Santaland Diaries”

December 10-13

Tom Chalmers returns to star in David Sedaris’ dark comedy following a Macy’s department store elf throughout the Christmas season. Sedaris, who rose to fame on NPR’s *This American Life*, comments on the best and worst of people and culture during the holiday season.

Our production of *The Santaland Diaries* has become an Asheville holiday tradition – for six years in a row, we’ve been selling out every performance, so don’t wait until the last minute to book tickets! Tickets to *The Santaland Diaries* make great gifts for friends, family, and co-workers. All performances begin at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$15.

“Morning’s at Seven”

Friday, December 19
and Saturday, December 20

Asheville Community Theatre’s senior theatre group, The Autumn

BY JENNY BUNN

Players, and the University of North Carolina Center for Creative Retirement partner to present a series of Reader’s Theatre performances. In December, they present Paul Osborn’s *Morning’s at Seven*, a marvelously life affirming play. Two houses, whose backyards adjoin, set the scene for this buoyant and charming comedy where we meet four sisters in a small Midwestern town in 1938, their husbands, and offspring.

This American “chestnut” about hope, lost dreams, love, and families, was recently revived on Broadway to stunning success! Performances will be held at 35below at Asheville Community Theatre. All performances begin at 2:30 p.m. Tickets are \$5.

IF YOU GO:

For more information on any of these events, please visit the Asheville Community Theatre Web site at www.ashevilletheatre.org.



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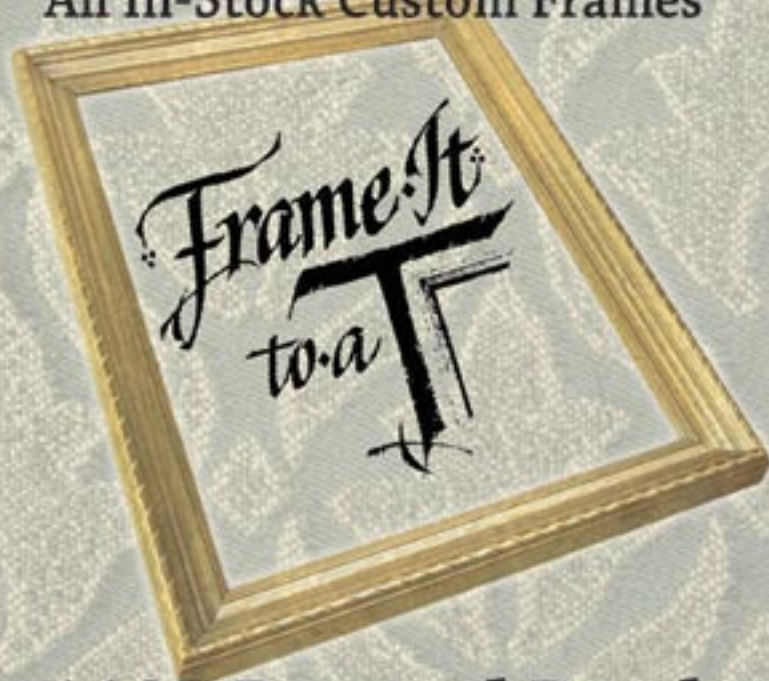
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THOREAU'S GARDEN

Roses in Pots

The love of roses is probably a worldwide phenomenon (at least in Europe and America), and there are over eighty references to the rose in the Fifteenth Edition of *Familiar Quotations* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1980) – and that doesn't include the thirty-three references to roses when plural. Roses are also the national flower of America (showing that Congress has little horticultural sense but knows what the public wants).

The selection of roses you can grow in containers is enormous. Hybrid teas, miniature roses, tree roses (of *Alice in Wonderland* fame) – in fact, almost all roses are suitable for container gardens. Imagine how a pot of blooming roses would add sparkle to a barren deck, empty balcony, forlorn doorway, a lonesome patio, or along a naked driveway.

Today's large selection of containers, made of not only terra cotta, cast iron, and stone, but those made of the much lighter high-tech composites and fiberglass, open up a new world of rose horticulture. By mixing and matching containers, when roses are the plants of choice, another garden door is opened.

Technically, just about any rose the gardener can handle can be grown in containers. But remember, as with gardening in

general, a lot depends on the effort gardeners are willing to expend. Traditional roses often grow too fast for most pots. And sometimes these roses might weaken just a bit due to the stress of container planting and become more vulnerable to common rose problems like black spot or mildew. One solution is to use a really large container, put the classic rose in the center then under plant with perennials and annuals to hide the less-than-attractive bush-bottoms.

Another choice would be using the emerging category of the so-called garden roses. These are roses specifically bred to produce florist-type blossoms on vigorous, leaf-crowded bushes. Examples include the new series of the Dream Rose

available in yellow, orange, red, or pink along with longtime favorites like that classic white floribunda rose 'Iceberg' or the coral counterpart, 'Margot Koster'.

Best Container Roses

From a practical point of view, the smaller ground-cover and shrub roses with their compact growth habits and weeping canes are better choices for a

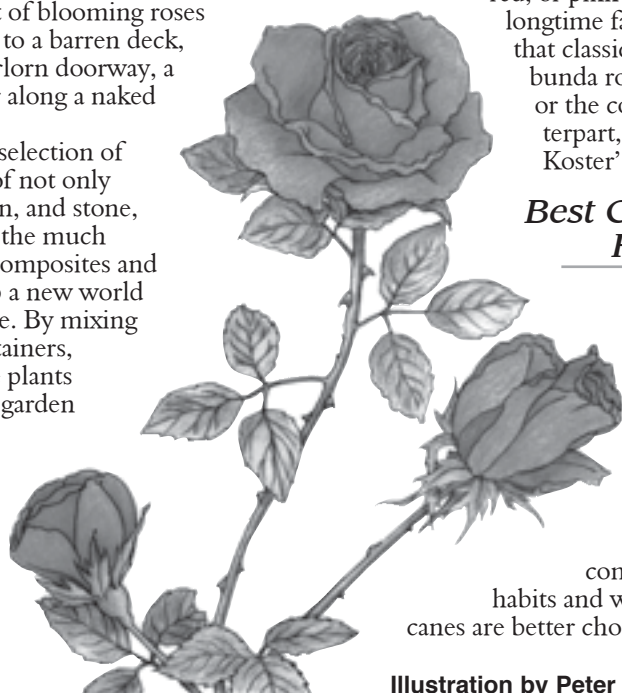


Illustration by Peter Loewer

life in containers. They're great choices because they have abundant flowers, an extended period of bloom, and are easy to care for.

Any of the popular Flower Carpet ground-cover roses are excellent choices and include Flower Carpet Pink, Flower Carpet Apple Blossom, and the recently introduced Flower Carpet Coral. There is also Flower Carpet Red and Flower Carpet White.

When looking for these roses don't be misled by the term groundcover – Flower Carpet roses grow about three feet tall and nearly as wide, making an easy job of filling out a fairly large container.

Other shrub roses perfect for containers include the delightfully fragrant Rosa 'Flower Girl' (pastel pinks and creams) and the pale pink of Rosa 'Mix 'n Match'. Don't forget Meideland's Rosa 'Bonica' with its shell-pink blossoms, Rosa 'Carefree Wonder' with flowers of violet-pink or white, and the vivid pinks of Rosa 'Carefree Delight'.

Roses have deep and thirsty roots so shallow containers are not recommended. Containers should be at least eighteen inches to two feet across. Larger containers help to insulate rose roots against excessive heat and cold, both being conditions that damage roots. The larger container is also a good bet because these roots can then spread over a longer period without becoming root-bound with the added threat of continual rotting.

Roots need air so the best pots are terra cotta, wood, or unglazed ceramic. Be sure the containers have holes in the bottom for adequate drainage. To keep dirt from falling out, you can cover holes with



Peter examines the blossoms of early-blooming Lenten roses.

BY PETER LOEWER

a bit of plastic screening or even a piece of paper toweling. Standing water in a pot can easily add to problems of root rot.

The planting mix should be two parts soil, one part builder's sand, and one part composted manure, compost, or other organic matter (except peat moss). Mix in about one-

half cup of bone-meal at planting time.

Make a small mound of soil at the bottom of the hole. Spread the roots out over the mound and cover them with dirt, so that the crown of the rose and the soil level are about two inches below the edge of the pot. This extra space makes watering much easier and allows room for a layer of mulch, which helps keep the roots cool. Roses need four to six hours of sunlight a day but never let the roots in the container bake in the hot sun.

Soil in containers tends to dry out quickly so frequent watering is a must. And remember, it's important to water thoroughly. It's possible to think you have doused a container but still leave the center root ball as dry as before you began. Water well once, then do it again, making sure that you see the excess water drain from the pot's bottom.

Roses in containers will need frequent feeding. Every time water runs out the bottom it will take valuable nutrients along for the ride. When using a fast release rose food, feed your plants once a week. If using a slow-release formula, you need only fertilize a few times during the growing season.

Give the Gift of Nature

The end of year is approaching and with it, the holidays and year end gift giving. Sometimes it is hard to find just the right gift.

Through the Western North Carolina Nature Center, you can give a gift membership to family or friends. Not only does this membership admit a family to our facility, but also to over 275 zoos, aquariums and science centers nationwide.

At just \$60 for a family, this is the perfect gift for the traveling family who loves nature and likes to learn. Visit www.wildwnc.org/friends/become-a-member to order your gift membership today. Be sure to allow 10 days after your

purchase for recipients to receive their personalized gift announcement.

Adopt the Favorite Animal of Your Niece, Grandson, or Family Friend

For many of us, animals hold special meaning. What better gift than adopting an animal friend from the WNC Nature Center. The gift packages range from \$25, \$50 to \$100 and can be purchased online at www.wildwnc.org/friends/adopt. With over 25 animals to choose from (including Oscar, the Center's new otter), this gift is sure to please anyone who is passionate about animals and their care.

Buy a Permanent Brick to Honor Family, Friends, even Corporate Partners

Buying a Brick at the WNC Nature Center leaves a permanent mark at our facility in honor of those you appreciate the most. Our shady Nature Center Brick Path is located near our facility entrance and graced with benches that provide a comfortable rest stop for many visitors. In addition to our regular 4" x 8" brick, we now offer Children's Artwork bricks and Corporate bricks (8"x 8"). Call (828) 298-5600 ext. 308 for more details. Bricks are \$100, \$135 and \$150 respectively and can be ordered online at www.wildwnc.org/



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For more information or questions about year end giving at the WNC Nature Center, please call Sarah Oram, Director, Friends of the WNC Nature Center,

at (828) 298-5600 ext. 308 or e-mail your question to friends@wildwnc.org.

Your extra support this Holiday season raises funds to enrich educational programming, improve habitat and make the Center more like home for all our animal residents at the WNC Nature Center in Asheville!

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SPINNING DISCS:

December CD Reviews by James Cassara

We'll finish out the year with a mixed bag of new offerings, linked in no way other than chronology. Once again, everything mentioned herein is worth your time and money; and be sure to spend both at one of the many locally owned record emporiums which this town is fortunate to have.

Dave Mason

26 Letters, 12 Notes

Out of the Box Records

As co-founder of the legendary rock band Traffic, Dave Mason holds a place of high esteem in the rarefied world of rock and roll. As a guitarist, one whose nuanced and restrained playing is often overlooked, he's played on some of the greatest albums in history: Electric Ladyland, All Things Must Pass, and Delaney & Bonnie on Tour have all benefitted from his six string acumen.

Originally produced by Mason at his California home (with finishes at Miami's venerable Criteria Recording Studios) 26 Letters 12 Notes, has a nice relaxed vibe consistent with its origins. It's a back to basics, '70s style rock and Brit soul record, spiffed up with a few modern production techniques, that showcases Mason not only as a solid, focused, and relevant songwriter in the rock idiom, but as an expressive vocalist of uncanny power and depth whose singing has only grown better with age.

His guitar playing has continued to develop and grow – reflecting the psychedelic pop roots that made Traffic's first three albums such joys. The production is warm and intimate but rarely tepid; the songs come first, with co-producers Ron and Howard Albert wisely allowing Mason to set the tone.

"Good 2 U," is the artist at his best, with Mason's bluesy guitar riff matched to a taut string arrangement that holds the song's tension perfectly in place. "One Day" allows him to open up a bit, firing out some wicked Stratocaster laced gospel blues while singing his heart out. The chorus, piano, and organ infectiously interact with his playing, feeling very much like mid '70s radio rock roaring out of the dashboard speakers. It's a highway anthem disguised as a broken love plea, and the type of song Mason does as well as anyone.

"How Do I Get to Heaven," is as emotionally convincing a lyric as he's written in decades, respectfully borrowing from Dylan in its examination of broken love and the damage we humans seem to endlessly inflict upon ourselves. There's a beautiful pedal steel here played by Dana



Keller that does exactly what it's supposed to do: add a ton of atmosphere without being intrusive.

Mason loves late R&B and early rock & roll, as evidenced by the swagger in "Ain't Your Legs Tired Baby," with a smoking baritone sax adding just the proper touch of raunchiness. Other highlights include the mid tempo torch song "Passing Thru the Flame," and a pair of lively funk tunes in "That's Love," and "World of Hunger" (a smoking duet with Sheila E.). The album ends with the country tinged "Full Circle and Then," a stunning love song with wonderful acoustic and electric guitar work as well as Mason's piercing vocal.

26 Letters 12 Notes stands tall in Mason's catalog, evidence that some things do get better with age and when the artist matches the right song to the right moment, and reaches deep within for that elusive muse, the results can be mighty indeed. ****

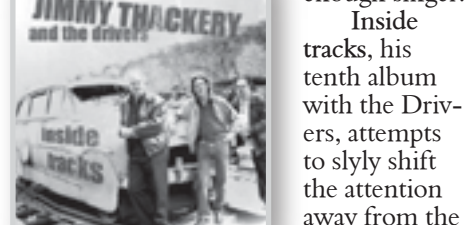
Jimmy Thackery and the Drivers

inside tracks

Telarc Records

Having long hung around the fringes of what passes for wide spread acclaim in the ever shrinking music industry, veteran Blues man Jimmy Thackery must surely tire of having review upon review rave about his guitar playing.

Certainly he enjoys being properly recognized as a virtuoso of the idiom (who wouldn't?) but what is rarely mentioned is his evolution into a fine writer and decent enough singer.



Inside tracks, his tenth album with the Drivers, attempts to slyly shift the attention away from the artist's wizardry with a guitar while focusing on his other musical virtues; it's a bit of a gamble and one that only partly pays off.

Continuing the formula set by last year's Solid Ice, Thackery is putting much more emphasis on song craft: There's nary an extended jam to be found (only "Promised Land" clocks in at over eight

minutes) and while Thackery keeps his own playing somewhat in check he does allow the two Marks (drummer Stutso and bassist Bumgarner) to more aggressively take certain stage.

"Blinking of an Eye," is the sort of reflective number Thackery would never have dared tackle a few years back, while "Change the Rules" and "Just a Feeling" convey a social conscience not previously heard from him. "What Part of 'No'" is a wry condemnation of pop music a la *American Idol* (a bit reminiscent of Rodney Crowell), while a pair of instrumentals – the Duane Eddy like twang of "Landlocked" and the Chet Atkins like "(You Got Me) Now What You Gonna Do" should satisfy those waiting for Thackery to really cut loose.

In the final count, while inside tracks might very well serve to expand Thackery's audience, it may likely disappoint those who crave the explosive fire of his earliest discs. Much like the post Dire Straits albums of Mark Knopfler, Thackery is giving up a little and hoping to gain a lot. Where that leads is anyone's guess but it should certainly be interesting. ***

J. D. Souther

If The World Was You

Slow Curve Records



I suppose you can't blame J.D. Souther for occasionally hitching his songwriting wagon to The Eagles – after all his royalties for such flaccid radio fodder as "New Kid In Town" likely quadrupled his bank account.

If The World Was You, with its cover intentionally evocative of a vintage Blue Note LP, Souther has recorded his first solo effort in more than two decades. Cut live in the studio with a basic quintet of piano, standup bass, drums, saxophone, and trumpet, Souther comes armed with a collection of songs that are among the best he's ever conceived.

In stark contrast to the slick Southern California mellow vibe of his '70's albums, the songs here are sharply focused, and while his trademark relaxed ease still sets the tone, there's an undercurrent of winsome adventure that keeps the proceedings on edge.

'CD's' continued on next pg.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

A Swannanoa Solstice

Grammy award-winning musicians Al Petteway and Amy White and multi-instrumentalist Robin Bullock headline the sixth anniversary edition of A Swannanoa Solstice.

In this annual winter holiday celebration, world-renowned musicians Petteway and White along with Bullock and a host of special guests share holiday songs old and new, religious and secular, joyful and poignant, in a warm and intimate winter concert.

Presented in association with The Swannanoa Gathering at Warren Wilson College, A Swannanoa Solstice has once again expanded to two performances in order to meet the audience demand for this popular winter gathering and concert, appropriately taking place this year on the day of the winter solstice.

This Year's Special Guests

- Sheila Kay Adams, world-renowned Appalachian storyteller and traditional

Appalachian ballad singer, with her husband, guitarist Jim Taylor.

- Steve Agan and E.J. Jones, award-winning highland bagpipers.
- The Twisty Cuffs, local Cape Breton-style stepdancers.
- Young virtuosic fiddler, Alex Reidinger.
- Host Doug Orr, president emeritus of Warren Wilson College, founder of The Swannanoa Gathering, and invaluable supporter of and participant in the musical heritage of western North Carolina.

A Swannanoa Solstice showcases all manner of seasonal sounds and festivities, with well-mastered Celtic and Appalachian songs and music on guitar, mandolin, fiddle, piano, Celtic harp, Irish bouzouki, vocals and world percussion – all against an atmospheric backdrop of Petteway's and White's winter photography from National Geographic.

Through music and storytelling, Bullock, Petteway and White explore



Grammy award-winning musicians Al Petteway and Amy White.

Photo by Irene Young

shared winter traditions from the area, the country, and from around the world.

The melodies played by Petteway, a virtuosic acoustic guitarist who favors an altered tuning, draw from a broad variety of cultural influences from Middle East tonalities to Scottish jigs.

BY JOHN ELLIS

White, on piano, mandolin, guitar, Celtic harp and percussion, draws on her classical background to create harmonic arrangements. Bullock, a multi-instrumentalist who plays the guitar, fiddle and bouzouki is hailed as a master flat picker whose style skillfully embraces Celtic music.

IF YOU GO:

A Swannanoa Solstice, part of the Mainstage Special Attraction Series, Diana Wortham Theatre at Pack Place.

Two performances: 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Sunday, December 21.

Tickets: Regular \$30; Senior \$28; Student \$25; Children \$10. Call the theatre's box office at (828) 257-4530 or visit www.dwthetheatre.com. Student Rush tickets (\$10 for students with valid I.D.) are sold the day of the show, based on availability.

'CD's' continued

The material is typically solid and catchy tunes have long been his forte – but with a subtle difference: the best songs are fueled by introspection rather than craft, as if Souther wants to take a few moments and think back upon his long career.

Both the writing and the small combo are a deliberate break from his past, so, despite the long gap between albums, this doesn't quite constitute a comeback. It's more like a reawakening, as if the muses suddenly sat up and slapped him hard.

It's an album he needed to do, both in terms of artistic reinvention and preserving his musical legacy. It's this sense of urgency that provides *If the World Was You* with its purpose. It feels vital and alive in ways that few other Souther albums do, as if he's digging deeper with his songs while supported by players who share his understanding of the material. That's ultimately what makes this effort one of 2008's most pleasant and understated surprises. ***1/2

Nils Lofgren

The Loner: Nils Sings Neil Hypertension Records

Nils Lofgren knows he's one of the luckiest guys in music. Certainly he's paid his dues (and heaven knows he's got talent to spare) but between lengthy



tenures with Springsteen's E Street Band, as well as being the occasional go to guy for Neil Young, he's pretty much lived a charmed life.

Trained in classical and jazz, Lofgren was initially enlisted to add piano and accordion to Young's *After The Gold Rush*. The pair clicked so well that he soon found himself a member of the band, adding his guitar and keyboards to *Tonight's the Night*, *Unplugged*, and various other Young masterworks. Although he's now firmly ensconced as a member of the E Street Band, Lofgren no doubt owes Young a debt of gratitude.

Accompanied only by his own piano or guitar, Lofgren strips the likes of *Birds* and *Harvest Moon* to their bare essentials, allowing his sweet voice (which does at times sound a bit like Young's) to lead the way. The triumph is in the simple and direct nature of the performances, making many of the songs sound almost as if they were Neil Young demos sung by someone else.

Winterlong and *Like A Hurricane* both benefit from this approach: the former because the sheer beauty of the song shines through and the latter by contrasting Young's own elegiac bombast with subtle chord structure and economy. Pur-

ists may grumble about anyone other than Young tackling this material, but who has more right to do so than Lofgren?

Like both Young and Springsteen he's always relied more on intuition than sheer technique, and while he's arguably a more accomplished vocalist, no one can sing Neil like Neil. Still, *The Loner* is far more than a mere covers project: it's that rare project that makes a true connection between both the tutor and the apprentice. ***

Scott Ainslie thunder's mouth Cat Tail Music

Inspired to take up the guitar when he first heard country blues artist John Jackson play in

1967, Scott Ainslie has never drifted far from his routes. As much an historian as a player, he's recorded four albums of traditional Delta Blues while working on such projects as transcribing Robert Johnson's published material for the seminal book "Robert Johnson at The Crossroads".

While the inclusion of cello, a few overdubs (strictly forbidden on his earlier efforts) and more contemporary production values may at first seem jarring, repeated listens of the ten tracks reveal the wisdom – while not wholly successful – of the album's intent: the building of a



sonic bridge between the traditional and the contemporary.

Much like the best of John Mayall's 1960's releases Ainslie is making the blues sound new all over again. The opening track is a head spinning cover of JB Lenoir's, *Down In Mississippi*, anchored by a thumping bass line courtesy of T Bone Wolk and Ainslie's own fierce slide guitar.

The low-keyed and natural strength of Ainslie's voice has a seductive quality that pierces direct to the heart. Don't be surprised if days later the powerful refrain is still echoing in your mind. Likewise his take on Son House's, *Grinnin' In Your Face* may not match the original – no one's could – but herein it gets a relaxed and sincere delivery that allows the singer to claim and make it his own.

There are other gems; *Dust My Broom* is another oft covered (some might say too much) classic, but Ainslie's throaty growl gives it just the proper edge, while his own *If Anybody Asks About Me* reveals him as not just a great Blues player but a fine writer in the art of swamp.

Like much of *thunder's mouth* (the line is taken from a Sleepy John Estes' song) it's as much lesson as listen without sacrificing either. No mean feat and even the Blues purists among us will find plenty within to remind us that the music is no less vital now than it was then. ****

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Holidays with the Guild

BY APRIL NANCE

Celebrate the wondrous winter season at the Blue Ridge Parkway's Folk Art Center. The Southern Highland Craft Guild schedule includes a special sale, free musical entertainment and hands-on craft workshops for children.

Children will be encouraged to make holiday ornaments and decorations using a variety of materials. Shop at Alanstand Craft Shop and enjoy the ongoing exhibitions and demonstrations. The Center is festively decorated for the season with Christmas trees, swags and all the trimmings. There is no admission charge and plenty of free parking.



Tracy Hildebrand and her daughter, Emily Stokes, work together on a craft project at a recent Folk Art Center event.

Photo by Stewart Stokes.

Sunday, December 14
Free musical performance, WNC Dulcimer Group, 2:30 to 5 p.m.

Sunday, December 21
Free musical performance, Voices in the Laurel and the Blue Orchestra Holiday Concert, 3 p.m.

The Southern Highland Craft Guild is a non-profit, educational organization established in 1930 to bring together the crafts and craftspeople of the Southern Highlands for the benefit of shared resources, education, marketing and conservation.

The Southern Highland Craft Guild is authorized to provide services at the Blue Ridge Parkway's Folk Art Center under the authority of a cooperative agreement with the National Park

Service, Department of the Interior.

IF
YOU
GO:

There is limited seating for all musical performances. For more information, call (828) 298-7928 or visit www.craft-guild.org. The Folk Art Center is located at Milepost 382 on the Blue Ridge Parkway, just north of the Hwy 70 entrance in east Asheville.

Saturday, December 6
Guild Artists' Holiday Seconds Sale, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Sunday, December 7
Free musical performance, Chapin High School Chorus, 2 to 4 p.m.

Handmade Holiday, hands-on craft demonstrations for children, 1 to 4 p.m.

THE SWANNANOVA VALLEY FINE ARTS LEAGUE

Christmas Gala & Auction

The Swannanoa Valley Fine Arts League "Christmas Gala & Auction Event" will take place on December 6 with festivities beginning at 7 p.m.

There will be wine, food and entertainment, an auction of quality fine art and other items of value. The event is open to the general public and should be a fun filled evening.

The new White Horse Black Mountain in the heart of Black Mountain at the intersection of Montreat road and State Street, will host the event.

GALA ART AUCTION & RAFFLE

An original painting by Deborah Squire will be raffled during the festivities. There will be hors d'oeuvres,

wine and music followed by the auction, desert and coffee.

Tickets are \$10 and can be purchased by cash or check only, at the door, or in advance, at the Black Mountain Chamber of Commerce. Your ticket includes a chance to win door prizes. You must be present to win. Proceeds go to provide scholarships and continued art education.

IF
YOU
GO:

Swannanoa Valley Fine Arts League Christmas Gala & Auction, December 6, beginning at 7 p.m. Open to the public. \$10 admission.

At the White Horse Black Mountain, 105C Montreat Rd., Black Mountain, NC.

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HOLIDAY 2008

Celebrate the Holidays With a One-of-a-Kind Gift

Frame it to a T is now offering 20% off all in stock custom framing and a new line of Eco-friendly frames. Eco Care products use only materials that have a high recycled content or come from renewable resources. The frames are made of 100% bamboo with water-based stains. A wide variety of finishes and sizes are available.

Asheville's Frame it to a T offers quality custom framing and design at a reasonable price. Using only materials of high quality and craftsmanship, Frame it to a T can frame that priceless photograph or piece of art in a unique and creative manner.

Owner Sean Robbins and Manager Tessa Eaton's combined 35 years of experience and extensive knowledge of art and interior design make Frame it to a T one of Asheville's best kept secrets.



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Special Holiday Workshop Series

AT THE BLACK MOUNTAIN CENTER FOR THE ARTS POTTERY STUDIO

As the holiday season approaches, perhaps you'd like to create your very own handmade holiday gifts, ornaments, and keepsakes – maybe a nativity set to add to your sister's collection, or a set of ornaments for all your grandchildren, or a piece that can be used year-round.

Families, beginners, and experienced artists can participate in a special holiday workshop at the Black Mountain Center for the Arts Pottery Studio, located in the old City Garage behind the Center at 225 W. State Street in Black Mountain.



When you sign up for the December session, your one-of-a-kind pots will be ready for the holiday season. Taught by AJ Reisman, resident potter at the Pottery Studio, the session will consist of two

BY RITA VERMILLION

Tuesdays from 6-8 p.m. and two Saturdays from 10 a.m. to noon in December. The classes are Tuesdays, December 2 and 9 (6 to 8 p.m.) and Saturdays, December 6 and 13 (10 a.m. to noon).

As cold weather approaches, the options for out-of-doors parties for birthdays, showers, and other group activities diminish. Perhaps it is time to think of hosting a "Paint-Your-Own Pottery" party.

The resident potters of the Center's Pottery Studio will make hand thrown pieces for you to decorate and glaze. Think of a Sweet 16 party where all the guests decorate their own mug as a party favor. Or a bridal shower where guests make a salad set for the wedding couple.

With advance notice, the potters make the pieces ready for the guests to decorate; the pieces are then fired by the Center, and you are notified when to pick them up. Prices per piece range from \$15 to \$50, depending on size and complexity. Parties are scheduled by appointment.

**IF
YOU
GO:**

Cost for an Adult is \$80. For an Adult and child (13 and under) together is \$120 for both. Clay and glaze materials and firing are included in the cost. To register: (828) 669-0930 or 225 W. State Street in the office.

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ALLANSTAND CRAFT SHOP AT THE FOLK ART CENTER

Milepost 382 Blue Ridge Parkway, Asheville, NC
Open Daily 9am-6pm | 828-298-7928

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Open Mon.-Sat: 10am-6pm; Sun: 10am-4pm | 828-298-7903

**SOUTHERN
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WWW.CRAFTGUILD.ORG

The Southern Highland Craft Guild is authorized to provide services on the Blue Ridge Parkway under the authority of a cooperative agreement with the National Park Service, Department of the Interior.

Jewelry: Tom & Pat Bauman

HOLIDAY 2008

A Great Gift Idea From Fast Frame

This summer I made my yearly visit to my old home town in Scotland. This year was extra special, as our family was together celebrating our Dad's 90th birthday. A second world war veteran, and still going strong as ever, he never ceases to amaze us.

So often people come into our store and hearing my Scottish accent, tell me their personal experience of being in Scotland. All too often they have made a trip to St. Andrews and can't say enough about their experience. So this year was my year to take a few days away from the birthday celebrations and go visit "The Old Course." What a wonderful experience, charming and friendly, with amazing history, and the architecture of the buildings just breathtaking.

I couldn't resist purchasing some wonderful prints of the "Old Course."



"The Old Course, St. Andrews, Scotland" prints available at FASTFRAME.

The prints are available in our store, framed or unframed. They make the perfect gift for the discriminating man (or woman) in your life.

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Best Bet for Holiday Shopping

On December 6 the Folk Art Center will host the Southern Highland Craft Guild's annual Guild Artists' Holiday Seconds Sale from 10 to 4 p.m. Craftspeople will be on hand in the center's auditorium to sell select work 10-50% off retail.

This is an excellent opportunity for the artist to liquidate overstocks and 2008 items, try out new techniques, and sell studio seconds. For the customer, the sale means great deals for holiday shopping and a chance to connect with the craftspeople.

It also provides an exciting, festive alternative to mall and big box import shopping. Buying from Guild artists supports the local economy and promotes the mission of the Guild, which is bringing together the crafts and craftspeople of



Wall hanging by Betsy Morrill.
Photo by Tim Barnwell.

BY APRIL NANCE

the Southern Highlands for the benefit of shared resources, education, marketing and conservation.

While at the Folk Art Center visitors can be inspired by three galleries showcasing the work of current Guild members and collections from the Guild's history. They can also shop at Allanstand Craft Shop, the nation's oldest craft gallery, where they will find gifts for everyone on their list.

**IF
YOU
GO:**

The Folk Art Center is located at Milepost 382 on the Blue Ridge Parkway, just north of the Hwy 70 entrance in east Asheville, NC. For more information, call (828) 298-7928 or visit www.craftguild.org.



Happy Holidays! From a Boy & His Dog Fine Art

Featuring the works of international artists, **a boy and his dog, fine art** is a contemporary gallery showcasing hyperrealist Vangelis Andriotakis' stunning florals along with the works of Alexander Sheversky, Hamilton Aguiar, Nobu Haihara, and shown above, Don Dahlke's "A Thousand Words." Dogs are welcome in our gallery.

89 Patton Ave. | Asheville | (828) 254-4051

HOLIDAY 2008

Twas the Sale Before Christmas...

This holiday season, help support a worthy cause by shopping at Grovewood Gallery from December 5 through December 7.

A portion of all sales on these days will go to benefit Arts For Life, a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the lives and healthcare experiences of children and adolescents battling cancer and other serious illnesses.

Take an additional 10% off on already marked down items such as handmade scarves, jewelry, pottery, glass, and much more. Customers who make a purchase will also receive a 10% off coupon towards lunch or dinner at the Grovewood Café, located right next door to the gallery.

At Arts For Life, young patients create drawings, sculptures and paintings while they receive lengthy, repetitive, and often times painful medical treatments. The children learn about watercolor and acrylic painting, rendering holiday images that warm the heart.

Arts For Life (AFL) has partnered with Brenner Children's Hospital in Winston-Salem, Mission Hospital in Asheville, Presbyterian Hospital in Charlotte,



At Arts for Life young patients create drawings, sculptures and paintings while they receive medical treatments.

BY ASHLEY VAN MATRE

and Duke Children's Hospital and Health Center in Durham to create successful pediatric clinic art programs, patient and family art support groups, and inpatient art programs.

AFL's staff members are artists and teachers who believe the arts are key to creating and maintaining vibrant and healthy communities. Arts For Life staff, interns, and volunteers teach the arts to patients for over 250 hours each week.

Teachers work with more than 2,000 patients annually, and see many of those children on a weekly basis. AFL's visual arts, creative writing, and music programs decrease patient stress and anxiety, keep patients active and engaged, and help families cope with the realities of illness.

IF YOU GO:

For more information on Arts for Life, or to make a donation visit www.afllnc.org/. For more information on this event or Grovewood

Gallery, call (828) 253-7651 or visit www.grovewood.com.

Great Local Gifts at Biltmore Coffee Traders

BY BETH GOSSETT

If you're looking for the perfect gift for friends, co-workers or relatives, you can find a variety of very special gift boxes at Biltmore Coffee Traders located at 518 Hendersonville Road.



Jennifer Hemmelgarn holds a gift box from Biltmore Coffee Traders containing a Catalytic Burner with two fuel blends, and two locally-made soaps \$39.95.

Gift boxes are available until December 24 and can be substituted with teas or aromatherapy products (prices vary). Call Bridgett Putt-Bounds at (828) 277-9227 for details.

- #1 The Office Helper:** Your choice of freshly roasted pound of coffee. \$14.95 plus shipping (if needed).
- #2 The Perfect Gift:** A roasted pound of coffee and a bottle of flavor syrup. \$29.95 plus shipping (if needed).
- #3 Coffee, Coffee, Coffee:** Your choice of three 10oz foil valve bags of coffee and a bottle of flavor syrup. \$49.95 plus shipping (if needed).
- #4 The Connoisseur:** Three different varieties of coffee. Your choice of three 10oz bags of freshly roasted coffee. \$29.95 plus shipping (if needed).
- #5 Coffee Squared:** Double the coffee pleasure with your choice of two pounds of freshly roasted coffee. \$29.95 plus shipping (if needed).

Coffee choices: Sumatran, Celebs Colossi, Organic Nicaraguan, Moka Java

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Brevard College Presents Annual Holiday Lessons and Carols

It's time again for Brevard College's 11th Annual Holiday Concert, *Lessons and Carols*. This year's concert will feature new and favorite seasonal carols, including those from Austria, Wales, Germany, and France.

The Brevard College Concert Choir and Chamber Chorale will

perform and feature guest organist Kyle Ritter from All Soul's Episcopal Church of Asheville.

This free event takes place on Saturday, December 6, 7:30 p.m. at the Paul Porter Center for Performing Arts. The community is warmly invited to attend. For more information, contact Michael Porter at (828) 884-8139.

Brevard College
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- Southern Surroundings
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- Suhae Gallery
- Susan Luke Art
- Sweet Creek Specialties
- T. Pennington Art Gallery
- Tammy Henry Photography
- Tara Bella's
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ASHEVILLE SHOPS

The Wine Guy Un-Corks a Sparkling New Future

BY PAM J. HECHT

You don't have to be a connoisseur to find a good bottle of wine. You don't even have to spend a fortune. But you do need to know where to go.

Peek inside The Wine Guy and you'll find it's not such an intimidating place for the novice wine drinker.

What's different about this wine store is that the wines are divided into styles, like "fruity" or "robust," rather than by region or grape variety, and all you need to know is what types of flavors appeal to you.

"The descriptions for each section of wines are in terms everyone can understand," says south store manager Steve Nelson. "We can ask you just a few questions about your flavor preferences and quickly help you pick out a bottle you'll enjoy."

Known for nine years as one of the best, and most innovative, wine shops in Western North Carolina, The Wine Guy, with two Asheville locations, specializes



Erik Peterson and Muriel Edens will help you find the perfect wine gift this Holiday season.

in unique wines \$20 and under that are an exceptionally good value for the money, says Nelson. A smaller "cellar" section features rare, age-worthy and pricier wines.

Two New Additions

Nelson, along with store owner Dorsey Fenner Campbell, have recently expanded their services to include comprehensive event planning. Samantha Nelson, a seasoned event planner with more than 15 years of experience, has joined the staff to coordinate both private and corporate events and to serve as the company's marketing director.

And in keeping with their quest to demystify the world of wine, Nelson and Campbell, who manages the north store, hold informal reception-style tastings in the south store and more formal, sit-down tastings at their north location. The pair recently added an additional tasting room at the south store and tastings will begin there in January.

Educational as well as social, the store's evening tastings are "semi-blind" – participants are given the wine list with prices and hints about the taste of each. Next, nine unidentified wines are poured from paper bags, three at a time. The secrecy "eliminates any preconceptions" about the wines.

"We discuss differences between the wines along with personal preferences," says Nelson. "And whoever guesses all the wines correctly, gets a Wine Guy t-shirt – it's a fun way to learn."

"Wine is so subjective – one person tastes coffee, another chocolate, another raspberry – it's a sensory thing," says

'The Wine Guy' continued on pg. 34

The Wine Guy Tasting Events

December 3, 7 p.m.

Syrah/Shiraz Comparison Tasting at The Wine Guy North. \$20/person. Light hors d'oeuvres, sample three wines of similar variety from different parts of the world. Reservations required, call (828) 254-6500.

December 10, 7 p.m.

Bubbly Tasting at The Wine Guy North, \$25/person. Light hors d'oeuvres, sample 10 sparkling wines from around the world to find the right one for your own holiday festivities. Reservations required, call (828) 254-6500.

December 17, 7 p.m.

Cucina 24 Wine Dinner, \$70/person (inclusive of tax and tip). Enjoy an Italian feast paired with several Italian wines and learn about the wine served. Reservations required, call Cucina 24 at (828) 254-6170.

The Wine Guy North
555 Merrimon Ave.
(828) 254-6500

The Wine Guy South
1200 Hendersonville Rd.
(828) 277-1120

Twass the Sale Before Christmas...



Arts for Life is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the healthcare experiences of children and adolescents.

For more information on Arts for Life visit www.aflnc.org

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DECEMBER 2008

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2 P.M.

MariJo Moore will sign copies of "When the Dead Dream," a novel about the entwined destinies of a group of people from Crockett County, Tennessee, during the first half of the Twentieth Century.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13, 10 A.M.

Ron Rash reads from his book "Serena." The year is 1929, and newlyweds George and Serena Pemberton travel from Boston to the North Carolina mountains where they plan to create a timber empire.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13, 11:30 A.M.

Christmas Presence

Join us for a book signing with **Celia H. Miles** and **Nancy Dillingham**, the editors of "Christmas Presence," a new anthology of writings by 45 western North Carolina women writers.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2 P.M.

Local mystery writer, **Vicki Lane**, signs copies of her popular Appalachian mysteries.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 11, 2009 3 P.M.

Women Respond to War

Award-winning author **MariJo Moore** asked women from around the world to consider the devastating nature of conflict-inner wars, outer wars, public battles, and personal losses. Their answers, in the form of poignant poetry and essays, examine war in all its permutations, beginning in 60 CE and continuing into the 21st century, from Ireland to Iraq and everywhere in between.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 15, 7 P.M.

Sweet Potato Queen

Bestselling humorist **Jill Conner Browne** has written a hilarious life maintenance program to help women navigate society's obsession with nips, tucks, carbs, and clothes – a comic relief for a culture addicted to finding the Fountain of Youth.

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Big Fat Juicy Books

The Perfect Gift

BY H. BYRON BALLARD

As the economy totters around in too-high heels, retailers and the mainstream media are already fretting about the December sales numbers. As your personal budget tightens and you begin thinking of those you love and the gift (or gifts) you hope to shower upon them, let me suggest a gift that lasts.

You don't have to worry about size or color or whether or not it was processed in the same facility as peanuts. It's easy to wrap and there's a perfect choice for everyone on your list. And if you frequent a local independent bookstore, you can avail yourself of years of experience when trying to make your decision.

May I suggest books for everyone on your list?

There are cloth books for babies and plastic books for their baths. Books to help them through puberty or Mad Libs to keep them occupied on long trips. There are how-to make-some-art books or books and CDs to help you learn a foreign language. There's history and fiction and self-help, poetry and philosophy (as if poetry is not philosophy).

But the best to give, to my way of thinking, are the big fat "coffee table" books. And I don't even have a coffee table. Here are some of my current favorites. All are richly illustrated and will make beautiful and appreciated gifts.

For the Comedian in Your Life

For anyone who grew up with Mad Magazine in the house, this boxed collection is both a stroll down memory lane and a reminder of the sharp, zany wit of some of that early artwork. Check out "Completely Mad Don Martin."



For the Dirt Worshipper

The tree hugging, dirt worshipper you married will begin planning long hikes when she receives "Trees and Forests of America" by Tim Palmer. When so much forest has been lost, we sometimes forget what rich places have miraculously escaped.

For the Naturalist

The bright plumage photographed for the dust jacket of Thomas Marent's "Rainforest" is evocative and beautiful.

Marent is a Swiss-born photographer and naturalist. You can read more about him and see more of his photos at www.thomasmarent.com

As a once-and-future beekeeper, I am fascinated by the workings of insect colonies and "The Superorganism" by Bert Hölldobler goes into this complicated and eerie world. Hölldobler won the Pulitzer for "The Ants" in the early 1990's.

For Those with Exquisite Taste

Someone with exquisite taste and a good eye will love "A Passion for Blue and White" by Carolyn Roehm. From *Weeping Willow* to *Flow Blue*, this is a dazzling feast for the eyes, as well as an interesting history.

Fabulous Cookbooks

There are a million fabulous cookbooks in the world and everyone has her or his favorites. Here are two new ones that I am putting on my personal list to Santa. Both are by Philadelphia-based chef Aliza Green and they are beautiful, clear and pioneering, if that can be said in the world of food.

"Starting With Ingredients: The Quintessential Recipes for the Way We Really Cook" and "Starting with Ingredients: Baking" If you are a foodie or simply love to cook, get them for yourself or put them on your list.

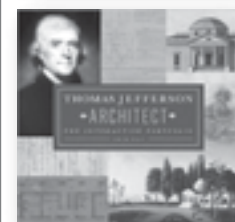
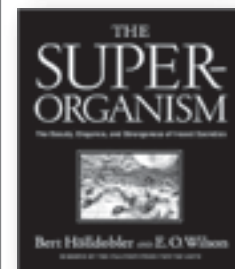
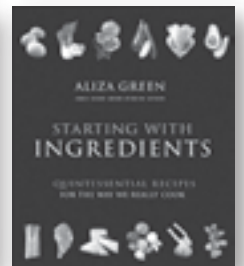
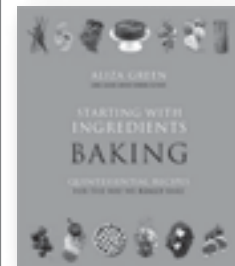
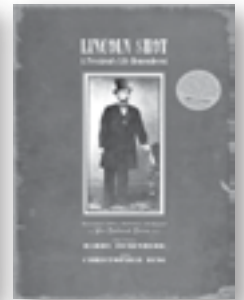
For the History Buff

Two histories have to be mentioned here. "Thomas Jefferson: Architect: The Interactive Portfolio" by Chuck Wills is full of photos, maps and other ephemera. He really was a fascinating and brilliant man. As was the subject of "Lincoln Shot - A President's Life Remembered" which is a large (even for coffee table books) retro-looking book compiled and created by the staff of the National News.

This is technically a young person's book but is such a wonderful assortment of information that we shouldn't limit its market. You have to see this one in person. It is simply amazing.

This is the tip of the literary iceberg and you'll have to visit a good store to see the wealth of books available for those you love. May I suggest adding virtue to the necessity we sometimes feel at this time of year? Buy local and take time out of your busy life to enjoy that new book smell.

Byron Ballard, Asheville's Village Witch
<http://blogs.citizen-times.com/blogs/index.php?blog=18>



Byron Ballard is a bookseller, organic gardener and a beekeeper. Her writings have appeared in local and national print and electronic media. She blogs for the Asheville Citizen-Times as "the Village Witch". Byron lives on an urban farmstead in Asheville's historic West End with her husband Joe and daughter Kate.

Holiday Reading

Saturday, December 13, 7 p.m.

Scott Osondu continues his annual tradition of reading holiday stories for children of all ages. Mountain dulcimer music will be provided by Balsam Gap Dulcimer. Cookies and hot chocolate will be available. Get out of the cold and into the spirit!

Osondu Booksellers, 184 North Main Street, in Waynesville, NC.

POETRY

It Just So Happens I Have Grown Tired of Words

It Just So Happens I Have Grown Tired of Words

particularly the ones
I don't know I know.

Traveling, of late, low and deep
to the infinity which floats
within my soul on a bevy of
sad white birds

conjecturing? spinning? ...no.
compounding? swirling? ...no.
exemplifying? skipping? ...no.
conjugating? faltering? ...no.
objectifying? flying? ...no.
I don't know!

It just so happens
I have grown tired of words.

Do I need new phrases?
new sounds? new meanings?
old languages?

Of what are these sad white birds
- this infinitesimal bevy of
sad white birds

- of what are these birds constructed?
Destinies ...

It just so happens
I have grown tired of words

but words... words... words...
have never grown tired of me.

MariJo Moore © 2005
from *Confessions of a Madwoman*

an hour or two and then
hiccup into a new poem.
I haven't written a new
poem in several months
now and I am missing
the feeling of exhilaration
when this happens.

I don't believe in
writers' block - I believe
in incubation. I am not
blocked. I am busy. I am
awaiting fruition of all
that I have gathered in
the past few months: time
with my grandchildren,
a disappointing literary
rejection, building a new mediation and
consultation business, spending time
with old friends, visiting with my sister
and her two children, political craziness,
economic woes, and emails warning that
the world is coming to an end in 2012.

After my fall snow falling walk, I
check my email for something enlighten-
ing. And there it is: my dear friend and
prolific writer, Tom Kerr sent me a poem
(to the right) he just constructed.

This is beautiful! Enlightening! We
all need help and reassurance! I am grow-
ing not so tired of words now! Therefore
I asked Tom for a bit of information
on how this poem came about and he
answered:

*"I just wrote about 20 poems us-
ing scraps of old notes and poem at-
tempts going back 15 years and most
of them were observations of nature
or natural phenomena and I think I
wrote this one because I have always*

poetry

A sacred fury...
an uncommon madness...



a scattering of birds...

BY MARIJO MOORE

*thought it was ironic
that it is possible to start
a fire with ice and I like
irony. In fact I ironed a
linen shirt in August."*

*"I was not con-
vinced that it was a real
thing so I went to a wil-
derness survival site and
read a long description
of how it's done with
photos of a guy start-
ing a fire with a piece
of ice."*

*"I have enough
trouble starting a fire with (this word
I deleted for posterity's sake) but any-
way I wanted to write about that so
I came up with the rest of the poem
about the journey and what not so
that I would have an excuse to write
about fire-making with ice."*

Laughing, I am reminded that words
are always around me, hiding, peeking
through old memories, awakening my
visceral dreams, coming from unsuspect-
ing as well as suspecting sources. And yes,
at times, I do grow tired of words, but
words — especially those depicting irony
and humor and madness and love and
sorrow and surprises and life in western
North Carolina — never grow tired of
me. So, I'll add a few more logs to the
dying fire in my fireplace, get to work on
what I have to do, and await a new poem
that will no doubt come when I least
expect it.

Resourceful Mindfulness

Lost in the wilderness
Sometimes the journey
is so tough

in the dead of winter
we just want something

you can start a fire by
tender to embrace

using nothing but a slice of ice
at other times the
directions soften

if you hold it over dry leaves
until we need to hold
something hard

focusing the rays of the sun
to help us concentrate

through the frozen lens
like light blazing through
a magnifying glass.

Tom Kerr © 2008

*Happy Holidays to all and
don't forget to say and share
words of thankfulness!*

**MariJo Moore is the author of a dozen
books including three books of poetry:
Spirit Voices of Bones, Confessions of a
Madwoman (now available on CD), and the
forthcoming Poets Inhale The Darkness
Artists Breathe. www.marijomore.com**

I wrote the above poem in December
of 2004. This morning (October
28, 2008) it came to my mind as I
thought about writing a new poem.
But about what? There are demands
on my time: a manuscript to be edited,
and an anthology to be put together.

Book signings approaching for my
new novel, and a new business to be
marketed. Not to mention my business
presentation/lecture/workshop engage-
ments in North Carolina, Maryland,
Michigan, and California. How can I
be creative when there is so much to be
done? How can I possibly have the time
or energy to create a new poem when life
is so pressing?

I reread the above poem. Yes, I am
a bit tired of words this morning. I need
some refreshing break. Perhaps a walk
in the fall snow that is falling outside my
cabin. Maybe a flake will hit my mouth
just right and a new idea will crawl onto
my tongue and make its way down into
my belly and stay there — incubated for

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www.tictocproductions.com

NOTEWORTHY

Flat Rock's Newest Restaurant



The Back Room is now serving a full menu starting at 5 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday, featuring fresh local ingredients.

Select any wine from the Flat Rock Wine Shoppe's extensive collection to enjoy with your meal. Never pay restaurant prices again!

The Back Room serves soups, salads, sandwiches, pasta, seafood, steak, and homemade desserts. We also provide a late night menu for snacking during our live musical performances.

Please call (828) 697-6828 for more information. Check out our menu at www.flatrockwineshoppe.com/food.html

The Back Room is located behind The Flat Rock Wine Shoppe next to The Flat Rock Cinema in The Singleton Centre, just down the street from The Flat Rock Playhouse.

Jam on into the New Year with

Donna the Buffalo

BY JAMES CASSARA

It's hard to imagine that the ensemble cryptically named Donna the Buffalo has reached the twenty year mark – after all they spent more than half that time without a recording contract and were virtually unknown beyond their home region of Ithaca, New York – yet here they are, sounding as fresh and energized as ever.

Silver Lined, their seventh album released this summer on Sugar Hill Records, builds on the band's signature sound of traditional mountain music infused with elements of Cajun, rock, folk, reggae and country. Throughout the album's dozen tracks the undulating rhythms are accented by the twin vocals, of founding members Tara Nevins and Jeb Puryear, backed by a band whose relentless touring schedule has only made them better with age.

Donna the Buffalo represents one of most respected 'brands' in the world of touring roots acts. The band has put countless miles on their vintage bio diesel bus playing the country's most prestigious festivals and clubs, sharing a stage with the likes of Los Lobos, 10,000 Maniacs, and Wilco. Their fervent fan base, nicknamed *The Herd*, follows the band with zeal and has created a unique and supportive community online and at shows across the nation.

But it isn't just the festival setting in which the band thrives. Given the right hall, a wide open dance floor, and enthusiastic crowd the band can groove with the best of them. And what better time is there to party down than New Year's



Kathy Zeigler, Tom Gilbert, Tara Nevins, Jeb Puryear, Bill Renyolds.

Photo by Jordy Risk.

Eve? Wrapping up 2008 in grand fashion, the band will play successive nights at The Orange Peel, sending out one year and welcoming another in high fashion. Two decades may have gone by in a flash, but for Donna the Buffalo it's been one terrific ride. Long may they roam.

For more information on Donna the Buffalo's new effort as well as their impressive history, check their full-length bio at www.sugarhillrecords.com/publicity.

IF
YOU
GO:

Donna the Buffalo at The Orange Peel in downtown Asheville. Tuesday, December 30, and Wednesday, December 31.

Both shows begin at 9 p.m. Ticket prices: December 30, \$20 advance, \$25 door; December 31, \$30 advance, \$35 door.

Visit www.theorangepeel.net

'Rings' continued from pg. 6

loved ones. Usually men's rings were very simple bands but a few decades later it became popular to have their rings match their bride's ring.

Today wedding and engagement rings can be just about any size, shape and description. The more they reflect the couple's personalities the more meaning they evoke for the bride and groom. This idea of making each ring very personal is carried out on a daily basis by two local goldsmiths, Lynn Daniel and Susan West in their gallery in Biltmore Village they named blue.

These two artists make wedding and engagement rings without the use of replicating molds, so that every piece is a true one of a kind piece. According to Lynn, they rarely make the traditional two ring sets and instead make one

larger ring to serve as both the engagement and wedding ring. Also quite often the request is for an engagement ring on the right hand and the wedding ring on the left hand, allowing both rings to be separate works of art.

Blue's annual winter wedding and engagement ring show continues through December 10, 2008. Lynn and Susan will be displaying their newest designs along with a large selection of the natural handcut Australian diamonds they have exclusively used for the past 20 years.

blue

1 Swan Street in Biltmore Village
Monday thru Saturday 10:30 a.m.
to 6 p.m. and Sunday 1-5 p.m.
www.bluegoldsmiths.com

When The Dead Dream

by MariJo Moore – the sequel to
"The Diamond Doorknob"

"I cannot believe anyone with any degree of perception can read this book and not be changed by it. Changed, certainly, in the way they see people who are different, but also in relation to all that is around them, to time, life and the universe, and ultimately how they view themselves."

~ Doris Seale, author of "Blood Salt, Ghost Dance," coeditor/author of "Through Indian Eyes, A Broken Flute," and cofounder of Oyate

"When the Dead Dream is a compelling, richly populated novel. Many characters come convincingly to life, forming Cloud Smoker's Cherokee and white communities, through which she journeys, precariously managing her gift of sight. MariJo Moore's sequel to The Diamond Doorknob anticipates a healing-through-writing – and is as reassuringly rooted as that novel was painfully searching."

~ Rob Neufeld, author of "A Popular History of Western North Carolina" and book reviewer for the Asheville Citizen-Times

"One of the deep pleasures of reading is giving oneself over to a gifted storyteller for the duration of the trip. MariJo Moore eases our transition into her several worlds and then holds us there, willing us to travel roads that are winding, difficult and revelatory. When the Dead Dream may be her masterwork – a sinuous and stony path where we encounter monsters as well as jewels. It is not for the faint-hearted and not to be missed."

~ H. Byron Ballard, author of "Back to the Garden" and "Earth Works"

IF
YOU
GO:

MariJo Moore will be signing copies of her new book at Malaprops on Saturday, December 6 from 2 to 4 p.m.

You can also order from www.marijo-moore.com. For more information call (828) 665-7630 or visit www.marijomooore.com.

When the Dead Dream

Paperback, 168 pages.
ISBN 978-0-9767581-5-0

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Send poems to:

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Reel Take Reviewers:

CHIP KAUFMANN is a film historian who also shares his love of classical music as a program host on WCQS-FM radio.

MICHELLE KEENAN is a long time student of film, a believer in the magic of movies and a fundraiser for public radio.

SIERRA BICKING, our Teen Reviewer, prefers movies that show teenagers as brilliant and brave.

Questions/Comments?

You can email Chip or Michelle at reeltakes@hotmail.com



For the latest **REVIEWS**,
THEATER INFO and
MOVIE SHOW TIMES, visit
www.rapidrivermagazine.com

- ★★★★ - Fantastic
- ★★★★ - Pretty darn good
- ★★★ - Has some good points
- ★★ - The previews lied
- ★ - Only if you must
- ☹ - Forget entirely

Changeling ★★★★★

Short Take: The young mother of a missing boy in the 1920's takes on the LAPD when she believes the child returned is not her son.

REEL TAKE: Clint Eastwood directed the true story of Christine Collins, the mother of a missing boy in the 1920s, who battled the LAPD when they return a child to her that is not her son. Collins was a single working mother in Los Angeles. She arrived home from work one day to find her son Walter gone.

After several months, the LAPD tells her Walter has been found in Illinois. When they take her to meet him at the train station, she knows immediately that the boy standing before her is not her son. In need of some positive press, Chief Davis (Colm Feore) and Captain Jones (Jeffrey Donovan) goad her into submission. They pose for pictures and send the mother and child home.

Once there she discovers physical proof that the boy is not her child. When Collins confronts the detective about the misunderstanding, she shuts her out. When she pursues her case with the help of the Rev. Gustav Briegleb (John Malkovich), it gets ugly. The police will stop at nothing to shut her up, even locking her up in an insane asylum. Meanwhile a Detective Ybarra (Michael Kelly) happens onto a juvenile case that leads to the discovery of a serial killer who has butchered a couple dozen young boys, Walter Collins perhaps one of them. The two stories combined to pit Collins as the unlikely figurehead of a battle against corruption in the LAPD.

While the murders were disturbing, it was the depths of corruption and the locking up or killing of anyone who got in the LAPD's way that is truly dismaying to a 2008 audience. The truth of the matter is that such things did happen. When I was in the Junior Red Cross when I was in high school, we visited the state hospital. There I met a woman who had



Angelina Jolie as Christine Collins in Clint Eastwood's "Changeling."

been locked up at around the same time as Christine Collins. She too had gotten in someone's way. Though a product of more than half a century of institutionalism, if we snuck Hannah a lipstick or rouge, Hannah would tell us a bit

of the story and then delight in playing the piano for us.

Changeling is a beautiful character and case study. The acting is fine, but for a jam-packed melodrama the pacing is interminably slow in parts. This seems deliberate on Eastwood's part and his score reflects it as well. Unfortunately it caused me to disconnect with the movie. On the other hand, I did remember a forgotten lady and for that I'm grateful.

Rated R for disturbing content and language.

Review by Michelle Keenan

Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa

★★★★ 1/2

Short Take: Sequel to the 2005 hit is quite entertaining if nothing really special.

REEL TAKE: After sitting through two heavy dramas (*The Caller*, *Rachel's Getting Married*) and an above average pop culture comedy (*Zach & Miri Make A Porno*), I was ready to cleanse the palette and *Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa* was just what I was looking for.

Following up on the success of the first *Madagascar* (2005), *Madagascar 2* is a perfectly acceptable sequel which according to some reviewers is better than the original (which I didn't see). All the main characters are back (Alex the Lion, Marty the Zebra, Melman the Giraffe, Gloria the Hippo) as well as the actors who voiced them (Ben Stiller, Chris Rock, David Schwimmer, and Jada Pinkett Smith).

The story involves the four main characters and their friends trying to get back to the Central Park Zoo from Madagascar (where they wound up in the first film). They only get as far as Africa where Alex is reunited with his family. Each character has a storyline which is developed over the course of the movie before coming together in standard fashion during the finale.

Although *Madagascar 2* is essentially a kid's movie, there are enough pop culture references (everything from *West Side Story* to *Survivor*) to keep adults interested and enough clever gags to keep them amused. The animation is the now standard computer generated imagery made popular by the *Shrek* franchise. It looks good but it also looks too much the same. The filmmakers at least make fun of this technique in a scene involving hundreds of zebras. I'm sure that it would be more impressive in the IMAX format for which the movie was designed.



The animated stars of Dreamworks' "Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa."

In the long run *Madagascar 2* is nothing special but it is a pleasant enough way to kill an hour and a half even if you don't have children to take to see it. Just sit back and enjoy the star voices, the pop culture references, and the well worn message that diversity and being yourself are good things.

Rated PG for some crude humor.

Review by Chip Kaufmann

Quantum of Solace ★★★★★

Short Take: Daniel Craig returns for a second installment as a now vengeful James Bond.

REEL TAKE:

What many people don't realize about *Quantum of Solace* is that it picks up mere hours after the point where *Casino Royale* left off. His love died and betrayed him in the last few minutes of the movie. So if you think our man Bond is going to be in a good mood, think again. Even for Bond, James Bond, it's going to take a day or two to move on.

The other thing that's important for viewers and uppity reviewers alike to remember is that with the introduction of Daniel Craig as Bond, they are retooling the franchise from the beginning. We're seeing how James Bond really becomes the James Bond 007 we all know and love. And befitting of the 21st century (not 1961), it's not the Bond of a misogynistic, cold war era. And, at least in this chapter, cell phones and computer technology serve as the necessary gadgetry.

Quantum starts out with the car chase from hell. It's also the only time we see an Aston Martin in this one and dear me it does take a beating. While trying to find out more about the organization that Vesper was connected to, Bond and M (Judi Dench) are betrayed by one of their own agents. As Bond follows the trail we meet Dominic Greene (Mathieu Amalric), a powerful businessman posing as an environmentalist but who's actually depriving Bolivia of its water supply. He may go down as the worst Bond villain ever. He's creepy but that's about it.

Daniel Craig and Judi Dench are powerhouses and they have great chem-

'Movies' continued on pg 26

FILM REVIEWS

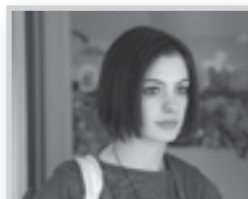
'Movies' continued from pg 25

istry. Bond's sidekick in *Quantum* is Camille (Olga Kurylenko) and she too is out for vengeance. Interestingly, the relationship between Bond and Camille is more mentor/student than anything else. However, like Almaric, Kurylenko doesn't have much presence. On the other hand, the smaller part players did very well. Gemma Arterton as Strawberry Fields and Jeffrey Wright as Felix Leiter were solid. Giancarlo Giannini, reprising his *Casino* role as Mathis, is top drawer.

Quantum of Solace is an action packed epilogue to its predecessor. Though not nearly as good, it's still worthwhile. Thankfully *Quantum* ends on a much better note for Bond than *Casino*. He's moved passed Vesper and vengeance. This puts him in good place for the next installment. James Bond will return.

Rated PG-13 for intense sequences of violence and action and some sexual content.

Review by Michelle Keenan



Anne Hathaway confronts her family in "Rachel's Getting Married."

Rachel's Getting Married

1/2

Short Take: Yet another dysfunctional family drama with a fine performance by Anne Hathaway and lots of

unnecessary camerawork.

REEL TAKE: Take one part Woody Allen, one part Ingmar Bergman, add the quirkiness of *Little Miss Sunshine*, and then shoot the entire movie in the style of *The Blair Witch Project* and you pretty much have *Rachel's Getting Married* in a nutshell.

This is one of those films that tests my mettle as a critic. *Rachel* is the latest offering from one of America's most talented filmmakers (Jonathan Demme – *Jimmy Carter: Man From Plains*) and it features remarkable performances from Anne Hathaway and an ensemble cast, yet for me it was torture to sit through. That doesn't make it a bad film, it's just not my cup of tea and I'll tell you why.

The biggest problem I had is that the entire film is shot with a hand held camera which gave me a headache but the rest of the audience didn't seem to mind. This gives the film the look and feel of a small Indie feature or a reality TV show (take your choice) but it didn't work for me.

As for Anne Hathaway, her performance is terrific and miles away from her typical roles which is the point and also part of the problem. She plays the part as

if it were written to show that's she's a serious actress (*Brokeback Mountain* already did that) and she couldn't convince me otherwise.

Last and not least the movie and the characters are basically upscale soap opera and I don't like soap operas. I could care less about the characters which is not the fault of the actors, the screenwriter, or Jonathan Demme. It's just me.

Like *The Caller* (see review in this issue), this is a small, important film that at least got a mainstream release thanks to its director and star. I'm all for more stripped down films like *Rachel's Getting Married*, I just personally didn't care for this one.

Rated R for language and sexuality.

Review by Chip Kaufmann

RocknRolla

Short Take: The ex-Mr. Madonna is back in the saddle doing what he does best.

REEL TAKE: If *RocknRolla* is any indication of what Guy Ritchie is going to produce in his post-Madonna life, then Amen sister! *RocknRolla* is the first in a new trilogy from Ritchie and it's what Ritchie does best – a Brit crime flick with low lives, a bit of grit and lots of laughs.

RocknRolla is a shell game of who's outwitting whom. An English businessman (mob boss), a Russian businessman (mob boss), a sexy accountant, an allegedly dead rock star, a corrupt politician and a gaggle of bumbling crooks all vying for the same money and a certain painting are a whole lot of fun to watch. A crooked land deal grows more crooked with each fast paced, twist and turn of the story.

The cast is a brilliant ensemble with Tom Wilkinson as Lenny Cole, the English "businessman" and architect of the crooked land plan. Thandie Newton is the cool and aloof accountant. Mark Strong is Lenny's right hand man Archie and Toby Kebbell is Lenny's drug addled, rock star step-son Johnny Quid. Gerard Butler, Idris Elba and Tom Hardy add the laughs as One Two, Mumbles and Handsome Bob respectively – part of Lenny and Archie's underworld crew of crooks, cons and thieves. The rest of the cast is great too, and with names like Cookie and Fred the Head, what's not to love.

What Ritchie does so well is blend the ugliness of the world and humor. He gives you a nugget of something to like in almost every character even if they are

not particularly likeable. Criminal activity replete with fumbles and totally unrelated conversation about someone's mum, who's gay and who you want to shag, is just plain funny.

As Johnny says, "everyone wants to be a RocknRolla ... they want the whole lot," however *RocknRolla* isn't for everyone. If you are a fan of Ritchie's *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrells* and *Snatch*, or other scrappy Brit flicks such as *Layer Cake*, you will most certainly enjoy this one. If you have a problem with thick accents, foul language, ugliness or grittiness then skip it – you ain't no RocknRolla.

Rated R for pervasive language, violence, drug use and brief sex.

Review by Michelle Keenan

Soul Men

Short Take: Two estranged has-been soul singers are reunited for tribute to their former lead singer and hopefully a comeback.

REEL TAKE: Louis Hinds (Samuel L. Jackson) and Floyd Henderson (Bernie Mac) are the Real Deal in *Soul Men*. Unfortunately for them at the height of their career in the mid 1970s, their lead singer Marcus Hooks (John Legend) left them to pursue a stellar solo career while the Real Deal floundered and eventually disappeared into obscurity.

Flash forward twenty some years, Henderson has been retired (by a swindling little nephew) from his successful, sexy car wash franchise (yes, sexy girls a la Hooters wash your car) and put out to pasture with his new artificial hip. Hinds is an ex-con turned mechanic who's barely keeping himself out of jail and barely keeping a roof over his head.

When Hooks dies suddenly, the stunned world mourns and Hinds and Henderson are called upon to perform at The Apollo Theatre in New York at a memorial for their former band mate.



Bernie Mac and Samuel L. Jackson gettin' down in "Soul Men."

movie is road trip there and getting in shape to perform. Along the way rediscover friendship and find family.

Soul Men is nothing new, nothing revelatory and not a great movie by any stretch of the imagination, but it is an enjoyable little joy ride, especially if you

This is easier said than done. Once Henderson convinces Hinds to do the tribute, the rest of the

are a fan of Samuel L. Jackson and the late, great Bernie Mac. Jackson and Mac have great chemistry together and they clearly had a ball making this movie. Their song and dance moves are not bad either. There is pervasive language used throughout the film that may make some white people squirm in their chair, but it's in context and I didn't find it offensive.

Isaac Hayes has a fun bit part in the movie as well. Ironically Hayes and Mac died about a day apart from one another. The end credits pay a nice tip of the hat to the comic and the real soul man.

Rated R for pervasive language and sexual content.

Review by Michelle Keenan

The Caller

Short Take: This well acted character study is a throwback to the way mainstream movies used to be made and should be made again.



Frank Langella and Elliot Gould in the engrossing drama "The Caller" which was screened at this year's Asheville Film Festival.

REEL TAKE: Whatever else gets said about the 2008 Asheville Film Festival, it probably had the strongest line-up of movies in its 6 year history. *The Caller* was one of those films and it illustrates why we need an AFF and what precisely is wrong with Hollywood today. Back in the 1970s and 80s this film would have been given a mainstream release. Not so today even though it stars Frank Langella and Elliot Gould and has an intriguing storyline. In fact it will probably go straight to DVD and that would be a crying shame.

The Caller is the story of two men. One is an oil company consultant who develops a conscience while the other is a low rent detective with very few cases. The consultant hires the detective to follow someone closely but doesn't tell him that he (the consultant) is the one being followed. The more the detective observes the more he discovers including a long lost connection between the two men.

This is old fashioned moviemaking at its best. Interesting characters, solid performances, and an unobtrusive visual

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FILM REVIEWS

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style that lets the story unfold without any unnecessary visual tricks. It's easy to follow without being simple minded and that enhances the emotional payoff that occurs at the end of the film.

The AFF audience, in attendance for the screening at a mostly full Diana Wortham Theatre, were thoroughly engrossed throughout and whenever a film can do that then it must have something extra. It isn't a great movie but it's a very good one and of a type that we need more of. Films that don't cost a lot to make and that can dazzle us with brilliance rather than bewilder us with special effects. Watch for *The Caller* on DVD if it can ever get a distributor to pick it up.

Not Rated as it hasn't been submitted to the MPAA.

Review by Chip Kaufmann

Zack & Miri Make a Porno



Short Take: A coarse and vulgar Pop Culture comedy that is a romantic love story in disguise.

REEL TAKE: Seth Rogen, fresh from *Pineapple Express*, is appearing in another Pop Culture comedy this time directed by Kevin Smith (*Clerks II*). The results are what fans of both director and star would expect but the uninitiated are in for a surprise with both the good and bad aspects that implies.



Elizabeth Banks and Seth Rogen as roommates in "Zach and Miri Make a Porno."

On one level *Zack & Miri* is your typical no-holds-barred gross out affair that passes for comedy today and I wish I could dismiss it as such. However underneath all the rampant sex and foul language, it's a love story and one that works because we come to care about the characters. In order for that to happen, two things are essential, good writing and good acting and both are here. Good directing

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Your Reel Takes Guide to the Movies this Holiday Season

BY MICHELLE KEENAN

It's December and you know what that means. The halls are decked, retailers are selling us the true meaning of Christmas and Hollywood brings out the big guns.

After dry spells that made the likeable but light *Wall-E* look a contender for Best Picture this year, suddenly the theatres will be overflowing with substantive movies. Yes boys and girls it's time for another Oscar Race and holiday blockbusters.

Slum Dog Millionaire (11/12)

Limited release – should hit Asheville this month.

Reel Buzz: Being hailed as the movie to beat this year, British director Danny Boyle (*Trainspotting*) takes an unusual creative direction with *Slumdog Millionaire*. UK indie meets Bollywood in the "Capraesque" tale of a poor Indian teen who goes on the Hindi version of *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire* in order to win the love of a girl. It sounds like it's a great little film complete with heart and dignity. Unfortunately many people probably won't see it as it's in limited release and has an Indian cast.

Australia (11/26)

Reel Buzz: It looks like a sweeping, epic, antipodean love-fest directed by Baz Luhrmann (*Moulin Rouge*) featuring the two prettiest people in Australia. Nicole Kidman plays an English aristocrat (what a stretch) who inherits a ranch in Northern Australia. Hugh Jackman plays her main ranch hand (figuratively and literally). Together they drive 2,000 head of cattle through the outback.

Meanwhile the Japanese bomb Darwin, World War II breaks out, all hell breaks loose, and they fall in love. Adding to the hype, Luhrmann shot three different endings and no one knows which one made the final cut. Will it be as breathtaking as it looks? Probably not, but it'll be worth a view.

Milk (11/26)

Limited release – should open in Asheville December 12 at the Fine Arts Theatre.

Reel Buzz: We're hearing *huge* things for director Gus Van Sant and Sean Penn in this biopic of Harvey Milk (Penn) on his journey to become San Francisco's first openly gay elected official, his assassination, and the fallout afterwards. The supporting cast features James Franco as Milk's lover and Josh Brolin (fresh off the

critical acclaim from *W.*) as Dan White, the city-supervisor-turned assassin.

Cadillac Records (12/5)

Limited release.

Reel Buzz: The story tells the rise and fall of Chess Records. Adrien Brody plays Leonard Chess the founder and visionary who helped launch the careers of Etta James, Chuck Berry and others. Beyonce Knowles plays James and Mos Def plays Chuck Berry.

This is one of those movies that is going to be really great or will really tank. Still Def's portrayal alone might be worth the price of admission and let's hope a little of Ms. James' soul rubs off on Destiny's most famous child.

Frost / Nixon (12/25)

Reel Buzz: Oscar-winning director Ron Howard will be a contender yet again this award season with *Frost / Nixon*. The story, adapted from the Tony-nominated play by Peter Morgan (*The Queen*), tells of the drama and controversy surrounding the interview between BBC host David Frost and President Nixon and the revelations of his role in the Watergate scandal.

The overlooked and underrated Frank Langella plays the former president. Perhaps this performance will finally give him the recognition he deserves.

Doubt (12/12)

Limited release.

Reel Buzz: *Doubt* is another Tony-nominated play adapted for the silver screen. Meryl Streep plays a nun and the principal of a Catholic school in the Bronx. She grows suspicious of a priest (Philip Seymour Hoffman) who she believes has crossed the line of propriety and decency with a young black boy. Accusations fly, doubt ensues and everyone's lives are forever changed. Consider this one a heavy, heavy-hitter.

Seven Pounds (12/19)

Reel Buzz: Will Smith, under the direction of his *Pursuit Of Happyness* director, Gabriele Muccino, stars as a man contemplating suicide after causing a car accident which kills seven people. He finds a reason to live and a way to atone when he meets and falls for a woman who wants to help him (Rosario Dawson).

The previews look like this one may take itself just a bit too seriously but with

Will Smith in the lead, Hollywood can do whatever it wants.

Revolutionary Road (12/19)

Limited release.

Reel Buzz: Leonardo DiCaprio and Kate Winslet are together again for the first time since *Titanic*. Winslet's real life husband Sam Mendes directs Kate and Leo as a young suburban couple in the 1950's who long to escape their boring lives. Maybe this time Leo is just King of suburbia, but *Revolutionary Road* is getting good buzz.

The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (12/25)

Reel Buzz: This may well be the most unique story of the year. Benjamin Button was born old and grows younger. This odd circumstance makes love and friendship challenging and heart breaking. This odd but curious offering features Brad Pitt in the title role and reteams him with both Cate Blanchett and director David Fincher.

Need a breather after all that?

Fear not there's plenty of lighter fare this season too. Among the action and adventure of *Transporter 3* and *The Day the Earth Stood Still* are also some family friendly offerings:

Four Christmases (11/26)

Vince Vaughn and Reese Witherspoon star as couple who always avoid their divorced families at Christmastime, but don't get so lucky this holiday season.

Yes Man (12/17)

Reel Buzz: Jim Carrey stars as a man who decides to start saying yes to everything for a year.

Marley & Me (12/25)

Reel Buzz: Based on the book the about the world's worst dog, Owen Wilson, Jennifer Aniston and a little Lab will be sure win everyone's heart and box office gold.

Bedtime Stories (12/25)

Reel Buzz: A hotel handyman (Adam Sandler) tells tall tales and bedtime stories to his niece and nephew and they somehow start to magically come true.

FILM REVIEWS

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from Kevin Smith doesn't hurt either.

Seth Rogen is a likeable fellow in most of his films and there's nothing new here in his portrayal of Zack. The real revelation is Elizabeth Banks as Miri who shows her range as she gets to play a character that's a 180 from her turn as Laura Bush in Oliver Stone's *W*. The supporting cast including real life porn star Traci Lords give the film the added depth it needs to go beyond the surface sleaziness of the material.

The story is fairly simple. Zack and Miri, two old friends from grade school now in their 20s, are sharing an apartment out of necessity. When their utilities are cut off, they need to come up with some money quick. The solution?, use today's casual technology to make a porno film and get it distributed. Along with some auditioned "actors", Z & M agree to have sex for the first time for the sake of the film's tiny budget. Strictly business of course except it doesn't turn out that way. Can a man and a woman be friends without sex and can they remain friends after sex? See it and find out.

Rated R on appeal for graphic nudity, pervasive language, and crude sexual content.

Review by Chip Kaufmann

Theatre Directory

Asheville Pizza & Brewing Company
Movieline (828) 254-1281
www.ashevillepizza.com

Beaucatcher Cinemas (Asheville)
Movieline (828) 298-1234

Biltmore Grande
1-800-FANDANGO #4010
www.REGmovies.com

Carmike 10 (Asheville)
Movieline (828) 298-4452
www.carmike.com

Carolina Cinemas
(828) 274-9500
www.carolinacinemas.com

Cinebarre (Asheville)
www.cinebarre.com

The Falls Theatre (Brevard)
Movieline (828) 883-2200

Fine Arts Theatre (Asheville)
Movieline (828) 232-1536
www.fineartstheatre.com

Flat Rock Theatre (Flat Rock)
Movieline (828) 697-2463
www.flatrockcinema.com

Four Seasons (Hendersonville)
Movieline (828) 693-8989

Smoky Mountain Cinema (Waynesville)
Movieline (828) 452-9091

Twilight

Twilight

Twilight is based on the popular four book series by Stephanie Meyer which tells the tale of the intense love between two teenagers — one mortal and one a vampire.

Having read the series last summer, I was really jazzed about seeing the movie. Would it be as good as the book, I wondered, and the special effects believable? Would Edward be the heart-throb that he's portrayed as in the book? At last the movie opened and I and a zillion other teenagers went to see it. I wasn't disappointed.

Twilight retells the story in the first book about Bella Swan (*Kristen Stewart*), a displaced teenager who moves to a dreary Washington town



work (a story in itself) until another clan of vampires happen by. Unfortunately, these vampires are definitely carnivores and they soon go after Bella. Will she survive? Will Edward die trying to protect her?

I have to say that *Twilight* was quite impressive. It followed pretty closely to the book and kept the audience enthralled (and often laughing)

TEEN REVIEW by Sierra Bicking

called Forks. There she becomes fascinated by a classmate named Edward (*Robert Pattinson*), who happens to be a vampire. Don't worry though; he is a "vegetarian" and only eats, er, sucks, the blood of animals. They fall in love and somehow make it

the entire time. I went with a friend of mine who hadn't read any of the books but was able to follow the events in the movie very well.

Robert Pattinson did a fabulous job as Edward (and has officially been given the nickname "Cedward" because he played Edward in *Twilight* and Cedric in *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*). Casting the right actor to play Edward was critical, as all those teenaged girls were mainly there to see him. He not only pulled it off, he even put on a passable American accent.

Overall, I would say that *Twilight* is juicy, and definitely a movie worth sinking your teeth into.



Sierra Bicking is an arte aficionado extraordinaire.

Chip Kaufmann's Pick: "A Christmas Carol"



A Christmas Carol (1984)

There have been countless movie versions of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* over the years. One of the very first versions

was made by the Edison Company back in 1910 (available on the Kino DVD *A Christmas Past*).

I have fond memories of an animated musical version starring Mr Magoo which aired in the early 1960s but the most highly regarded adaptation was done in 1951 in England. It was called *Scrooge* and it starred Scottish character actor and comedian Alastair Sim. Although it's a fine version with a great supporting cast, I have always found Sim's performance to contain a little too much comedy for my taste. The 1938 MGM version with Reginald Owen was closer to my concept of the story but until the advent of Turner Classic Movies a few years ago, it was rarely seen.

My personal favorite which combines the best attributes of both of the above is the 1984 made for TV version with George C. Scott (which was released as a feature film in England). It was directed by Clive Donner (*Alfred The Great*) and featured a solid cast of British

December's DVD Picks

professionals including David Warner, Edward Woodward and Susannah York. Scott invests Scrooge with an honesty and a believability that avoids the caricature that the character has become.

The production is handsomely mounted with just the right degree of theatricality which is essential to the story. I once read in an interview with J.K. Rowling that she had seen the film as a teenager and was very taken with it. Come to think of it, the Ghost Of Christmas Yet To Come does look uncannily like a Dementor. Check it out and see for yourself.

It's a Wonderful Life (1946)

Perhaps it's a slightly cliché, been-there-done-that pick for the holidays, but *It's a Wonderful Life* is a perennial favorite of mine. It's become a bit of holiday tradition in my family. Unfortunately we haven't had the chance to watch it in the last couple of years, but this year I'll be pulling it off the shelf, popping a big ol' batch of popcorn and gathering loved ones 'round.

I made it my holiday pick for you this year because I thought this Frank Capra classic might resonate with folks



Michelle Keenan's Pick: "It's a Wonderful Life"

a little more than it has in recent years. Economically it's been a bit of a George Bailey year for many.

For those that don't know, *It's a Wonderful a Life* is the story of George Bailey (Jimmy Stewart). George is the salt of the earth and a pillar in his community. He gives up his boyhood dreams to run the family's Savings and Loan. He marries his childhood sweetheart Mary (Donna Reed) and they have a family. When the town villain, and George's personal arch nemesis, Mr. Potter (Lionel Barrymore) seizes the opportunity to put the Bailey family out of business once and for all, there's a run on the bank and George thinks everyone would be better off if he were dead. It's at that point that he gets to see what the world would be like had he never been born thanks to Clarence (Henry Travers) a 2nd class angel.

Just thinking about *It's a Wonderful Life* makes my heart warm and my eyes well. The movie may be 62 years old but the story is timeless. While there are plenty of corny moments and quotable/spoofable lines ("Zuzu's Petals!" is a favorite), there is also something very universal and lovely about it. The casting is perfect. After you revisit it, or see it for the first time, you will never hear a bell ring the same way again.

RESTAURANTS & WINE

Fizz - White Wine for Winter

We could not be more aware of the weather we have, but here come the newsletters and regional wine columns and drink articles that start by telling us what the weather is doing these days and what, therefore, we should be drinking. There is an irony in all this wine talk, and a boredom.

I understand why, in the realm of the consumer, wine drinkers who have their lives in completely different lines of work say things like, "I prefer red wine in winter," but they don't stop to think about a particular white, a white that must be served chilled, which they will be buying for others and drinking in great quantity, over the next 31 rather cold days.

So much for the rules concerning wine color and weather.

It makes some sense that sparkling wine is not really thought of as white wine. It is a different animal, and can be a real beast. There must be holes in the top of the oral cavity for those bubbles to fast-track that funny feeling straight to the brain. The worst mistake we make is allowing generous hosts to top off our glasses as we run our mouths. When that happens, we don't keep a tally of our consumption.

The following is from a very brown 1935 newspaper clipping that fell out of the champagne section of an 1878 encyclopedia. It quotes an even-older-still, long-lost writing titled, *The Gentleman's Table Guide, and Table Companion to the Art of Dining and Drinking*, which was authored by Edward Ricket and printed in 1873.

"To give Champagne fair play, it ought to be produced at the very beginning of dinner, or at any rate after one glass of sherry or Madeira. Any other

wines rather unfit the palate for it. The usual mode is, as with other delicacies, is to produce it after the appetite is somewhat palled, and I have often thought it particularly ungallant and ungracious, where there are ladies, to keep it back till a late period of dinner, and such a practice often presents an absurd contrast of calculation and display.

"According to my doctrines, the champagne should be placed upon the table, so that all may take what they like, till the presiding genius pronounces in his own mind that there has been enough, which is not difficult to a practiced eye.

"The champagne should be placed upon the table, so that all may take what they like..."

~ EDWARD RICKET

"I am far from objecting to a limited supply, even the most limited — that is, one glass round; but I do object to the period when it is usually served, and to the uncertainty with which it is usually served.

"The advantages of giving champagne, with whatever limit, at the beginning of dinner, are these: That it has the greater relish, that its exhilarating qualities serve to start the guests, after which they seldom flag, and it disposes people to take less of other wines after, which is a relative, and sometimes even an absolute saving to the pocket of the host, and it is undoubtedly a saving to the constitution of his guests."

Mr. Ricket's concern over the "absurd contrast of calculation and display" is ironic, given his money-saving strategy. It



brings to mind another agenda, from the mind of Graham Greene: "Champagne, if you are seeking the truth, is better than a lie detector. It encourages a man to be expansive, even reckless, while lie detectors are only a challenge to tell lies successfully."

Saving money by serving fizz will only work in these modern times if you know how to shop. Your fizz will have to be good if it's going to be cheap, and that's why you need the guidance of local wine shop staff. Consider some of these:

Willm, Cremant de Alsace Brut NV (\$13) This is a nifty before-lunch or dinner sparkler for people who like lighter-styled fizz, with a particularly appetizing whiff of pear. It's actually kind of complex.

No. 1 Family Estate, Cuvée Number Eight, New Zealand NV (\$25) This sparkling wine from the world's newest land is surprisingly big in style, very champagne-like with a load of bread-like nuances you get from real champagne. Impressive.

Il, Prosecco, Italy NV (\$12.50) That's spelled with a capital I and a little l, and it's a delightful glass of fizz. Dry, pleasant on the nose with a little peach, pleasant on the tongue with bubbles from nowhere and otherwise good texture. Drink this at Modesto with Hector's splendid cichetti menu.

Canella, Prosecco, Italy NV (\$18) This Prosecco is a little more complex, even with a touch of minerals, like the ganega grapes were grown in chalky soil. Good, if a little pricey, and preferred to be drunk with food.

Jean-Luc Joillot, Cremant de Bourgogne NV This is a delicious, creamy

glass of sparkling wine from Burgundy. It is two-thirds pinot noir, hence the body and texture that makes this a good alternative to real champagne.

Sant' Evasio, Brachetto d'Acqui (\$18) This one is red! Red sparkling wine is not for everyone. Personally, I am not a fan. But it sells, which means there are plenty of people who do like it. It is best to score a taste at a wine tasting or mooch off someone else's open bottle before you spend the money. However, this particular Brachetto shows good structure. If you like red fizz, you will like this one.

BY MICHAEL PARKER

December Events at the Weinhaus

Reservations are required. Call the Weinhaus at (828) 254-6453.

Wednesday, December 10

A pre-holiday dinner will be held at Ophelias, featuring multiple courses of their innovative cuisine with fine matching wines provided by the Weinhaus. Enjoy the bounty of the season! Time is 7 p.m. Price is \$60 all inclusive.

Saturday, December 20

Come to a free afternoon wine tasting featuring "Sparklers for the Holidays" from 2-4 PM. At the Weinhaus, 86 Patton Ave., Asheville. Phone is 254-6453.

The Weinhaus

86 Patton Ave., in Asheville
(828) 254-6453

TASTING EVENTS!

Free tastings are held at the Wine Guy South every Saturday, from 4 to 6 p.m. Featured wines by local distributors are 10% off that day.

On-site special events coordinator available for private and corporate events. Tasting rooms can be reserved for private events. We can host wine tastings or provide and pour wines offsite for any event.

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NOTEWORTHY

Christmas at Connemara

BY CONNIE HUDSON BACKLUND

Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site will host it's annual Christmas at Connemara on Saturday, December 13, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The holiday celebration will be held in the house garage adjacent to the Sandburg Home.

Musicians and storytellers will perform traditional holiday stories and music. Hot cider and cookies will be served. This festive celebration will honor Carl Sandburg and the family holiday tradition of music. The house will be decorated in the style of the Sandburg's with poinsettias and a traditionally decorated Christmas tree until January 6.

The celebration begins at 10 a.m. with Lucy Allen and Marshall Goers singing holiday music with guitar, banjo and mandolin accompaniment.

At 11 a.m., Pat Corn will play holiday music on the guitar. At noon, Black Feather, dressed in her native Cherokee Indian attire, will share stories of Cherokee holiday traditions.

At 1 p.m., Sheryl Wilson Bell as Sojourner Truth, the former slave, abolitionist and women's rights activist from the 1800's, will spin tales and sing folk music with audience participation.

At 2 p.m. Jim Fox and Gail Ashburn will sing and play holiday music on the hammered dulcimer and autoharp, and at 3 p.m. Howard Bakken will play Christ-



mas music on the Appalachian dulcimer and bowed psaltery.

Jan Hranek will provide melodious tunes on the hammered dulcimer from noon to 2 p.m. in the bookstore of the main house.

IF
YOU
GO:

For additional information, visit www.nps.gov/carl or call the park at (828) 693-4178.

There is no charge for this event or to visit the grounds and barn. The house tour fee is \$5 for adults age 16-61, \$3 for adults age 62 and older, and children age fifteen and under are free.

Finding What's Missing in Christmas

No matter how joyful or perfect Christmas is, most individuals have a sense that there should be something more personally significant and meaningful to the holiday.

At the Inner Christmas workshop participants will enrich their relationship to Christmas, learn about the Twelve Holy Nights, discern the six meaningful experiences and celebrations of Christmas, and design a fulfilling practice for the Nativity of self-renewal and the Epiphany of self-awakening. Inner Christmas is a psychospiritual path of personal renewal and awakening.

Occurring between Christmas, December 25, and Epiphany, January 6, Inner Christmas brings you to the deepest personal meaning of Christmas – the birth of what has been gestating/incubating deep inside your core sense of self. Inner Christmas celebrates the individual's inner divinity and clarifies destiny questions and possibilities.

Beginning with Christmas, 2004, Lynn Jericho, a counselor, writer and

speaker, has emailed twelve daily emails to guide and inspire an Inner Christmas. She has an international audience of over 25,000 readers and 6800 continuing subscribers. Inner Christmas subscribers are from all cultures and faiths.

The *Inner Christmas Movie* can be seen on YouTube.com. More information on Inner Christmas and Lynn Jericho can be found at www.innerchristmas.com.

Lynn addresses the delights, dilemmas and disappointments, the blessings, blues, blahs, and bah humbugs of Christmas from all perspectives including neuroscience and post-modern psychospirituality.

IF
YOU
GO:

Lynn Jericho will present *The Inner Christmas Workshop: Finding What's Missing In Christmas*, on Decem-

ber 7 from 1:30 till 6 p.m. The event will take place at Jubilee!, 34 Wall Street, Downtown Asheville. Call Caroline at (828) 281-1347 for information. The workshop costs \$35.

ARTFUL LIVING

A Light That Came Into The World

I am not a Christian. I was born and raised as a Christian, but became alienated from the church as a youth. This church, established in worship of Jesus, seemed hypocritical to me.

I liked what I knew of Jesus. I liked his talk about forgiveness, peace, non-judgment, non-materialism, caring for the poor and the unfortunate. I just didn't see much of this reflected in the church that carried his name, particularly those sects that emphasized sin, the crucifixion and resurrection; that believers were "washed in the blood of the Lamb".

I had difficulty with the idea that those with the "right" beliefs were destined for Heaven, while all non-believers were damned to Hell. I couldn't even feel comfortable with the concept of Heaven and Hell as presented. None of this resonated with my instinct, my intuition, concerning God and the spiritual life. What I could identify with was the one instance of Jesus losing his temper, even getting violent, happening in a church against the "hypocrites" he found there.

In my lifetime, I have sadly watched a dramatic increase in dogmatic sin-based Christian theology. On the other hand, I have also seen a growing Christian theology of openness and acceptance, a searching for spiritual harmony and realization through a reexamination of original Christian teachings, sometimes in a reexamination of the Gospels in the original Aramaic language.

All religions are creations and extensions of the human ego...

I have seen a searching for a theology and practice much closer to the spirit of the teachings of Jesus, teachings not in conflict with other world religions, but actually harmonious. I am appreciative and hopeful for this development. Still, my own journey has taken me away from belonging to any church or religion since my personal breakaway many years ago.

I have, however, found a deep and abiding spirituality, first activated through exposure to the mystical teachings of Jewish theologian, Abraham Heschel, that belongs to no single religion, but which resonates with spiritual and mystical teachings from cultures around the world.

Trained as a psychologist, I have gravitated to the most specifically psychological of religious traditions, Buddhism, as a particularly valuable source of guidance in understanding the human

mind and the human instinct towards spirituality. I have found that the ancient Asian traditions of Hinduism, Taoism and Buddhism bring forward with the most clarity a path for human salvation from the disaster of human conduct directed by the ego, the belief in separateness and form as the limit of our mortal experience.

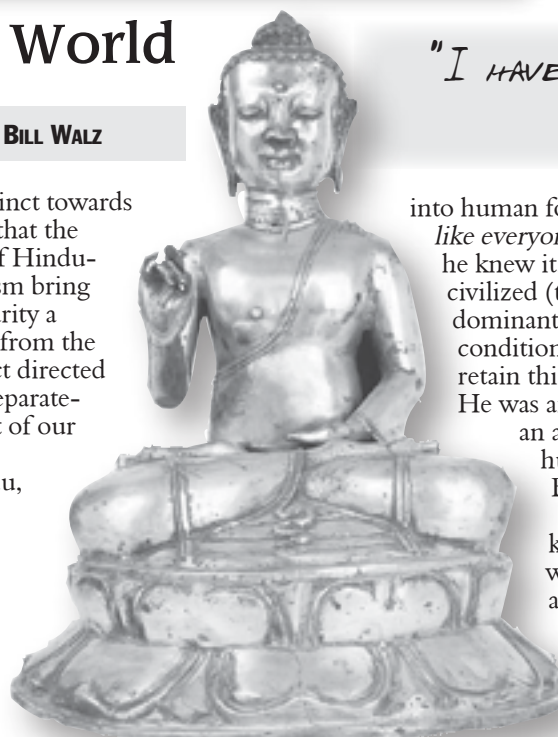
Still, I am not a Hindu, Taoist or Buddhist. I am a spiritual human being. All religions are creations and extensions of the human ego, expressed at a social/cultural level, and spirituality is specifically, that which is not the human ego.

The mystic/psychologist, Carl Jung, once gave as his definition of God, "simply a word for the non-ego." I like that. He was saying that God is all that is, but human ego extracts itself from all that is. Of course human ego is, so then, even human ego is of God. But human ego is an abstract representation of self that does not know it is God. So it is separate in its own experience from God and must create religions to bridge the gap. Unfortunately, religions, being creations of the human ego, macro-egos, if you will, just like nations, tend to widen the gap.

Spirituality is the knowing that there is no gap. Spirituality is the knowing that this individual being experienced as self is an individuated aspect of the universal Being. This knowledge is the heart of Asian religion. I believe it is the heart of all religions, even those of the West, but the politics of Western religion banished this knowledge, losing it to all but the rare mystics always to be found on the fringes of Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

Only in the stillness of meditation, the deep looking within to the quiet recesses of consciousness, where the Soul whispers its truths, can this knowledge be found. This is why the institutional Western churches teach only prayer, which is the talking to God. Mystics know that meditation is the listening for God within the quiet stillness of consciousness and in finding God in direct contact with Nature. No separation.

Jesus was a mystic who knew no separation from God. This is what Jesus was teaching. The "Son of God" was a child of God that knew the illusion of form and separateness. He was God individuated



"I HAVE COME AS LIGHT INTO THE WORLD."
- JESUS IN JOHN 12:46

into human form, just like everyone, except he knew it, and the civilized (that is ego-dominant) human condition is to not retain this knowing. He was an avatar, an awakened human, a Buddha. He knew that who we are at the depth of our being, is that which is before form, the

consciousness of all that is, individuated into human form. He was "a light into this world," bringing light into the darkness of a human world that has forgotten the truth of who we are. His name in Aramaic is *Yeshua*, which translates as "one who reveals or restores the original state". This is identical to the "original mind" of Buddhism, the consciousness that reveals the truth of who we are.

"Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow." "Judge not that you may not be judged. For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged." "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you." "Do not lay up for yourself treasures on earth... for where your treasure is, there will be your heart also." "Therefore, I tell you, do not be anxious about your life." "Enter by the narrow gate." "Whoever exalts himself will be humbled and whoever humbles himself will be exalted." "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you shut the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither enter yourselves, nor allow those who would enter to go." "Forgive them for they know not what they are doing."

Quite similar words were passed down in the context of their own cultural traditions by Buddha, Lao Tzu, Krishna, Moses, Muhammad, Zoroaster and Bahá'u'lláh. All these avatars were lights coming into the world, those who walked the earth in form, but knew the truth of who they and we are, from that which is beyond form.

A new understanding of Jesus and the spirituality of all avatars is greatly needed. The Earth will be healed for humanity and all God's creatures when we

learn to walk in light, to carry the light, the wisdom that these great teachers discovered within the deepest level of their being and so, likewise resides in every human. This dark world needs it.

*A meaningful
Christmas, Hanukkah and
Winter Solstice to all.*



Bill Walz is a UNCA adjunct faculty, College for Seniors and private-practice teacher of mindfulness, personal growth and consciousness.

He holds a weekly meditation class, Mondays, 7 p.m. at the Friends Meeting House, 227 Edgewood. Info on classes and personal growth and healing instruction or phone consultations at (828) 258-3241, or e-mail at healing@billwalz.com. Visit www.billwalz.com

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JOE'S BREW NOTES

Craft Beer and Food: Create New Taste Sensations for Holiday Celebrations

For many people, the holiday season is a time when family and friends gather for dinners and parties. At this year's events dare to be different; use craft beers in your traditional recipes and for your beverage selections.

Typical holiday dinner and party plans usually begin with a shopping trip for food, wine, liquor, and, oh yeah, some beer. Beer as an afterthought is understandable when many recipes call for wine, most foods are served with wine, and beer choices have been light lagers and not much else. Now with the large and growing availability of craft beer styles, recipe and food pairing rules are changing. People have discovered new flavors and aromas when they prepare their recipes with the right craft beer.

To learn more about this "culinary cultural revolution", I spoke with Julie Atallah of Brusin' Ales. Julie and her husband Jason host bi-weekly beer tastings at Brusin' Ales, Asheville's beer-only store. These tastings have included some remarkable beer/food pairings (chocolate, cheese, fruit, and cookies). They also arrange beer dinners at some of Asheville's

BY JOE ZINICH

finest restaurants where they feature different beers for each course.

For starters, Julie suggests consulting knowledgeable people, reading books (see sidebar), learning the basic rules, and experimenting. She also offered some food/beer pairing tips. Serve fish and chicken with lighter-colored beers (lager styles) and meat with darker beers (ale styles).

As the spice, salt or fat increases in a recipe, the bitterness (amount of hops) of the beer should increase. The more robust the flavor of the food the more robust the beer, for example serve beef stew with a porter (see sidebar). Sweeter foods require even sweeter beers and traditional holiday foods almost beg for winter ales which are spiced to match the flavors of the season (Highland Cold Mountain or Belgian Noels).

"The versatility of beer doesn't end there" Julie said. "Not only is beer an excellent companion to food of any cuisine, it is also a great partner". Beer is second only to water as a versatile cooking liquid. But, while water is bland, beer, with its many styles, flavors, and aromas, is not.

A porter used in a marinade for tuna allows the sweetness of the fish to shine through. Add a porter or Belgian dark ale to a marinara sauce for more punch. Use



At Brusin' Ales, Julie Atallah explains the flavors of an ale.

a Belgian triple in a white pasta sauce for a hint of sweetness. An American-style stout adds a chocolaty, coffee flavor to ice cream. (Try the Black Mocha Stout ice cream at the Ultimate Ice Cream Company made with the Highland beer of the same name).

Savor the difference when pilsners or saisons replace white wines and when barleywines replace red wines in your favorite recipes. Expect to find a beer to enhance and harmonize the flavors of almost any food.

And there's more. Want to celebrate an occasion? Try Bière de Champagne, a new style made primarily in Belgium using the *méthode champenoise*. Need an aperitif (Belgian strong gold ale); a sorbet (fruit lambic); a dessert (imperial stout); or digestive (barleywine)? A suitable beer is always available.

Craft beer is a flexible and flavorful food companion and a partner that will turn your dinner or party into a matchless taste experience. All it takes is a stop at the supermarket and a first-rate beer store to get the ingredients for an entertaining holiday event.

Oven Stew Made with an Oatmeal Porter

This recipe (compliments of my wife) is easy to make with a taste that is rich, slightly sweet and substantial. Can be eaten as is or served with noodles or sliced boiled potatoes.

A Porter (we enjoy Highland Oatmeal Porter) is a recommended companion to the stew and a great partner with the other ingredients in the recipe.



Beef stew made and enjoyed with an Oatmeal Porter.

- 2 1/2 lbs. lean beef (top or bottom round), trimmed and cut in 1/4" cubes
- 12 small white onions (boiling or pearl onions), peeled
- 3 large ribs celery, cut in 1" pieces
- 4 large carrots, quartered crosswise and cut in 1" pieces
- 4 ounces small fresh mushrooms, trimmed
- 1 1/2 cups tomato juice
- 1/2 cup Porter (Highland Oatmeal Porter) or red wine
- 1/4 cup quick-cooking tapioca
- 1/2 teaspoon dried basil
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- salt to taste

Heat oven to 300 degrees F. Mix all ingredients in a heavy 3-quart ovenproof saucepot. Cover and bake for 3 hours or until meat is tender and sauce is thickened. Stir 3 times while ingredients cook.

Brusin' Ales

66 Broadway Street
Asheville, NC 28801

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www.Brusin-ales.com

Ultimate Ice Cream Company

1070 Tunnel Rd
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Reference Books

The Brewmaster's Table,
Garrett Oliver

Brewpub Cookbook,
Stephen Beaumont

He Said Beer, She Said Wine,
Sam Calagione, Marnie Old

Cooking with Beer,
Lucy Saunders



For five years, Joe Zinich has been taking a self-guided, high-intensity tour of Asheville's beer world. Contact him at: jjinich@bellsouth.net

FINE ART

Digital Resolutions Group Duo Works Digital Magic

BY PAM J. HECHT

It's worth taking a drive over to the folks at Digital Resolutions Group just for the striking mountain view and a friendly chat. But what they're doing inside is pure magic.

Tucked away high on a hill in a West Asheville home studio, art and digital worlds collide.

Digital Resolutions Group is a state-of-the-art digital darkroom and photography studio, which, using the latest in technology, helps artists and photographers preserve and reproduce their work.

Fine art reproduction services include giclee (fine art printing), commercial studio photography; digital photo restoration, color correction and digital retouching; and high resolution photo, negative and slide scanning.

Owner Nicholas Scull opened the studio in March, 2007, because he "had a dream" inspired by his family's collection of cherished family portraits. "How do you share them?" he said.

A former photojournalist with degrees in art history and fine arts, Scull's images have been published in international publications such as National Geographic, Newsweek and Yachting Magazine. He has also studied printmaking under several master printmakers in Florence, Italy.

He began studying cutting-edge digital reproduction methods and equipment in Jupiter, Florida, until hurricanes brought him to Asheville – a longtime favorite place that drew him in with its "creative mood and bluegrass music."

His business partner is Paola Nazati, who, with a bachelor of fine arts in photography, provides an extensive knowledge of computerized imaging programs, film and digital cameras, commercial studio lighting, and the latest printing and photo manipulation techniques.

"When artists see what we've done, they're so appreciative," Scull said. "As artists ourselves, we love helping them."

"It's also a wonderful way to share beautiful art with family and friends."

Scull and Nazati use a 108 megapixel camera – the industry's best, said Scull – and a museum-approved studio lighting and camera system. Two industrial size inkjet printers can print images up to 44" wide by any length.

"All of our inks, papers and canvases

are of the highest archival quality – we produce products that are going to last more than 100 years."

Every project is a new challenge,



Paola Nazati

said Nazati, describing a 4' x 8' panel that involved placing lights strategically, outside. "They said we couldn't reproduce something that large, but we did it," she said.

Another was a 10' x 6' watercolor that was painted on 10 separate pieces of paper – each piece was photographed separately and then digitally "glued" together on the computer.

"The artist was in tears when she saw it all together – she had no idea it was possible," Nazati said. "You'd never know it was a painting in pieces."

Most clients are from the Western North Carolina area – one Tennessee artist comes to town with her students and spends

the day. "We're not getting rich," Scull said. "It's a labor of love."



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NOTEWORTHY

Dine out at the Asheville Mural Project's Silent Art Auction and Banquet

BY ERIN SCHOLZE

Assist the Asheville Mural Project (AMP) in fulfilling the dream of creating more community-made public art, creating new spaces, and revitalizing old by attending the AMP's Silent Art Auction and Banquet on Saturday, December 20 at the YMI Cultural Center.

Supporting the arts by attending this banquet also means getting a taste of some of the finest food that Asheville Culinary Artists have to offer. This buffet-style dinner consists of food contributed from over 15 of the areas finest independent restaurants, Kubos, Jerusalem Garden, New French Bar, Lobster Trap, The Marketplace, Thai Basil, Havana, Zambra's, Table, Laurey's Catering, Gourmet, The Early Girl Eatery, Heiwa, Bouchon, Mela, Modaddy's, Barley's, Doc Cheys, Kilwins, and True Confections, amongst others.

Entertainment for the evening includes classical guitar, members of the Asheville High School Choir, as well as other local music acts. Mingle about as you bid on the art donated to the silent auction by local artists. Four AMP Artists will also be painting live on stage throughout the evening and will auction the finished pieces.

There will also be guest speakers and a slideshow presentation about the history of murals, as well as cultural and community development of murals. Speakers include AMP Director Molly Must, AMP

Artist Dan Beck, Arts2People's Executive Director Kitty Love and others to be determined.

This banquet is a fundraiser for the completion of the Lexington Gateway Mural, located on the support pillars of the I-240 overpass marking the northern corridor into downtown Asheville. Monies raised will go to support AMP artists, and to purchase needed materials, including scaffolding, to complete this cultural heritage mural. An additional \$10,000-15,000 is needed to complete this mural, including the painting of the Merrimon Avenue side of the support pillars.

The Asheville Mural Project is a branch of Arts2People, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, which exists to beautify and diversify Asheville's urban landscape, providing artists and local community members with the opportunity to design and implement their own public art.

IF
YOU
GO:

Asheville Mural Project Benefit, December 20 from 7 to 10 p.m. at the YMI Cultural Center, 39 South Market St (corner of Eagle St.) Visit www.ymicc.org, www.ashevillémuralproject.org, or call (828) 252-4614 for more information. Tickets are \$35. Seating is limited to 160.

'The Wine Guy' continued from pg. 21

Nelson. "And price doesn't indicate whether or not it's good – a great wine could be \$10."

Long-time friends Nelson and Campbell, both wine aficionados from a young age, taste all the wines they sell, working together to decide which are the best to carry.

"We sell what we like," Campbell says. "I may like just one or two out of 50 – I've been doing this for over twenty years and I'm picky."

"I'm like a kid in a candy store," adds Nelson. "There was much less available twenty years ago – now there's a much wider selection."

The Wine Guy also has a variety of wine accessories, books and other items, and gift baskets can be ordered, preferably with 24 hours notice, Nelson says.

Drop-in, free tastings are held at the south store every Saturday, from 4 to 6 p.m. Featured wines by local distributors are 10% off that day.



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555 Merrimon Avenue, Asheville
(828) 254-6500

The Wine Guy, South

1200 Hendersonville Road
(828) 277-1120

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Sunday 1 pm
December 21, 2008
Asheville Civic Center

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Much more than a one-day concert, Hands of Hope is a unique program that brings social action into the classroom and teaches students that everyone has the power to create lasting change for the better. For four months students at Maccabi Academy, New Classical Academy and New City Christian School have partnered with three local non-profit agencies – in the classroom and in the community – in order to make a difference in the lives of those around us. The Hands of Hope concert is the culmination of that effort and a chance to see what we can do when we work together.

For concert and ticket information visit
www.maccabiacademy.org/handsofhope

WHAT TO DO GUIDE™

Through December 31

Holiday Sparkle Sale

Throughout the *entire* month of December WICKWIRE Gallery will offer 10 to 50% reductions on selected art items. Look for the Stars! on Handmade in America works by emerging and recognized artists. Distinctive art choices for family, friends, home, and office décor. Enter our holiday drawing.

WICKWIRE fine art/folk art ... *where the heart finds art*. Located at 330 and 329 N. Main, Hendersonville, NC. (828) 692-6222, wickwire@bellsouth.net or visit www.wickwireartgallery.com.

December 2 to January 3 Flood Holiday Show

The work of various local artists such as Connie Bostic, Frank Botts, Jennifer Brock, Rose Candela, Alex Greenwood, Frank Lombardo, Logan MacSporran, David McDermott, Sean Pace, Richmond Smith, and others will be on view, with prices ranging from \$10 to \$500.

How to place an event/ classified listing with Rapid River Art Magazine

Any "free" event open to the public can be listed at no charge up to 30 words. For all other events there is a \$9.95 charge up to 30 words and 10 cents for each additional word. 160 word limit per event.

Sponsored listings (shown in boxes) can be purchased for \$12 per column inch.

Deadline is the 19th of each month. Payment must be made prior to printing.

Email Beth Gossett at: ads@rapidrivermagazine.com or mail to: 85 N. Main St, Canton, NC 28716. Or Call: (828) 646-0071 to place ad over the phone.

– Disclaimer –

Due to the overwhelming number of local event submissions we get for our "What to Do Guide" each month, we can no longer accept entries that do not specifically follow our publication's format. Non-paid event listings must be 30 words or less and both paid and non-paid listings must provide information in the following format: date, time, brief description of what your event is and any contact information. Any entries not following this format will not be considered for publication.

Asheville Community Theatre Events

**Sunday, December 7 and
Monday, December 8**

The Little Dog Laughed

Asheville Community Theatre will hold auditions for the risqué satire *The Little Dog Laughed* from 7 to 9 p.m. *The Little Dog Laughed* will be directed by Francis Cullinan. Roles are available for 2 men (ages 25-40) and 2 women (ages 20-40).

**Monday, December 8
Morning's at Seven**

Auditions will be held for the Autumn Players Reader's Theatre production *Morning's at Seven* from 11 a.m. to 3

p.m. *Morning's at Seven* will be directed by Deborah Austin. Roles are available for 4 men (ages 40-late 70s) and 5 women (ages 40-late 70s).

**Tuesday, December 2
Volunteer Orientation**

A Volunteer Orientation Session will take place at 6:30 p.m. at the downtown theatre. All those interested in volunteering are invited to attend.

No previous experience in theatre is required to volunteer. The orientation session should last no longer than an hour and will include a tour of the theatre.

**Saturday, December 6
Richie Havens in Concert**

Album release, 8 p.m. at the Orange Peel, 101 Biltmore Avenue Asheville. Tickets \$22 advance, \$25 at the door. All ages welcome. For more information please visit www.theorangepeel.net or www.richiehavens.com.

**Sunday, December 7
The Sounds of Christmas**

7 p.m. at the First Baptist Church of Asheville Sanctuary, presented by the FBCA Orches-

Celebrate the Holidays with a High-Energy Musical

Friday, December 12

Western Carolina University's *Galaxy of Stars Series* will host "A Red, Hot... & Blue! White Christmas!" at the Fine and Performing Arts Center on Western's campus at 7:30 p.m.

A song-and-dance revue from Branson, Mo., the performance takes audiences on a nostalgia-filled musical journey. With costumes, wigs, choreography and vocal harmonies, the six-performer troupe sings and dances its way through ragtime, classic jazz, big band and disco.

"The show is filled to the brim with color, choreography, singing, harmonizing, tap, ballet and just plain, old-fashioned fun," said Paul Lormand, director of WCU's Fine and Performing Arts Center.

Tickets are \$25. Tickets for WCU faculty, staff, and senior citizens, are \$20. Student tickets are \$5. Tickets can be purchased online at www.wcufapac.ticketexchange.com.

For more information, contact WCU's Fine and Performing Arts Center at (828) 227-2479.

Womansong Arts and Crafts Fair

Saturday, December 13

The community chorus Womansong of Asheville, will present an Arts and Crafts Fair, featuring the original work of Womansong members and friends.

The Fair will run from noon until 6 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 1 Edwin Place in Asheville.

Cards, pottery, hand knits, photography, baked goods, hot drinks, massage, original art, CDs, jewelry, organic personal care products, and more will be available.

Proceeds from a raffle basket will benefit Womansong's *New Start Program*, which helps women in transition make a new start in their lives. The *New Start Program*, which began in 1987 is intended to "fill in the gap" when other short-term funding options are not available.

For more details call Janet Oliver at (828) 299-3110.

tra and Handbell Choirs. Event is free. For more information call (828) 252-4781.

**Thursday, December 11
Quilting Bee**

Beginning at 9:30 a.m. Open to the public. Quilters of all levels are invited. Held at Earth Fare, 1856 Hendersonville Road. Contact Janice Husk, (828) 210-0100 for more information.

**Friday, December 12
Holiday Wine Tasting
& Music**

Second annual holiday wine tasting featuring over 25 varieties of wine paired with imported cheese and organic fruit. Ron Clearfield and the Blue Ridge Orchestra Trio will perform from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. At Earth Fare, 1856 Hendersonville Road. \$5 suggested donation to benefit WHO Women. Contact Janice Husk, (828) 210-0100 for more information.

Deadline December 20

Innovative Spa Management Sponsors Scholarships

Two scholarships in the amount of \$2,375 will be awarded for the January 2009 Esthetic Institute at Privai Academy.

Applicants must prepare a demonstration of their passion for the skin care industry. This demonstration can be a written essay, in person presentation, or visual representation.

Application for the scholarships must be submitted by December 20, 2008. Interested applicants may receive more information by emailing ilana@ismspa.com.

**Saturday & Sunday,
December 20 & 21**

Nutcracker Demo

Eddie Hamrick, named one of the top 100 artists in the nation by the Southern Highland Arts and Crafts Guild, will be at Grovewood Gallery in Asheville for a nutcracker woodcarving demonstration.

This year's limited edition nutcracker will be a drummer boy that can actually play the drums! Eddie's nutcrackers are heirloom quality, sure to be passed down to future generations. Grovewood welcomes collectors, casual shoppers, and children of all ages to take part in this very special event. From 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Visit www.grovewood.com for more information or call (828) 253-7651.

Sunday, December 21

Messiah by George Handel

First Baptist Church of Asheville Sanctuary, 7 p.m., presented by the FBCA Adult Choir and Orchestra. Event is free. For more information, call (828) 252-4781.

Sunday, December 21

The Blue Ridge Orchestra Holliday Concert

The Blue Ridge Orchestra (BRO) under the direction of Ronald D. Clearfield will present a concert of holiday music with tenor William Martin as soloist at 3 p.m. at the Folk Art Center on the Blue Ridge Parkway.

DECEMBER EVENTS ~ ANNOUNCEMENTS ~ CLASSIFIEDS

WHAT TO DO GUIDE™

The program will include favorite holiday orchestral music as well as Christmas melodies and carols sung by Mr. Martin.

Tickets are \$10, open seating. Available only at The Wine Guy, 555 Merrimon Ave. (828) 254-6500, or 1200 Hendersonville Rd. (828) 277-1120.

For more information, visit www.blueridgeorchestra.org.

Tuesday, December 23 Cookies for Santa & Me

From 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. Children are invited to the store for a complimentary cookie (while supplies last) for themselves and Santa. Earth Fare, 1856 Hendersonville Road. Contact Janice Husk, (828) 210-0100 for more information.

UNCA Events

Tuesday, December 2 The Lost Tools of Learning Discovered

Great Quotes Philosophy Lecture Series presents Cynthia Gadol of Rutherford County Public Schools, 7:30 p.m. UNC Asheville's Kellogg Center, 11 Broyles Rd., Hendersonville, \$5. For more information call (828) 251-6272.

Thursday, December 4 Earth Day April 20, 1970

A Sense of Time and Place Lecture Series presents Grace Campbell, 12:30 p.m. UNC Asheville's Laurel Forum, Karpen Hall, free. Call (828) 251-6981 for information

Sunday, December 7 Holiday Concert

4 p.m. UNC Asheville's Lipinsky Auditorium, \$5 (students free with ID). Call (828) 251-6432 for more information.

Saturday, December 20 UNC Asheville's Winter Commencement Ceremony

10 a.m., Asheville Civic Center, free. Call (828) 251-6470 for more information.

Evergreen's Holiday Arts and Crafts Bazaar

Saturday, December 6

Evergreen Community Charter School's fourth graders will host the 4th Annual Holiday Bazaar from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the school's gymnasium in East Asheville.

The fourth graders have spent the last month learning about our regions long and rich history of artists and crafters. After having a variety of guest artists come and speak with the students the fourth graders have created their own craft business.

Student Anna Johnston comments, "Projects like this are important because they inspire us to try out new and different ideas. It teaches us possible options for

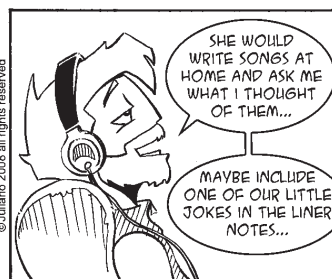


when we are older."

Please come and join up to 40 amazing local artists and crafters in this year's Holiday Bazaar. The bazaar will have artists exhibiting glass art, woodwork, textiles, collage, dolls, painting, jewelry, blacksmith, photography, music, and more, along with crafts created by the school's very own fourth grade class.

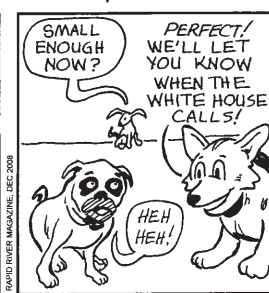
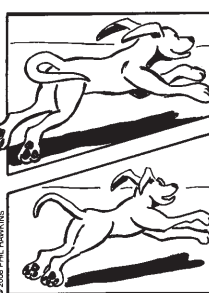
Support local artists, and get your holiday shopping done early. A portion of all proceeds will go towards the fourth grade end of the year school trip. The school is located at 50 Bell Road in Asheville. Admission is free. For more information please call (970) 420-7071.

Best in Show



by Phil Juliano

Corgi Tales



by Phil Hawkins

Callie & Cats



by Amy Downs

Flat Rock Music

Thursday, December 11

High Windy Band, 9 p.m.

A combination of contemporary and traditional bluegrass with old-time themes and an original approach. \$5 cover.

Friday, December 12

Tennessee Hollow, 9 p.m.

Rhythmic folk and deep wooded blues mixed with pounding rhythms. Tennessee Hollow will blow you away with their tight stage performance and intuitive songwriting. \$5 cover.

Saturday, December 13

Michael Reno Harrell, 9 p.m.

Dirty Linen magazine says, "Harrell's deep soothing voice carries you through a journey filled with family, lovers, moonshiners, dreamers and, most of all, journeys."

Thursday, December 18

Songs from the Road Band, 9 p.m.

The Asheville based band plays original, mostly acoustic music that is self described as Cosmic American Bluegrass. \$5 cover.

Friday, December 19

Big Road, 9 p.m.

Duane Simpson, Peggy Ratusz, and Joshua Singleton present traditional and contemporary blues. \$5 cover.

Saturday, December 20

Shane Pruitt Band, 9 p.m.

Peter Cooper, critic for the Nashville Tennessean, names Pruitt as "the most exciting young bluesman working today." \$5 cover.

Friday, December 26

Moonshine Babies, 9 p.m.

Timeless American folk and country music.

Saturday, December 27

The Sways, 9 p.m.

Guitarist Adam Landry and vocalist Carey Kotsionis, a husband-wife duo out of Nashville, perform Americana pop songs.

Friday, January 2

Pond Water Experiment, 9 p.m.

Reggae, bluegrass, funk, blues, jazz, and world fusion.

The Back Room

Behind the Flat Rock Wine Shoppe, just down the street from The Flat Rock Playhouse.
www.flatrockwineshoppe.com

CLASSES ~ LECTURES ~ ARTS & CRAFTS ~ READINGS

ASHEVILLE SHOPS

Eyewear Expert Brings State-of-the-Art Vision to Asheville

Richard Krasnov found his calling almost by accident. While in college, he decided to help out a friend, an optician who needed a hand in his optical manufacturing lab. Krasnov soon found himself cutting lenses to make glasses and enjoying it thoroughly, he said.

After a two-year stint managing his own lab, he decided to venture into the retail side, where he found his lifelong niche, successfully opening and managing stores for several large eyewear companies in Florida, as well as two stores of his own.

Nearly forty years later, he's still in the eye care business, recently opening East Side Optical in East Asheville this past May.

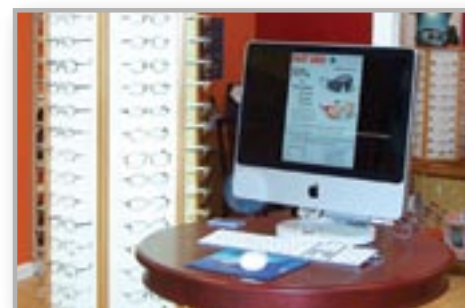
Several things make his store unique, he said, including an on-site, veteran independent ophthalmologist, exclusive eyewear collections not found anywhere else, and separate sections for different types of glasses.

BY PAM J. HECHT

A large, open and colorful space, the 1750-square-foot store displays more than 1300 frames, with a separate "Kids Corner" featuring more than 250 frames for children, a "Sun Bar" with a wide array of sunglasses, and a "Locker Room" with recreational sports frames to fit any prescription, such as swim and ski goggles, dive masks, and biking eyewear. Rooms in the back accommodate contact lenses and services, pre-tests, and comprehensive eye exams for children and adults.

What he's most proud of, meanwhile, is a computerized eyewear program called Eye Compare, which creates large-screen pictures of different frames on customers' faces and allows shoppers to print or e-mail them for a second opinion.

Krasnov discovered Eye Compare at a trade show and is the first and only one in the country to have one, recently becoming a U.S. distributor for the company. "It is definitely a useful tool for my customers," he said.



East Side Optical's computerized eyewear program, Eye Compare.

Also useful: a personal touch, he said. Unless you're there for an exam, Krasnov will likely be the only one you'll be dealing with at the store.

"When customers walk through these doors, they get over 37 years of experience - me," he said. "You're going to get the latest lenses and technology available, reasonable prices and a large, unique selection - it's impossible not to find what you need."

Krasnov describes the service he provides as "lifestyle dispensing" - matching the proper lens for each frame and



Richard Krasnov, owner of East Side Optical.



fitting the eyewear to each customer's particular lifestyle, occupation and other eyewear needs.

"This isn't just a job," he said. "It's what I do every day and I come to work happy - it's my passion."

East Side Optical

1011 Tunnel Rd.
Suite 160, Asheville
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ARTFUL LIVING

Influenza – Real Threat, Real Prevention

BY MAX HAMMONDS, MD

Short Message: get your flu shot today – especially if you are: over 50 years old, younger than 2 years old, or have a chronic illness – like lung disease, heart disease, cancer, kidney disease, diabetes – to name a few.

If you are not in any of these categories, have you been reluctant to get your flu shot? Do you think you really don't need it or there may be some danger to getting the shot? Do you think it probably won't work anyway? Do you think that the flu isn't really all that dangerous – it's just a scare tactic for companies and doctors to make more money?

FACT: The flu virus is endemic (resides in the wild) in birds and animals. Even if there is no large outbreak among people, the flu virus is living and multiplying around the world, on islands of the Pacific, the jungles of Africa and South America, the plains of North America and Middle Europe in the animals and birds who live in these regions.

FACT: Of the healthy adults who get the flu, less than 0.1% get more serious side effects, such as pneumonia. In small children, in older people and in those with debilitating diseases, the number of patients getting serious side effects increases to 2.5% to 5%. Each and every year influenza infection causes 3-5 million cases of serious illness and kills half a million people.

FACT: The flu virus is very quick to change (mutate) each year from one variety to another. Each year's flu is not the same as last year, although they are similar. Some strains grow primarily in birds and animals; some grow more readily in people. Not all strains have the capability of easily transferring from animals to people – like the bird flu – at least not yet.

FACT: WHO and CDC working in 122 national influenza centers in 94 countries sample patients with the flu to see what strains are prevalent in the world. Working with several manufacturers around

the world, these combined world agencies come up with a new trivalent (three types in one) vaccine every year. There is a mad dash every year to get the selection right, to get the vaccines made and tested, to get the vaccine shipped – to ALL the countries of the world at the right time.

FACT: The injectable vaccine is made from dead viruses. The flu shot cannot give you the flu. But your immune system might react to the egg in which it was grown or to the dead virus protein and can give you one or two days of low grade fever and aching muscles – sort of like the beginnings of the flu. The nasal spray vaccine – for use with special people groups – is made from a live attenuated (weakened) virus. It is possible to get the flu (mild form) from that kind of vaccination.

FACT: There has not been a wide spread influenza pandemic since the Hong Kong flu of 1968-69. Why? For several reasons: 1) the agencies have been really good at guessing which strains of flu need to be in the vaccine each year; 2) so many people in so many countries are getting vaccinated each year, the flu can't really infect enough people in any one place to cause an epidemic – except in those sections of the world where they are not vaccinated; 3) there are some new antiviral medicines which – if taken early enough – can slow down or stop the flu but these are expensive and available only in developed countries; 4) personal hygiene efforts (washing hands and foods) prevent the spread of flu virus.

FACT: The US recently committed \$7.2 billion and other countries \$2 billion to continue influenza research and head off a future world-wide flu pandemic – which could kill 40-100 million people (like in 1918) and cost the world hundreds of millions of dollars.

Do your part. Stop the transmission of the flu through one more person – you. Get your flu shot.

Classes & Lectures at Earth Fare

Tuesday, December 9, 6:15 p.m.

Learn How to Use Therapeutic Touch to Destress & Soothe Family, Friends and Pets. Free lecture by Emily McCulley, RN. Registration required.

Earth Fare, 1856 Hendersonville Road

Contact Janice Husk, (828) 210-0100 for more information

Tuesday, December 16, 6:30 p.m.

How to Heal the Thyroid with Dr. Nik Hedberg. Learn the five things everyone should know about the thyroid and what your doctor isn't telling you.



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