

RAPID RIVER

Arts & Culture Magazine

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"Rosebud," a painting by Elise Holder, one of the participants in the annual Haywood Arts Open Studio Tour. PAGE 32



Violinist Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg and pianist Anne-Marie McDermott perform

on September 26 as part of the BRAVO Concert series. PAGE 12



Corbin Gates prepares for the 2008 Gee Haw Whimmy Diddle Competition during the Folk Art Center's Heritage Weekend. PAGE 33

Photo: Stewart Stokes



Zap Mama is one of the many groups performing at LEAF's 29th Festival October 15-18. PAGE 10

Opera

Asheville Style

Asheville Lyric Opera presents
"The Marriage of Figaro"

financial wellness forum

Savvy Social Security Planning for Baby Boomers

BY BYRON BELZAK

POP QUIZ #1: Will Social Security be there when Baby Boomers retire?

The short answer: Yes.

The long answer: It is projected that Social Security, under the current system, will be fully funded until 2037. After that year — and if there is no reform — Baby Boomers can expect to receive 75 percent of the promised benefits. So Baby Boomers can be fairly confident that Social Security is not “going broke,” as many fear, and that reform will likely occur.

“Social Security is far more valuable than most people realize,” said Doug English, CFP, of Scientific Investors, which has offices in Asheville, NC, and Charleston, SC. He will be conducting a free seminar about Social Security on September 17, in downtown Asheville. (See listing below.)

Another salient point when planning for retirement: Social Security usually forms about 40% of the foundation of the average retiree’s total annual income. Consequently, it’s vital for every Baby Boomer to under-

stand how much Social Security will pay each month before one actually decides to retire; most people cannot afford to make a wrong decision.

Doug English — a financial planner who helps clients figure out the best time to retire and which investments can make the most sense to achieve financial security — explained that Baby Boomers should coordinate Social Security payments with the rest of their retirement income plans. Only then can a retiree hope for a financially worry-free retirement.

POP QUIZ #2: When should a Baby Boomer choose to retire, and how much money can that person expect to receive each month?

Short answer: There is no short answer.

Long answer: Planning for retirement is one of the most complex challenges that most Americans will face. Yet, there are solid facts that a person can consider to limit risk and build a stable financial future.

“There is nothing wrong with maximizing one’s Social Security benefits,” said English. He explained that one’s benefit will depend on how much a person earned over his or her working career and at what age the person applies for benefits.

The Decision is in the Details

There are many facts a person must weigh before deciding whether to take early retirement or wait until later to receive Social Security payments. But Baby Boomers can be assured that they will collect Social Security as long as they live. And the longer a person lives, the more he or she will extract from the system. Also, Social Security offers annual inflation adjustments, currently at 2.8%, known as COLAs (Cost of Living Adjustments).

For instance, if one’s monthly benefit today is \$2,000 and annual COLAs are 2.8%, and the person lives 10 more years after retiring, he will receive total lifetime benefits of \$304,256. If the person lives 20 more years after retiring, the total benefits will be \$673,622. If one lives 30 more years after retiring, he can expect payments totaling \$1,160,479.

Social Security As Life Insurance

Another key benefit of Social Security has to do with survivor benefits, which operate similar to a life insurance policy. In the case of retirees, the surviving spouse can switch to the higher of the two benefits. If John Doe was receiving \$2,000 and he dies, Jane Doe (his spouse) can trade her \$1,200 benefit for his \$2,000 benefit. There are a number of other nuances in the Social Security Act (which was

launched in 1935) to consider as well.

Early Retirement vs Delayed Retirement

Baby Boomers have to calculate in dollars and cents the impact of whether or not to take early retirement, because retiring earlier means receiving less money each month than one would have received if he or she had waited until later. A Baby Boomer born between 1943 and 1954 can apply for benefits at age 62 and receive 75% of the PIA (or Primary Insurance Amount); at age 63, he would receive 80% of the PIA; at age 64 receive 87%; at age 65 receive 93%; at age 66, the person would be considered to be at full retirement age and able to receive 100% of anticipated benefits.

Doug English said that there are those who may want to work after age 66, but they must consider the wisdom of doing so. If a Baby Boomer applies for Social Security after he or she turns 66, the Boomer will earn what is known as “delayed credits” of 8% for each year delayed. So if the Boomer applies at age 67, his or her benefit will be 108% of the PIA (or Primary Insurance Amount). At 68 the PIA would be 116%, and so forth, up until age 70. After age 70 retirees cannot earn any more delayed credits. Therefore, it does not pay to wait until after age 70 to apply for Social Security.

POP QUIZ #3: Are Social Security benefits tax free?

Short answer: No. Currently, up to 85% of a retiree’s benefits may be taxable.

Long answer: Obviously, there’s much to know about Social Security and retirement planning, from taxes to timing to tactics. No one likes surprises, especially if one is a Baby Boomer who might make a wrong decision now about Social Security that could interpret into a loss of thousands of dollars later. It’s savvy to explore all of the details and facts BEFORE one decides to take the giant leap into retirement, said Doug English.

And the difference of a right or wrong financial decision could mean a retirement that is truly golden — or one that is a golden pain in the pocketbook.

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Doug English of Scientific Investors, LLC, in Asheville, has been a Certified Financial Planner (CFP) for over 12 years. The Consumers’ Research Council of America has consistently rated him as “One of America’s Top Financial Planners.” He can be contacted at doug.english@lpl.com, (828) 398-2802, or www.scientificinvestors.com.

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Thursday, September 17, 6-7 p.m.

Savvy Social Security Planning: What Baby Boomers Need to Know to Maximize Retirement Planning

Part of the ‘Planning Ahead’ Series

ASA SPEAKER: Doug English, CFP, Scientific Investors, (828) 398-2802

Baby Boomers want to know the following: Will Social Security be there for me? How much can I expect to receive? When should I apply for Social Security? How can I maximize my benefits? Will Social Security be enough to live on in retirement? Free and open to the public. This is a rare opportunity to learn about Social Security from a Certified Financial Planner.

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About the Cover: The singer is Anne Scwhartz, costume by the Costume Shoppee, costume designer, Susan Sertain, photo by Kristen Yarborough.

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cover story

Lyric Opera Presents Mozart Masterpiece, Asheville Style

Asheville Lyric Opera's production of Mozart's comic masterpiece, *The Marriage of Figaro*, fits the theme of the company's eleventh season: Opera - Asheville Style.

"From the inspiration of mountains to the world-class international retreat of our season sponsor, The Grand Bohemian Hotel, Asheville Style is unlike anything in the nation," says ALO General and Artistic Director, David Craig Starkey. Performances, set for October 9 and 10 at 8 p.m. at Diana Wortham Theatre, will feature many of the distinguished performers who have relocated to the region from around the country, in addition to some illustrious guests from outside the region.

"This kind of ensemble piece is the perfect way to show off so many of the artists who call this area home, and who have become audience favorites. It's also an opportunity to showcase great artists who have been associated with our company during the last decade," said Starkey. "They are important exponents of ALO and the region's music scene." The story at the core of *The Marriage of Figaro*, which is similar to life today, is that the heart is what ennobles a person - not nobility, wealth or social rank. It tells the story of a servant and his fiancée who go head-to-head in a comic tussle with their employers, the Count and Countess.

The *Marriage of Figaro*, written in 1786, represents one of the most important collaborations in the history of art and music, and ALO plans to make collaboration a key element in their production, co-producing the show with Tennessee Tech University and the Bryan Symphony Orchestra in East Tennessee.

The libretto was written by Lorenzo DaPonte, whose extraordinary life as a poet, friend of Casanova, and world traveler has been the subject of dozens of books. It is based on the play, *La Folle Journée*, by Pierre Beaumarchais, which Napoleon later called 'The first stone thrown in the French Revolution,' because of the role it played in the rise of the working class. The music that Mozart composed for the opera is considered to be some of his absolute best and most joyous. A year after the premier Mozart traveled to Prague, where he said, "Nothing is played, sung or whistled but 'Figaro.'" To this day, it is the sixth most performed opera in North America.

Playing the title role, Figaro will be Jonathan Ross, well-known baritone in the region and AB-Tech faculty member. In the grand role of the Count will be baritone Jon Truitt, who returns to ALO after performing with many top opera companies across



BY DAVID STARKEY

the U.S. Mr. Truitt will play opposite his wife, Elizabeth Truitt debuting as the Countess. Other well-known singers to the area, Andrea Blough (as Susanna) and Scott Joiner (as Basilio and Don Curzio) will be heard along with debuting

mezzo and Lake Toxaway-native, Regina Davis (as Cherubino), who was recently heard with Colorado's Central City Opera. Diane Pulte, an accomplished mezzo-soprano who has sung with the Dallas Opera makes her ALO debut as Marcellina, and Daniel Webb, known for his appearances in the Broadway production of *La Bohème*, returns to ALO as Doctor Bartolo.

To lead the Lyric Opera Orchestra, ALO is bringing in Daniel Allcott, who has been Principal Conductor of the Atlanta Ballet, guest conductor for the Dallas Symphony, Indianapolis Symphony, and Music Director of the Bryan Symphony Orchestra. Jon Truitt will direct the opera, in addition to playing one of the primary roles. The opera will feature a new scenic design by local artists Daniel Azazpour, formally designer and artist for the The Dallas Opera Company. "We are blessed with so many craftsmen and creative talent, the ALO is excited to be featuring these individuals of our community in the creation of producing an opera."

The show promises to be an evening full of fun, wit, wisdom and beautiful music for families and young alike. Tickets are available and range from \$28 to \$49 with discounts for children and students. In addition, season tickets may be purchased for the entire season at a major discount. Future ALO special events this Fall include, *Hansel and Gretel* November 6 at North Buncombe High School and *The Christmas Concert* November 20, the eve of the Asheville Holiday Parade at the Diana Wortham Theatre.



For information on season or dress rehearsal tickets, group discounts, or for a season brochure, please contact ALO at (828) 236-0670 or visit www.ashevillelyric.org.

For tickets call the Diana Wortham Theatre Box Office at (828) 257-4530 or go to www.ashevillelyric.org.



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stage preview

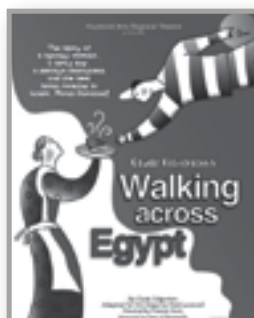
HART presents "Walking Across Egypt"

The summer is a good time for comedy and the folks at HART are following the outrageous "The Producers" with the more sublime down home wit of one of North Carolina's most celebrated authors, Clyde Edgerton.

"Walking Across Egypt" is an adaptation of Edgerton's best selling novel about Mattie Riggsbee, an independent, strong-minded senior citizen who at 78 "might be slowing down just a bit. When young, delinquent Wesley Benfield drops in on her life, he is even less likely a companion than the stray dog that she keeps chasing off. But the dog never tasted her mouth watering pound cake."

Mattie is a stubbornly independent and funny woman and she is being played by one of the area's best comic actresses, Allison Stinson, under the direction of Frances Davis, making her debut as a director on HART's main stage. Sean Bruce, who has just completed HART's internship program plays Wesley, the runaway boy who she decided to befriend.

The adaptation of the novel by Reid Leonard has been a major hit in every theatre that has produced it, and especially in North Carolina where the characters are



as familiar as your neighbors. In 1997 the Performing Arts Center at the Shelton House opened with a production of Edgerton's "Rainey" and the return of the author's work to the HART stage is part of the organization's twenty-fifth anniversary celebrations.

HART's cast for "Walking Across Egypt" also includes John Winfield, Jennifer Sanner, Roger Magendie, Stan Smith, Susan Rudniak, Rhonda Parker, Tim Beck, Buffy Queen, Tom Dewees, Tracy Hyorth, Thomas Butler, Lisa Gerber, Holly Ann Harmon and Jackie Webb.



"Walking Across Egypt" has performances September 3, 4, 5 at 7:30 and September 6 at 3 p.m. Tickets are \$18 for Adults, \$16 for Seniors and \$8 for Students with 1/2 price student tickets for Thursday and Sunday performances.

Box Office hours are Monday-Saturday 1-5 p.m. Call (828) 456-6322 for reservations.

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Art Fit for a Chancellor's House

Artists-Store Owners Wrap up Latest Project

The creative work of custom furniture builder John and textile artist Suzanne Gernandt will soon grace the University of North Carolina at Asheville (UNCA)'s newly constructed chancellor home.

The Gernandts, who also own Textures, an eclectic home furnishings store and working studio in Waynesville, say they enjoyed being part of the group of local builders and craftspeople selected for the privately-funded project.

Pisgah House is designed to serve as the residence for current and future UNCA chancellors, as well as a location for small, University-hosted meetings, receptions, dinners, programs and performances.

"It was an honor to be invited to participate," says Suzanne, who designed a 13-by-5-foot linen textile – a permanent piece of art – to hang in the home's great room. Hand-dyed in 30 colors, the piece took about two months to complete, she adds, and is her own design.

John built a fireplace surround and ornate dictionary stand for the home's library – a challenging, detail-oriented project that he enjoyed, he says.

Ken Gaylord, architect/builder for the Pisgah House, says he chose the Gernandts because he's "admired their fine crafted work over the years." Local contractors and artists were selected for the project – in keeping with a "Blue Ridge style" of architecture – to support the local economy, he adds.

John Gernandt's Furniture

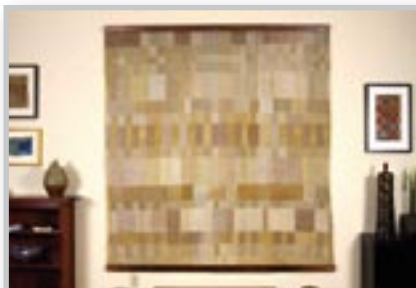
A fourth-generation custom furniture maker for 35 years, John says he creates more than just carefully drafted furniture: each is a lasting, one-of-a-kind piece incorporating elements from both the past and present.

A member of The Furniture Society – a group of North American studio furniture artists – and board member of Handmade in America, John focuses much of his energy on hands-on apprentice programs, teaching those new to the trade.

It's a craft that must be passed on in order for it to continue and it's not something you can learn in a classroom, he says.

The Art of Suzanne Gernandt

After years of designing with thread and fabrics, Suzanne says she saw a loom one day and it (weaving) was just something she "had to do." Experimentation with dyes came soon after, and eventually, what was once a hobby became her life's work.



A completed commission from 2008.

BY PAM J. HECHT

Meanwhile, Suzanne has raised the art of weaving to another level. Her fine art work is unique and in recent years, she has also been doing large-scale projects. She says she enjoys the ability to create freely, without

parameters, such as with the project for the Pisgah House.

While the process of weaving is precise, once the woven pieces are off the loom, the creativity begins, she says. "I'm very much a colorist – my work is about color and mood."

She begins work with cloth she weaves herself or ready-made cloth in cottons, silks and linens – each piece is processed multiple times before it is ready for a composition. She adds colors with dyes and paints, as well as with more complex printing processes, and stitching "to explore line quality as a painter might use a pencil," she says. Over-dyeing between each process layers the colors, creating depth, complexity and texture.

Suzanne exhibits nationally and her work is in collections throughout the United States. A member of the Southern Highlands Craft Guild and founding member of Ladies in New Textiles (L.I.N.T.), she has taught numerous workshops, including those at the prestigious Penland School of Craft, Appalachian Center for Craft, Handmade in America, and at Haywood Community College's Production Craft Program.

Textures: Store, Studio, Classes

Wander through the colorful store and it feels like you're strolling through the rooms of a beautifully appointed home, with artful surprises everywhere you turn. Textures, housed in a charming 1920s three-story building, features the Gernandts' work, as well as that of other local and regional artists/craftspeople and those from around the world. An in-store studio is designed for tours and classes.

The contemporary handcrafted and manufactured home furnishings include fine art furniture, tableware, lighting, bedding, sculptures, wall art and more in a variety of mediums: ceramics, fiber, glass, wood, and metals. Playful pieces sit by the sophisticated, inspiring new ideas.

Classes in fabric surface design utilizing dyes, silk screening and other methods; and woodworking and furniture-making, are offered at both the store's studio and at the Gernandts' scenic farm just outside Waynesville.

A Passionate Life of Art in the Mountains

Founding members of the renowned Ariel Gallery in Asheville, the Gernandts arrived in Western North Carolina in 1989. A few years later, they opened Textures.

"We really like the area – it's a collaborative, rather than competitive, community of craftspeople and artists, says John.

Each also does commercial work, as well as private commissions. "We work with people to satisfy their dreams," he adds. "We're just going for it – enjoying what we do."

Textures

142 N. Main Street, Waynesville
(828) 452-0058

Check website for woodworking/furniture
and surface design class schedules
www.texturesonmain.com.

For information on UNCA's Pisgah House,
www.unca.edu/construction/Pisgah.html

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R A P I D R I V E R A R T S

festivals

Lake Eden Arts Festival (LEAF)

October 15-18, at Camp Rockmont in Black Mountain

BY JENNIFER PICKERING

The 29th LEAF festival will present "Expresiones Latinas" (Latin Expressions), which is supported in part by LEAF's first National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) grant.

"Expresiones Latinas" kicks off Mexico's Bi-Centennial celebration in 2010 and helps LEAF to enrich our community by presenting a unique blend of many different Latin cultures both at the festival and in our LEAF in Schools & Streets programs.

LEAF International will be hosting teaching artists and children from our LEAF International Panama programs which have been working with hundreds of Ngobe Indian children over the past two years with 4-5 weekly music lessons as well as a music summer camps.

LEAF's fall lineup is red hot with exceptional headliners including Arrested Development, Zap Mama, Cowboy Junkies, Alex Torres and His Latin Orchestra

(Mexico), The Squirrel Nut Zippers, Los Amigos Invisibles, Los De Abajo (Mexico), Battlefield Band.

LEAF in Schools & Streets is hosting a special family-friendly performance and school field trip opportunity. Sonos de México Ensemble will perform on Friday, October 16 at The Orange Peel, 101 Biltmore Avenue in downtown Asheville. Doors open 10:30 a.m., concert at 11 a.m.

IF YOU GO

Advance ticket purchase required. Under 10 admitted FREE! Day tickets \$29-48. Weekend Camping Passes \$107-161. Community Pass (locals, no overnight) \$69-89.

Tickets/Info: theLEAF.org or call (828) 68-MUSIC (686-8742).

Carolina Mountains Literary Festival

BY BRITT KAUFMANN

The authors gathering in Burnsville September 11 and 12 have been selected around the 2009 theme *Mountain Mosaic* – enjoying the diverse heritages and histories of people living in Appalachia today. Appealing to readers of all kinds, it has invited poets, novelists, historians, naturalists and journalists.

The weekend will be filled with simultaneous readings, workshops, book signings, panel discussions, performances, and Q&A sessions. The keynote panel, We All Come from Someplace Else, will be moderated by Gloria Houston and include noted Cherokee historian Robert Conley; children's author Eleanor Tate; and Melungeon scholar Wayne Winkler. Each of these authors will address how being from "someplace else" influenced their writing. This panel will be held on Friday morning.

The final event is the Saturday evening ticketed banquet with keynote talk by Ann Pancake. A native of West Virginia, Pancake's novel *Strange as this Weather Has Been* is set in a town polluted by mountain top removal.

The festival will bring back some favorites from previous years including prolific novelist Peggy Poe Stern, mystery writer Vicki Lane, teen author Alan Gratz, and historian Timothy Silver. First timers to the festival include poets Laura Hope-Gill and John Hoppenthaler; moonshine historian and cookbook writer Joseph Dabney; and photographer/writer Rob Amberg.

While the festival is primarily for people who enjoy reading, it will offer four

3-hour long workshops for those interested in writing. This year, as a part of the Mountain Mosaic theme, Jim Clark will lead a song-writing workshop. John Hoppenthaler will lead one on writing poetry, while Judy Goldman and Tamara Baxter's workshops will focus on prose techniques. Details for registering for the workshops are available through the website cmlitfest.org.

On Saturday, there will be several events specifically for children. In the morning on the Town Square, the Penland School of Crafts and the Arts Malters Group will assist children in creating quilt-like mosaics for journal covers. In the afternoon, there are more opportunities for kids of all ages and their parents to get excited about reading.

There is something for everyone. In addition to fiction and poetry readings, learn about the hanging footbridges of Yancey and Mitchell Counties, the history of moonshine, the best places to whitewater raft in WNC and much more.

IF YOU GO

September 11 and 12. Schedules and maps will be available at the Burnsville Town Center (6 South Main St.) and sessions will be held all over downtown.

To see a complete list of authors and a schedule for the weekend visit cmlitfest.org, or call (828) 682-4476.

asheville shops

Isavorite... All That Glitters is Sometimes Green

One of the lesser known gemstones, but definitely a real treasure is the green garnet called tsavorite. It has a tricky spelling, as the first t is silent as well as a unique pronunciation, "savorite".

This stone is one of those naturally beautiful stones, as the green color is bright and has an internal glow when well faceted. Often it is said that tsavorite is the stone emerald wishes it was, as it is clear, bright green and hard enough to wear everyday....all the things emerald is not.

Tsavorite is one of the gem varieties of the garnet mineral called grossular. The more common gem variety of grossular is called hessonite. The best quality tsavorite has so far been found in Kenya. It's green color is caused by trace amounts of vanadium and tsavorite is not the only green garnet found so far. Uvarovite is almost never used as a gemstone, but the green andradite garnet variety called demantoid is also cut for gems. Telling the difference between these stones can be difficult, but experienced gem dealers are capable of doing so.

This beautiful shiny green stone has a very interesting history in geology. It is found along the border between Kenya and Tanzania in the east-african bushland, in a very dangerous countryside near the famous Tsavo National Park. This area of the world is full of poisonous snakes and hungry lions, making it less than hospitable for the casual miner. Campbell Bridges, a scottish gemologist, was never casual about his mining activities in this area of the world.

Bridges first discovered this form of green garnet in 1961 in Zimbabwe while working for the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority. Later in 1967 he found another discovery of this stone in northern Tanzania.

Believing that this deposit was a part of a larger geological structure extending possibly into Kenya, Bridges began prospecting in that part of the world. He was successful



Tsavorite is one of the gem varieties of the garnet mineral.

in 1971, when he found the mineral variety in southeast Kenya, a hundred miles south-east of Mount Kilimanjaro. Bridges was eventually granted a permit to mine this deposit.

The gemstone was only known to mineral specialists until 1974, but after Bridges' largest discovery, Tiffany and Co launched a marketing campaign to bring tsavorite the recognition it so richly deserves. At this same time Sir Henry Platt, president of Tiffany and Company, proposed the name tsavorite for this gemstone in honor of Tsavo National Park in Kenya.

Unfortunately, Bridges was murdered in 2009 when a mob attacked him and his son on their property in Tsavo National Park. Most believe that this attack was because of a three-year argument over access and control of Bridges' gemstone mines in Tsavo.

Two women in Biltmore Village are particularly fond of using this unusual stone in their one of a kind jewelry

they make at their gallery, blue. Lynn Daniel and Susan West both enjoy designing with this stone as it is indeed a beautiful bright green color, unlike any other natural stone. The hardness of the stone also makes it a great choice for rings as not only is the color unusual and eye-catching but it is durable enough to wear every day.

For the month of September, Lynn and Susan will be featuring tsavorite in their designs. They will also have a good quantity of loose tsavorites for people to select to set in their custom designs. You can view these beautiful creations along with this unusual stone at blue, located at 1 Swan Street in Historic Biltmore Village. You can also see their tsavorite designs by visiting www.bluegoldsmiths.com.

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R A P I D R I V E R A R T S

performance

Asheville Bravo Concerts

The Area's Oldest Arts Not-for-Profit Forges On

BY CHALL GRAY

Whenever a discussion about the finest classical violinist alive today

ensues, the name Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg is not far behind. In late September, to kick off their 78th season, Asheville Bravo Concerts is pleased to be bringing Ms. Salerno-Sonnenberg and pianist Anne-Marie McDermott to the Thomas Wolfe Auditorium.

Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg burst onto the international music scene as a teenager in 1981, when she became the youngest ever winner of the prestigious Roy M. Naumberg Intl. Violin Competition. Since that time she has been recognized as one of the preeminent violinists of her generation, and she has been lauded with a plethora of national and international honors and awards for her music.

In the late 1980's Ms. Salerno-Sonnenberg joined forces with acclaimed pianist Anne-Marie McDermott. Their ongoing collaboration over the past two decades has been acknowledged as some of the most significant classical music produced in the late 20th Century.

In recent appearances Ms. Salerno-Sonnenberg has been playing a wider array of



Violinist Nadja Salerno-Sonnenberg and pianist Anne-Marie McDermott perform on September 26.

pieces than ever before, and has been garnering effusive praise with each concert. The veteran violinist is playing as well or better than she ever has before, and on September 26th she and Anne-Marie McDermott will perform a varied repertoire in Asheville, for what is sure to be a delightful evening for not only classical music lovers, but all musical enthusiasts.

The show will be the season-opener from

Asheville Bravo Concerts, the area's oldest arts non-profit. Coming attractions over the course of the fall and winter include The Vienna Boys Choir and The Gershwin's Porgy & Bess, among others.

IF YOU GO

For more information about Asheville Bravo Concerts or the 2009-2010 Season, please call (828) 225-5887 or visit www.ashevillebravoconcerts.org.

Subscriptions are available now by calling (828) 225-5887. Subscribers receive a 20% discount off full ticket prices, choice seating, and exclusive benefits.

Singer-Songwriter and Multi-Instrumentalist Justin David

Justin David, a Nashville-based singer-songwriter and multi-instrumentalist, is viewed by many in the business as the industry's "one to watch" on the contemporary country music horizon.

David, a songwriter, guitarist, mandolinist, fiddler and singer, is among the fastest-rising performers on the circuit; a top-five finalist of TV's Nashville Star; and a featured artist for several years on tour with the legendary musician and entertainer Roy Clark, who says, "Do yourself a favor and listen to Justin David. As far as playing great fiddle, mandolin, being a great singer — he is unequalled."

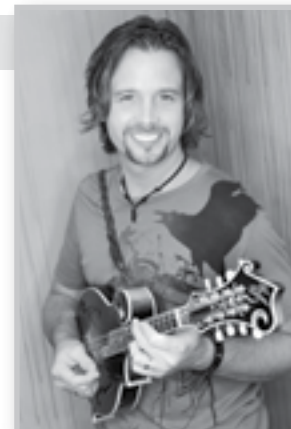
Justin David's 2009 release *Chapters* is a highly anticipated project that features his smooth vocals and songwriting skills. Displaying his instrumental abilities on guitar, mandolin, and fiddle, the album is a little bit of country, acoustic, and Americana rolled into one.

BY JOHN ELLIS

IF YOU GO

The Diana Wortham Theatre kicks off its 2009-2010 Mainstage Series with a performance by Justin David, 8 p.m., Friday, September 11.

Ticket Prices: Regular \$28; Seniors \$26; Students \$23. Student Rush day-of-the-show (with valid ID) \$10. To purchase tickets phone the Box Office (828) 257-4530 or visit www.dwthetheatre.com.



performance

Rapid River Magazine Interviews

Comedy Central's Lynne Koplitz

Continuing the momentum of hosting one of the the largest and most successful stand-up comedy festivals in the country, the "Laugh Your Asheville Off" team brings Comedy Central's Lynne Koplitz for one night only at the Diana Wortham Theatre in downtown Asheville.



Lynne Koplitz is a graduate of Troy State University in Alabama and performed in community theatre throughout the southeast before moving to New York City where she tried stand-up comedy on a bet. A decade later, Lynne Koplitz's half-hour Comedy Central Presents Special was ranked 13 out of 100 of the top stand-up specials on Comedy Central.

She performed at the Montreal Just For Laughs Comedy Festival and Bonnaroo. She regularly opens up for Lewis Black and was also the co-host of the comedy cooking show "How to Boil Water" on The Food Network and a co-host of last year's "Shop & Style" on NBC. Lynne was first noticed as the host of Telepictures "Change of Heart", the nationally syndicated relationship show.

Lynne has appeared as guest host for NBC's "Later". She has had a development deal with NBC for her own sitcom, was a featured comedienne on Comedy Central's "Premium Blend", and guest starred on NBC's "Extra" and "The Other Half".

She was the first comedienne since Roseanne Barr and Brett Butler to have a development deal for a sitcom with Tom Werner from the former Carsey/Werner producing team (Roseanne, Grace Under Fire, That 70s Show).

RAPID RIVER: How's your hit television show "Zrock" (which can be seen on the IFC channel) doing?

Lynne Koplitz: It's great. We just finished our second season. Working with Joan Rivers has been a lifetime dream come true. She is an amazing woman and I cannot say enough about having the opportunity to work with her. "Z ROCK" is a comedy series that follows three friends leading a double life: by night they're a hard-partying rock band and by day they're a kids party band. I play the manager of the band.

RR: In Hollywood they say women stars die at 40, but in comedy it seems women get more respect as comics after 40. Do you think this is true and if so why?

LK: In comedy you have to have experience in order to be funny. The older you get

the more material you'll have. Respect, in this line of business, as with being a writer, comes with age. Young people have the drive and the determination, you know, but what kills them is that so few have anything to really say. I didn't get into stand-up until I was 29. At 29 I felt I had something to say. Now at 41 I have a lot more to say.

RR: What comics most influenced you?

LK: Growing up I listened to Richard Pryor, Bill Cosby, Eddie Murphy. These comics talked about truly horrible sad things and they had you laughing. They were great storytellers and through what they talked about you as an audience member got to know them. I try to do that with my standup.

RR: What makes something funny?

LK: That's hard to say. It's like asking what makes a movie good? For standup it's all about connecting with the audience. You also have to have good punch lines. And there is delivery. Five comics can tell the same joke, same punch line but you'll feel like you just heard five different jokes because of the way they presented it to you.

There is the performance aspect also that probably doesn't get as much credit as it should. That's why stand-up comics do well in the movies — we're all really actors. Comedy is naturally about horrible tragic things. A guy lights himself on fire, which is horrible, and he runs down the street and he thinks, "Wow, people sure get out of my way pretty fast." We laugh at that. Why we laugh I haven't a clue.

RR: What direction is comedy heading today?

LK: Comedy is going strong. The economy has got a lot of people worried, and out of work, and scared, so they want to laugh. They want to feel better about their situation. Stand-up comedy is always changing. Ben Konstantin is certainly worth keeping your eye on.



Laugh Your Asheville Off presents Lynne Koplitz September 18, 8 p.m. at the Diana Wortham Theatre in Asheville, NC. Advance Tickets

\$15; \$20 week of the show. Recommended for mature audiences 18+.

Visit www.laughyourashevilleoff.com for more information. For tickets call the Diana Wortham Box Office (828) 257-4530 or visit www.dwttheatre.com.

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September CD Reviews

by James Cassara



**Ian Hunter
Man Overboard
New West
Records**

On *Shrunkn Heads*, his 2007 comeback release, Ian Hunter sounded like a man

reborn, revitalized, and ready to take on all the upstart new comers who'd emerged on the scene in the decades since he'd founded Mott the Hoople.

With *Man Overboard* he sounds a bit more his 70 years-his raspy voice as intact as ever and his guitar work no less sublime-while still displaying the intensity and dedication that has marked his career. The tempo may be a bit slower but the inner fires burn just as brightly.

Having now spent nearly half his life residing in the United States Hunter has absorbed a number of country music idioms (although they are in truth closely related to the British folk he originally played) giving this album a economical veneer that serves the music well. On "The Great Escape" he deftly leads his band through a series of changes that would have felt right at home on a Burrito Brothers album while "Up and Running" shows he can still crank out perfectly crafted boogie rock as well as anyone.

And for those who miss the acerbic wit of his years with the Hoople "The Girl from the Office" is as bright and addictive a pop tune you'll likely hear these days. *Man Overboard* may not be as flamboyant as its predecessor but in its own way it more exactly charts this phase of Hunter's career.

He's rarely sounded more heartfelt, and while he's clearly slowed down a bit-five decades of rock and roll mayhem can do that to you-his songwriting has only gotten better with age. It is likely most listeners are only vaguely aware Hunter is still around, let alone making records of such quality and conviction. That he is still doing so is nothing less than a minor miracle, and if my writing this review compels a few of us to seek out his latest than my time has been well spent. ****

**Chris Isaak
Mr. Lucky
Wicked Game/
Reprise Records**

With his ridiculously handsome looks, affable guy next door persona, and throwback voice, Chris Isaak is indeed



spinning discs

Given two stars or five, be assured anything reviewed in these pages is worth your time and dollars. Just be certain to spend that dough at any of Asheville's fine independent record stores. They're the ones who really know and support the music. Downloading may be fine but for my money there's nothing like holding the real thing in my music loving hands!

one fortunate man. Few artists have managed to walk a tightrope between cult artist and mainstream performer with such delicacy and ease, and while it has been seven years since his last studio effort *Isaak* has hardly been sitting on the sidelines.

His early 2000s sitcom chronicled the misfortunes of the music business in hysterically honest fashion while his current A & E production-a series of in house performances by and interviews with a diverse yet select group of artists-is a treasure trove of trivia for the music geek. While *Mr. Lucky* isn't quite an audio compliment to the show it does seem reasonable that this recent flurry of activity is calculated to increase *Isaak*'s once high visibility.

As for the music itself, the real star here is the production (courtesy of *Isaak* and Mark Needham) which nimbly recasts the artist's backwards fixations into a more modern sensibility without losing the buoyancy of either. *Isaak* may remain ever the suave romantic but the presence of such hipsters as Trisha Yearwood and Michelle Brand indicate he's not afraid to try new tricks.

As with any of his records one's reaction to *Mr. Lucky* will depend largely in part to how much of *Isaak*'s Roy Orbison fueled nostalgic fascination the listener shares but it's hard to imagine anyone not tapping their toes to such buoyant gems as "We've Got Tomorrow" and "Summer Holiday." Nothing on *Mr. Lucky* is new or revelatory, but the song crafting, precise and fluid musicianship, and breezy joy that imbues the record is more than sufficient. *Lucky* indeed! ***1/2



**500 Days of
Summer
Original
Soundtrack**

If Marc Webb's delightful tale of star crossed love and heart wrenching reality hitting like a freight train had nothing else going for it the sparkling ways in which he deftly interweaves music in the narrative structure of the movie would be enough to carry the day.

Of course the film is itself such a rare joy-a boy meets girl fable that actually manages to reflect the truly complex joys and heartbreak of relationships- that having a soundtrack this good is icing on the cake.

Initially brought together by a mutual love for The Smiths-not exactly the sort of romantic love songs upon which

partnerships are built-Summer and Mark endure the highs and lows of dating set to a soundtrack of their lives: And ours too, if you're still young and foolhardy enough to karaoke when properly inebriated.

Fittingly Morrissey and company are given top billing ("There Is a Light That Never Goes Out," "Please, Please, Please, Let Me Get What I Want") but the inclusion of a pair of Regina Spector songs balances the mix in fine fashion. Of course Zooey Deschanel, who plays the title character, is herself no stranger to pop music.

As half of *She And Him* the effervescent songstress delivers her fine take on The Smith's while another Smith-in this case the delightful singer/songwriter Meaghan-graces us with one of the album's most affecting tunes in "Here Comes Your Man."

Amongst this collection of solid heavyweights (including Hall and Oates "You Make My Dreams Come True") Smith shines brightly. Rarely does a movie so beautifully capture the fundamental link between pop music and dating, and even more rarely does a soundtrack come along that makes you want to race home after the movie finishes and break out those vinyl delights of back when. ****

**Alice Peacock
Love Remains
Adrenaline
Records**



While ostensibly considered a singer/songwriter Alice Peacock carries a much wider umbrella, stretching the conventional boundaries of that narrow description while infusing her music with touches of Tex Mex, roots rock, country, and even a bit of piano backed lounge. Her husky voice is better suited for the more down to earth songs but the ease with which she adapts to any number of styles is startling.

On *Love Remains* she tackles some rather familiar (some might argue overly so) themes with a casual verve that breathes them with new life. Nostalgia for school days, a restless life on the road, and longing for lost love are hardly new ideas but Peacock makes them sound as if they were.

While her earlier records seemed timid and uncertain *Love Remains* is confident and focused, with Peacock eagerly assuming her role as the lady in charge. Her band, noticeably Scott Dente on guitars and Dan Dugmore on Dobro and banjo, are perfectly

'CD's' continued on next page

what's happening

'CD's' continued from page 14

suiting to her style; most surprising is that Peacock herself plays a variety of instruments, including guitars, keyboards, and percussion.

Of the songs themselves the best of the bunch are "Trying to Hold Back Time," which turns any thoughts of regret on their collective head, and "I Am Mary," a surprisingly downbeat song that demonstrates Peacock's skill at first person narrative. But there's not a weak moment in the lot, and while *Love Remains* may not quite qualify as her break through effort it continues to mark her as an artist to watch, one whose records have become consistently more personal and engaging. ★★★1/2



Mark Knopfler Get Lucky Nonesuch Records

Given the sheer blast of radio friendly up-front-and-

center enjoyment that marked the best of Dire Strait's music the direction of Mark Knopfler's solo work seems ever the more puzzling. His initial forays into soundtrack recordings displayed a previously unseen talent for atmosphere and genre crossing ambiance that fit perfectly into the restraints of scoring movies. Unfortunately with each subsequent album Knopfler has grown increasingly comfortable in that role, to the point that all of his releases are little more than background music.

Long gone are the trademark Telecaster epiphanies, replaced instead by a keyboard dominated sound courtesy of co-producer and longtime collaborator Guy Fletcher. And while Knopfler's earlier work was replete with surprises-musical detours that while not always successful were never dull-much of *Get Lucky* finds a reasonably pleasant groove and seldom strays from it.

When Knopfler does stretch out a bit, as in the witty but unconvincing "Cleaning My Gun," he almost inadvertently displays a fraction of the flash and brilliance that propelled him to rock royalty: So while the stories found herein are certainly worth telling, the music is inconsequential to the point that most of these songs would have been better served as spoken word entities. There's certainly nothing wrong with an artist seeking a new and challenging direction, but Knopfler seems well past the point of artistic challenge.

He's comfortably settled into a predictable niche, and while each new album takes him further from his roots he doesn't seem to care. The question then, is why should we? ★★

Farmer Jason Brings the Tractor to Town

BY JAMES CASSARA

When singer-songwriter Jason Ringenberg (Jason and the Scorchers) created his children's music character Farmer Jason little did he suspect that it would be the most artistically and commercially successful move of his life. With the Scorchers he'd already pioneered a fusion of country and punk that brought to mind such giants as Gram Parsons and X.

But life on the road was hard, and with a pair of daughters missing their father Ringenberg decided to take a break. He spent the better part of two years away from touring, playing the dad and reflecting on his lot in life. That life of course included music, and while it was no longer the central force in his existence the restless artist within needed to get back to work: Hence, cometh the Farmer.

Ringenberg wanted to make a CD that his kids could listen to while he was out globetrotting. Since the family lived on a small farm in western Tennessee, and he'd grew up on an Illinois hog farm, Ringenberg figured that a roots oriented CD about farming and farm animals was just the ticket. Thus the first Farmer Jason CD, *A Day in the Life of Farmer Jason*, was born. Released in the fall of 2003 "purely for fun" Jason the dad delighted in hearing his daughters singing along to songs like "The Tractor Goes Chug A Lug" and the immortal "Guitar Pickin' Chicken." Ringenberg clearly did it for fun, and his expectations for the album's acceptance were muted. To his surprise and delight the effort took off. Before long, lots of other daughters and little sons were singing along as well.

The Disney magazine *Family Fun* named it "one of the Top 5 kids' CDs of 2003." Farmer Jason, Jason Ringenberg's "twin brother" (said with a nod and a wink), was soon drawing sell-out crowds from coast to coast, performing children's concerts in venues ranging from schools and libraries to punk rock clubs.

Farmer Jason dares you not to sing along, but resistance is utterly futile." The album has been equally successful overseas. In Spain it became a hit among Spanish Harley riders, while the sold out shows in London proved it not just for country folks.

This brings us to the new CD, *Rocking in the Forest with Farmer Jason*. Again produced by eccentric studio wizard George Bradfute it brings to fruition the idea that both kids and parents can, and should, listen to the same music.

In Farmer Jason's own words: "We definitely had this as one of our goals: that a children's CD could successfully entertain and educate children, without making their parents want to blow up the stereo!" This concept album takes children to a musical forest where they experience its diversity and beauty. The songs, with their stick-in-your-head hooks, also teach subtle lessons about ecology, exercise,



Jason Ringenberg as Farmer Jason. Photo: Sara Anne Finke

and history. In this age of instant gratification, how many family music artists would attempt to tackle a subject as complex as a Shawnee arrow-head, with its multi-dimensional history and grace? Farmer Jason does it successfully here; introducing listeners to a surprisingly complex musical ecosystem.

Recording the CD was a process of pure joy, a joy which is shared by the listener. You can actually hear the musicians and singers laughing in the background. Those musicians include Farmer Jason's friend

Todd Snider, who stopped by to deliver a hilarious duet and dialogue on He's A Moose on the Loose." Victor Wooten of the Flecktones adds his distinctive bass, while radio personality and Americana legend Webb Wilder added mysterious harmonies and whacked-out raps. An accompanying DVD (look for a review in next month's RR) has also been released. In the meanwhile Farmer Jason is playing a series of low key gigs, including one here in Asheville, in support of the CD and just in time for the fall harvest.

IF
YOU
GO

Farmer Jason and Friends at the Grey Eagle on Sunday, September 13 at 1:30 p.m. Tickets are family friendly priced at only \$6!



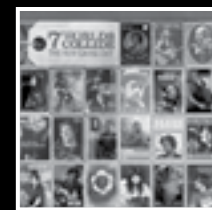
New Riders of the Purple Sage Where I Come From Woodstock Records

On the first proper album in nearly two decades the newest version of NRPS manages to sound both suspiciously recognizable and surprisingly fresh. Anchored by founding members Buddy Cage (who technically didn't come aboard until the second album) and David Nelson the band, fleshed out by newcomers Michael Falzarano on guitar, bassist Ronnie Penque, and drummer Johnny Markowski the band sounds relaxed and alert.

The songwriting, dominated by Nelson (with collaborator Robert Hunter of The

Grateful Dead) but shared by all save Cage, is surprisingly strong. "Where I Come From" is both an ode to the sixties as an era and age while "Higher" is less about cannabis consumption and more about reaching a certain stage of acceptance and gratitude. Penque takes lead vocals for the exquisite "Olivia," making me wish he'd do so more often (not that there's a thing wrong with Nelson's Bob-Dylan-done-light singing).

"Carl Perkins Wears The Crown" is a heartfelt tribute to some of those who have gone before (sadly, NRPS co-founder John Dawson who died shortly after the completion of this record can now be added to the list) showing that while the band still has a very promising future they are proudly attuned to the past. It's a past worth preserving, and no one knows that any better than the five genies who made this very enjoyable album. ★★★★★



7 Worlds Collide

"The Sun Came Out" to be released

September 29 by Sony Music.

A double album of original songs created and recorded by 7 Worlds Collide. The release also features KT Tunstall, Liam Finn, and Wilco. It's ripe with heart stopping firsts, including Phil Selway's songwriting and vocal debut as well as dream collaborations between Johnny Marr and Jeff Tweedy.

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CIGZNL

community

Asheville's New Italian-American Social Club - C.I.A.O.

The Carolina Italian American Organization is a family-friendly club whose mission is to encourage the understanding and appreciation of Italian history, culture, and values.

Members gather twice a month for either a dinner meeting (pot-luck or catered) or a game night (Bocce, Italian card games, etc.) with special events throughout the year; all focused on fun, food, and shared Italian tradition.

CIAO started a little over a year ago after a dinner invitation for people of Italian-American heritage appeared in the bulletin of Saint Barnabas Church (Arden). As a result, about 10 – 12 people began meeting regularly and in the fall of 2008 the club was formed. Today, CIAO is an official organization with a board of directors, officers, by-laws, non-profit status, and over 70 active, enthusiastic members.

Dinner meetings are held at the Senior Citizens Center in downtown Asheville. While not the same as gathering at a private home or trattoria, these get-togethers offer the same spirit of family, fun, and camaraderie. A typical meeting begins with a social hour (conversation,



CIAO Officers (L-R)
Vincent E. Carangelo
(President), **Rosemarie Carangelo** (Secretary), **Frank Anello** (Treasurer), **Jeff Sparacino** (Vice-President).



Good food and good times at a dinner meeting.

pool, Italian music) followed by a delicious family-style dinner. Afterwards, a member volunteers to present a brief family history. These meetings end with a discussion of club business.

On game night participants learn and play Italian games — card games like Scopa and Briscola played with 40 card decks or a lawn bowling game called Bocce. The games are competitive and the banter between opponents can be almost as much fun as the game itself. Time is always made available to mingle and share food and drink.

Special events this year include a Columbus Day celebration/dinner (October), a bus trip to Charlotte for an Italian Festival (October), and a holiday dinner (December). Plans are in the works to develop Asheville's own Italian festival and to sell authentic, imported Italian foods on the CIAO website.

If you are Italian by birth, marriage, or interest and would like to get together with lively, sociable people to share Italian history and culture attend a meeting and enjoy. Ciao!

Did You Know?

Legend has it that those famed St. Bernard rescue dogs of the Alps carried a cask; a cask filled with whisky. But Italians know (legend) that those casks were filled with Grappa, a rough tasting but very warming (90% alcohol) drink made by fermenting the left-over stalks, stems, and seeds from wine production.

The Italian language in Italy has many regional dialects. It is not unusual for Italians from different regions (for example, Florence and Naples) to be unable to communicate if they speak their native dialect. However, Italy also has a "pure" or business Italian spoken by almost everyone.

Family/Italian-History Presentations

Since one of the goals of CIAO is to promote the understanding of Italian history, members are encouraged to volunteer to share their family history or knowledge of Italian culture. Much of their information comes from experience but many use the Web and professional services to gather facts and pictures for documentation and/or to complete their research. Presentations are informal and are often accompanied by family photos, heirlooms, maps, and papers.

Carolina Italian American Organization
www.ciaoanc.org

community

Building Bridges Sessions

I am not a great gardener, sometimes I am attentive to my plants and sometimes not. This has been a good summer because with all the rain I am mostly required to weed, which I can do at my convenience, rather than water which should be done at certain times of day and on a fairly regular schedule. I like a garden with many different plants, vegetables and flowers.

I have found that to have an interracial, multicultural community, it also takes regular attention. When I first took Building Bridges 15 years ago, I heard something which has stayed with me: "to have a multicultural community in Asheville you have to be intentional." In other words, if you just make friends with the people who show up in your White world, you will never have a multicultural community. I have found that planting, weeding and watering are all necessary to make friends with people different from myself.

I have had to plant myself in situations where I will meet different people. I have to discern those with whom I can sincerely feel connected and I have to nourish the relationships with my attention, sincere interest and genuine curiosity.

I took that advice to heart and kept coming back to Building Bridges, meeting new people and learning more about the history of race relations in Asheville, walking toward the bridge across the chasm of difference. Those of us who want to meet on that bridge and haven't lived here all our lives need to learn a lot more about the history of race relations in this city and this region. It is not like it is on the Piedmont or other parts of NC or elsewhere in the South. It is not like it is in the North. It is unique to this southern Appalachian region and specifically to Asheville. Oh, yes, Asheville has had many similar experiences to other parts of the U.S. around race, but somehow it has always had its own flavor, just like only certain plants grow in this climate.

One of the most frequent litanies I hear



During our fall session potluck, the night Obama was elected.



All Building Bridges sessions are led by teams of black and white facilitators.

Building Bridges provides a safe space to learn from one another.

BY KATHRYN LISS

that divides the Black and White communities is which direction we are looking in, the past or the future. I hear White people saying: "I don't see color. Everyone is the same to me. I haven't done any harm to Black people. Why can't we just move forward into a better world?" And I hear Black people saying: "We have a history of oppression and until we clear up that history, we can't move forward. We need to know that we have been heard, that our pain has been heard and that we can feel confident that those hurts won't be forgotten by those who didn't experience them."

Building Bridges has been for me a place where that conversation can take place. It is a safe space to learn from one another. The conversation may not be comfortable because we are learning. But with the help of trained facilitators we can talk to one another, ask each other

questions, make mistakes and be corrected and mostly step onto the bridge and look back to see how our world looks from a different perspective.

IF YOU GO

Come nurture variety with me at the next Building Bridges session beginning September 15 at Hill St. Baptist Church. Meetings are on Tuesday nights from 7-9 p.m.



Kathryn Liss has lived in Asheville, NC since 1993. She is a mediator and educator and has been an active participant in Building Bridges off and on since she moved here. You can contact her via email at kliss@igc.org.

For more information on Building Bridges call (828) 777-4585 or go online to www.buildingbridges-asheville.org.

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Bring on the WPA

BY JAMES CASSARA

Not much is yet known about the mysterious collective musical entity known as the W.P.A. (Works Progress Administration) but the names associated with the band are certainly familiar ones. Formed as an aggregate of players best associated with other performers, the W.P.A. has been barnstorming across the United States in support of a forthcoming album.

And what names they are. While the actual line up is ever changing — owing no doubt to the other high profile commitments the musician's have — W.P.A. is fronted by Toad the Wet Sprocket front man Glen Phillips and Nickel Creek's Sean and Sara Watkins. Other band members include Luke Bulla (best known for his work with Jerry Douglas) and Greg Leisz, whose innumerable studio work includes Joni Mitchell, Wilco, Sheryl Crow, and Beck.

And as if that weren't enough the group recently added Davey Faragher and Pete Thomas (members of Elvis Costello's Imposters) and long time Tom Petty and



The Heartbreakers keyboardist Benmont Tench. The upcoming album, slated for release in mid-September, was produced by Jim Scott. Best know for his work with Wilco, Tom Petty, and the Rolling Stones, Scott is one of the most in demand producers in the industry. Once Watkins and Phillips, two core band members, entered Scott's studio they quickly laid down a number of tracks. Within two days they'd laid down the basic tracks and by the end of the week the still untitled disc was ready to go.

While information about the band and the album is still largely being kept under wraps, with talents such as these involved it's safe to assume the upcoming Asheville show will be well worth the gamble.



WPA at The Grey Eagle on Friday, September 18. Tickets are priced at \$18 in advance and \$20 the day of the show. Visit www.thegreyeagle.com for more information.

3rd Annual Blue Ridge StoryFest

Escape to Lake Junaluska & the mountains for spectacular storytelling and beautiful fall color!

Two of the Carolina's finest storytellers, Michael Reno Harrell, a Southern Appalachian Mountain native who has charmed audiences across the U.S. and around the world, and "All American Storyteller" Tim Lowry from Charleston, SC, perform at Terrace Auditorium in afternoon and evening story concerts.

Day-long activities begin on September 26 under the Lakeside StoryTent with an open StorySwap from 11 o'clock until noon. At this time festival goers sign up to participate by telling a short story.

At 1 p.m. the Asheville Storytelling Troupe perform under the Lakeside StoryTent adjacent to Harrell Center. Listeners will enjoy the stories of Charlotte Ross, "The Legend Lady" from Boone, NC; Donna Marie Todd, renowned Biblical Story Teller, Black Mountain, NC, and a showcase of Asheville region tellers: Karen-Eve Bayne, Joyce Birkenholz, Sandra

BY JANE SIMS

Gudger, Tom Lockhart, and Mica White, with Wayne & Jane Sims, Emcees.

The afternoon Storytelling Concert for Families featuring Tim Lowry, with Michael Reno Harrell opening, starts at 3:30 p.m. Following a break for dinner, the evening Storytelling Concert for Grown-Ups, featuring Michael Reno Harrell, with Tim Lowry opening, begins at 7:30 p.m.



Blue Ridge StoryFest at Lake Junaluska. September 26, 11 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. Lake Junaluska Conference & Retreat Center, 91 N. Lakeshore Drive, Lake Junaluska, NC

The \$10 admission fee includes entry to all events; Children 6-11: \$5, Under 5: Free. Advance tickets may be purchased at the Lake Junaluska Conference & Retreat Center administration building. The storytelling areas are handicapped accessible.

Identity Theft Hits 5-Year High

Leader in I.D. Theft Protection Strikes Back with Free Protection Offer for All

TEMPE, ARIZONA – Identity theft has topped the Federal Trade Commission's list of consumer complaints for the past eight years.

Now, a stunning new survey shows a record 9.9 million Americans were victims of identity theft last year – a shocking 22% increase over the prior year – according to Javelin Strategy & Research. This news mirrors a just-released report from the Federal Trade Commission that cites a 21% increase in identity theft complaints during the same period.

Apparently, individual consumers are not the only ones at risk: a recent review cited by the Wall Street Journal reports that the cost of information breaches to U.S. companies was also on the rise, with the average total per-incident cost in 2008 rising to \$6.65 million*.

These studies send a clear message: in the wake of the global economic crisis, identity theft is a big business. It's up to consumers to take proactive steps to protect themselves.

That's why for a limited time, LifeLock, the industry leader in identity theft protection, is offering 30 days of guaranteed identity theft protection service at no cost.

"All you have to do is call 1-888-252-5862 for an individual membership, or 1-888-261-1335 if you

are enrolling more than one member," said Todd Davis, the CEO of LifeLock known for giving out his real Social Security number in advertising to show his confidence in the service. "It's that simple."

Immediately upon enrollment, all LifeLock members are protected by LifeLock's \$1 Million Total Service Guarantee.

Why should you protect your identity? Consider some of the Javelin survey's specific findings:

According to the survey, more than one in every ten victims knew the person who stole their identity.

The Javelin survey also revealed women are 26% more likely to be victims than men. The survey also named higher income consumers (households with combined incomes of \$75,000 or more) to be at higher risk. Latinos are 47% more likely to become victims of new account theft, versus 32% of all victims. It's important to point out that no one can stop all identity theft, but what LifeLock doesn't stop, they fix at their expense, up to \$1 million.

To get LifeLock free for 30 days during this special offer, call 1-888-252-5862 for individual memberships, 1-888-261-1335 for multiple enrollments, and use promo code FREEMONTH.

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"When I first learned about a company called LifeLock that protects families from identity theft, my husband was skeptical. I signed us up anyway, and forgot about it. A couple of months later, on a family vacation, my husband received a phone call asking if he was applying for a new credit card. Someone was trying to steal his identity. LifeLock had stopped the thief cold." **Kim Barnes**



"I'm a former chief of police of a major city. I knew identity theft was a \$50 billion a year business, and a prime focus of organized crime. But they got me anyway. Even though I was a senior law enforcement official, it took weeks to clear my name. I decided: never again. A reporter recommended LifeLock to me and I tried them out. I've never had a problem since. I highly recommend them to you." **Bobby Jo Harris**

Never give your Social Security number out unnecessarily. Source: Javelin 2009 Identity Fraud Survey Report. *Source: M.P. McQueen, "Data Breaches Cost Businesses More", Wall Street Journal, February 2, 2009

Fall Series of Painting Workshops

Saturday, September 12 and Saturday, October 3 from 2 to 5 p.m

Catch the Spirit of Appalachia presents a series of spontaneous painting workshops for the art event, ColorFest, Art of the Blue Ridge.

The workshops will be located at Nature's Home Preserve in Tuckasegee, NC. Each participant will leave with a finished painting. Learn more, visit www.spiritofappalachia.org or call (828) 293-2239.

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Cucina 24

Accomplished Italian food, from antipasto to dessert. Cucina 24 is the creation of chef/owner Brian Canipelli and general manager Brian Candee. "We wanted a restaurant that offered incredible Italian food that was served in a comfortable atmosphere," Canipelli said. Considering the splendid service, high-quality ingredients and integrity of preparation, dining here is a delicious bargain.

Details – Pastas are all made in house, as well as all their bread and desserts.

The Crowd: Affluent but casual, even boisterous on busy nights.

The Staff: Young, well trained and eager to please. The Bar: Magnificent on all counts. The bar itself is gorgeous and inviting. Try a dessert martini – well worth the price.

Cost: Lunch entrees, \$6 to \$11. Dinner entrees, \$15 to \$23.

Cucina 24
24 Wall Street in Asheville
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Vincenzo's

Vincenzo's Ristorante & Bistro is neither pretentious nor overly simplistic. The menu is reasonably priced and is quite extensive. They feature smaller versions (piccolos) of some of their more popular plates. You can also order side portions of practically every entrée.

Their signature dish is the Filetto Gorgonzola (\$25), two seared filet medallions accompanied by a Gorgonzola cream sauce, pine nuts and caramelized shallots.

Details – The restaurant fills up fast so call for reservations. The Bistro is California casual in style and offers live music seven nights a week. The upstairs restaurant is smoke free. You can smoke in the Bistro after 9 p.m.

Hours: Monday - Thursday 5:30 p.m. to 10 p.m.; Friday and Saturday 5:30 p.m. to 11 p.m.; Sunday 5:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.

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Curras Dom puts Mexican Cuisine on the culinary map by offering Modern Mexican Cuisine in a friendly, casual fine dining atmosphere. It's a great place to relax, unwind and have a great meal. Only 10 minutes from downtown Asheville.

They offer a seasonal menu of authentic dishes from the interior of Mexico using locally grown ingredients. They also have an excellent wine list and a full bar. If you are adventurous, go ahead and try their very own Avocado Margaritas.

Details – Outstanding service. Lunch: Appetizers and salads \$2.50 to \$7.50; Entrées: \$7 to \$9.50. Dinner: Appetizers and salads \$7 and up; Entrées: \$17 and up.

Open Tuesday through Saturday for lunch and dinner, and Sunday's for brunch from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Reservations are strongly suggested.

Curras Dom
72 Weaverville Road
(828) 253-2111
www.currasdom.com



Limones

An established restaurant featuring a mix of Californian and Mexican cuisine, in a cozy and classy atmosphere where the service is both professional and personable.

The old cherry floors and lacquered wood tables give the feeling of modest, unassuming elegance, setting the stage for meals that please the palette and provide something a little different and apart from the ordinary.

The word about town is that chef and owner Hugo Ramirez, a native of Mexico, graces his ever-evolving menu with local, organic vegetables, hormone-free meats and wild seafood. Ask about the Tres Leches cake for a special dessert treat.

Details – Dress: nice casual. Serving brunch (\$10-15), and dinner (\$15-20). Wine, beer, and cocktails. Reservations accepted.

Hours: Monday - Sunday 5-10 p.m., Sunday brunch 10:30-2:30 p.m.

Limones
13 Eagle Street in Asheville
(828) 252-2327

Afternoon Tea with Llamas

The Cradle of Forestry in America historic site will offer two Afternoon Tea with Llamas programs Saturday, September 19 at 11 a.m. and again at 2 p.m. The llamas will carry your lunches or snacks on this easy walk along the Discovery Trail at the Cradle of Forestry. Ice tea and cups will be provided.

The programs will be led by George Appenzeller and Sarah Meadows. Come learn about the llamas' cooperative social structure of teamwork and caring on this easy 2 mile walk through scenic woods.

Admission is \$5 for ages 16 and older, free for youth under 15, Golden Age, and America the Beautiful Passport holders. The Cradle of Forestry is located on Hwy. 276 in the Pisgah National Forest, six miles north of Looking Glass Falls, four miles south of the Blue Ridge Parkway. For more information call (828) 877-3130 or go to www.cradleofforestry.org.



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Restaurant Guide



Forest Blue

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Details – Clean, open, modern meets warm and woodsy. Non-smoking. Down-to-earth atmosphere. Full-service bar for appetizers, mixed drinks, beers on draft and local wines.

Appetizers and salads - \$7.99 to \$10.99; Lunch: \$7.99 to \$15.99; Dinner: \$16.99 to \$25.99; Brunch: \$6.99 to \$10.99

Hours: Mon – Thurs 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Fri 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.; Sat 4 p.m. to 10 p.m.; Sunday brunch 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Reservations suggested. Catering and private party space available.

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Flying Frog Café

The Flying Frog Café is one of Asheville's most unique upscale dining establishments, featuring a culmination of flavors resulting from more than two decades of experience in Asheville. Owned and operated by veteran restaurateurs Jay and Vijay Shastri.

Passionate about great food and wines, chef and certified sommelier Shastri showcases European and Indian cuisines, both classic and innovative, enhanced by his deft hand with spice.

The restaurant also features a boutique wine list with several hundred vintages of great wines. The intense menu is matched by a professional wait staff of food enthusiasts who know and understand what composes each dish.

The Flying Frog Café has earned an impressive list of reviews from almost every major newspaper and culinary magazine in the United States.

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September Events at the Weinhaus

Reservations are required for these events, please call the Weinhaus at (828) 254-6453 or 1-800-283-1544.

Tuesday, September 1

Ophelia's Restaurant will serve a five course meal featuring chef Jamie Allred and accompanied by fine wines. Chef Allred's emphasis on local foods brings out the best of WNC meals. Time: 7 p.m. Cost is \$60 all inclusive.

Thursday, September 17

Always a favorite, the Lobster Trap will be serving a New England clam bake dinner for the those of us who love fresh seafood. Time: 7 p.m. The cost is \$75 all inclusive.

Friday, September 25

Come to a bread and wine tasting with the City Bakery and the Weinhaus featuring red wines from the Andes. The price is \$10 for a tasting and light hors d'ouvres. Time is 5 to 7 p.m. Held at the Weinhaus, 86 Patton, Ave. Asheville.

Monday, September 28

A wine dinner in Brevard will feature Chef Marc Dambax, the new owner of Marco's Trattoria. The five course meal will showcase Marc's fine cooking and wines designed to match the cucina cuisine. Time: 7 p.m. The cost is \$65 all inclusive.

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Decade-nce

BY MICHAEL PARKER

Wrapping up the 30's: Countless good times and wine-drinking friends

This decade began in Charleston, at midnight, September 5, 1999. Good friends were married at nearby St. Philip's eight hours before. The newlyweds were cool enough to don their casuals that night and bar hop with their guests. Current friends and new ones were eager to buy me shots of *Jäger*, along with countless beers, at a beat-up bar on Cumberland when the clock on Philip's tower marked the change from their wedding day to my birthday. If a bell tolled, we didn't hear it.

A shameful amount of gratuitous, unasked-for birthday *Jäger* had to be secretly dumped, one shot at a time, to ensure a vomit-free evening and a pain-free birthday morning. I like *Jäger*, but I have to be in control. There were two particularly memorable smooches at that hour, one from the girlfriend of some guy I regarded with anathematical contempt, and the other from the fancy hat-wearing girlfriend of an unjealous cigar aficionado, a girl who is currently serving time in prison for a significant act of embezzlement.

We finished off a box of very good cigars, obtained via the free market two nights before by the aforementioned aficionado (who, unlike his now ex-girlfriend, got away with the crime). We smoked and laughed, recalling how the Rector from Philip's had accepted one of those cigars, blissfully unaware of the felony attached to it.

48 hours before, on the night of (and at the scene of) the crime, we drank late bottled vintage Port, plus 10 and 20 year-old tawnies. The wines were inescapably on the multi-hundred dollar tab.

The years rolled. There were countless dinner parties, and we dined out with no compunction as our debts grew. The number of friends grew as well, to numbers that greatly annoy current Facebook critics. Asheville holds countless people who know

how to eat well, drink well, and be merry, with or without money. They are the reason I call Asheville home, the reason I, an only child, feel as if part of a large family.

There is a mystical bonding property in drinks, but especially so in wine, and even more so in wine in this age of information. Obtaining wine knowledge does not require wealth, and sharing wine knowledge does not necessarily require words.

There is a compliment paid when one friend opens a well-chosen wine for another. There is also a comfort zone created when wine lovers can feel free to geek-out a little and mutually enjoy their wine knowledge.

Here is an abridged list of fellow glass-raisers who have been a special part of my thirties:

Vijay – The output of his talent at the Flying Frog Café and flow of wine from his generous hands put him at the top of my wine-drinking buddies list. His has been a reign of *terroir* throughout this decade, enriched by his volume of knowledge of the facts of wine. Friends like Vijay make wine collecting for future sharing worth the effort – my very best and rarest (what's left of them) have his name on them.

James – Our friendship began in London when he took me to Boodle's and handed me the wine list. We often drank Port together and recalled what we knew of ancient history. In Asheville, his dinner parties were straight from the pages of A.J. Liebling. His death, five years ago, was the end of an era.

Kirti and Robb – Those day-long Sunday brunches at my house were as awesome as the wines and their company.

Billy – we drank the '83 Ducru together, when it was 18 years old. It is still the finest wine of my life, appropriately drunk with one of the finest friends in my life.

Mac – My all-time number-one drink-



ing buddy, and an amazingly supportive and empathetic friend. An immeasurable amount of beer, vodka, and tequila have passed through our bodies. Wow, what a ride!

Mark – My other number-one drinking buddy. You know you are with a soul-mate when, after three Long Island ice teas, you say to each other at the same time, "We need to switch to beer."

Todd – His picture belongs in the dictionary next to genuine. Here's to more beer and Bourbon, and no end to the intelligent conversations I very much enjoy.

Guadalupe – A legendary party host and lover of good rum and Burgundy. He has been as awesome a drinking buddy as he has been a supportive friend.

Shannon – for slinging superb gin martinis accompanied by her Kathleen Turner voice, she was the sneaky guest at my table, where we hid the particularly special wines at our feet and let everyone else refill with the less special wine from the bottles on the table.

The Basta Girls – We drank the super-old Italian and Spanish whites together, and enjoyed many dinners with grilled lamb and old vine zinfandel.

John – We found a way to polish off three bottles of wine in an afternoon and call it working.

Scotty – We walked the longest trek ever together in pursuit of beer, from Foggy Bottom to the Brickskeller, but so worth it for the Hardy Vintage Ales. A fellow aficionado of Sauternes and premium sake, I look forward to more sharing.

Matthew – We drank Wee-Heavy at Jack by the pitcher until it came out of our ears, and good Sherry until five in the morning.

The Fools – all you dumbasses who didn't know the Dom Perignon was actually a ten dollar fizz poured into an empty DP bottle. HA!

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joe's brew notes

New Brews – From Concept to Pint Glass

Almost anyone can brew a good beer or cook a good meal - find a tempting recipe, gather the equipment and ingredients, follow the recipe, and enjoy the results.

A bit oversimplified perhaps but it hints that the difference between a cook and a chef or a brewer and a Brewmaster is the ability to create the recipe they use.

Brewmasters and Chefs can create recipes because, in addition to their passion, experience, and technical skills, they share the ability to taste, recognize, and remember flavors by ingredient or in combination. This talent allows them to dissect recipes and find ways to reproduce, enhance, or craft new taste sensations. The chef works in a kitchen with various foods and spices; the Brewmaster works in a brewery with various malts and hops.

But why develop a recipe for a new beer; what spurs the idea; what takes place to get it to our pint glasses; and what makes it a success? Several local Brewmasters – John Lyda of Highland; John Stuart of Greenman; and Carl Melissas of the Wedge – share their approach for the development and commercialization of a new beer.

John Lyda applies his technical and brewing education (UNCA, Siebel World Brewing Academy) to make distinctive beers with consistent flavor. Because of Highland's size and market reach, the decision to make a new beer is a collective one (management, sales, staff). However, the recipe is the decision of the Brewmaster.

Highland's New Tasting Room

Hey, Beer Fans, Highland Brewing has opened a new tasting room (unofficially "The Highland Beer Garden"). Hours of operation are 4PM – 8PM on Friday nights. All their standard and current seasonal and/or specialty beers are available on tap for \$3.00 and Highland merchandise can be purchased as well.

The "beer garden" is a cozy space with a bar and an adjacent outdoor patio; both with seating and tables. Enjoy a beer and conversation or play one of the games provided (table tennis, corn hole, table shuffle board). The lawn area, next to the patio, is a great place to toss Frisbees or footballs when weather permits.

A Grand Opening is planned for the very near future but there's no need to wait. The folks are friendly, the atmosphere is relaxed, and the beer is excellent; visit this Friday and enjoy.

BY JOE ZINICH



John Lyda, Highland Brewing Company

Once the decision is made to introduce a new beer, the style is selected with consideration for the time of year and market compatibility and acceptance (both local and regional). John then gets representative samples of the beer style for taste-test purposes. After taste tests are complete he develops a recipe and makes test batches until an acceptable profile is found. The recipe is then scaled for production, ingredients are purchased, and commercial quantities are made. Extensive laboratory tests are conducted on both the ingredients and the steps of the process to achieve the same flavor batch after batch. Personally, John wants the new beer to have the aroma, taste, and body he was trying to achieve. On a commercial basis he wants the beer to thrive in the markets where they're introduced.

Later this year Highland will celebrate their 15th anniversary with the introduction of a very special Strong Irish Ale.

John Stuart uses his knowledge of beer history to make beers that stand the test of time. His goals are to have a stable of flagship beers that are repeatable, well accepted, and fit the image of a Celtic pub; a collection of seasonal beers based on their market acceptance; and specialty beers with flavors that excites and attract.

The idea to make a new specialty beer can be inspired by a new malt flavor, the taste of a food, or even another beer. Once John chooses to make a new beer he considers the local market, creates a recipe, gathers the ingredients, and produces a 5-gallon test batch. The beer is tasted by the entire Green Man staff and later by some select tasting-room customers.

If the beer fails the taste tests, the recipe is adjusted and another test batch is made and tasted. When the beer passes the taste tests, it is produced commercially. The new beer is a success when the customers consider the taste of the last beer as good as the first and they look forward to the next one.



John Stuart, Green Man Brewing Company

New for the fall at Green Man Brewery is an Oktoberfest beer, a delicious treat John is excited to release in time for Asheville's Oktoberfest celebration, October 10- Go to, www.ashevilledowntown.org, for more information.

Carl Melissas, a former chef and sommelier, has a goal to bring world-beer flavor to the Wedge. His key is to discover and taste the best standards for the style like Duvel (Belgian strong golden ale), Hoegaarden (Belgian wheat) or Lagunitas (California IPA) then brew similar or duplicate beers with authentic (as possible) ingredients.

A new beer is usually developed after an "Aha" moment, a taste that triggers a memory of a specific beer or style. Carl then considers the season and the beer offerings from other local breweries, develops a recipe, orders needed ingredients, and makes commercial quantities. The new beer is a personal success if it achieves the desired balance in aroma, flavor and finish. It's a commercial success if the customer enjoys the second beer as much as the first and returns for another.



Carl Melissas, Wedge Brewing Company

A double IPA (higher alcohol and hops than standard IPA) is planned at the Wedge for mid 4th quarter this year. Expect a stronger brew with a more forward malt flavor (without the sweetness) than their Iron Rail IPA.

Despite differences in background and approaches, Brewmasters share the common goal of creating beers with memorable flavors; lucky us.

Green Man Brewing Company
www.jackofthewood.com

Highland Brewing Company
www.highlandbrewing.com

Wedge Brewing Company
wedgebrewing.com



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

Chili-in Out by The Lake Benefit

This year's special, fun-filled event features celebrity chef Tony Schlarb who will prepare a variety of delicious chili selections, complemented by a salsa bar from local restaurant favorite, Papas and Beer.

In addition to great food, entertainment will be provided by local singer Carol Duermit and her band, plus a special preview of the musical "Heaven In Your Pocket." Paddleboats and canoes will also be available to enjoy the fall colors from a different point of view.

Tickets are \$45 (\$40 for Arts Council members) and proceeds benefit the

community and educational programs of the Arts Council of Henderson County. Tickets are available by calling (828) 693-8504, or visiting the office at 538 North Main Street in downtown Hendersonville. For details visit www.acofhc.org.



The Arts Council of Henderson County will host the second annual "CHILI-in OUT by the Lake" fall fundraiser on the shores of

Highland Lake at the Highland Lake Lodge and Spa on Sunday, October 25 from 4 to 7 p.m.

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



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www.rapidrivermagazine.com

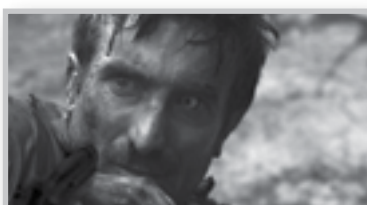
- ★★★★★ - Fantastic
- ★★★★ - Pretty darn good
- ★★★ - Has some good points
- ★★ - The previews lied
- ★ - Only if you must
- ☹ - Forget entirely

District 9

Short Take: An intelligent modestly budgeted sci-fi offering with strong political overtones.

REEL TAKE: Here in Asheville within the space of a month we have had two modestly budgeted, intelligent science-fiction offerings. First there was *Moon* and now there is *District 9* courtesy of producer (but not director) Peter Jackson.

Like *Moon*, *District 9* borrows a lot from several previous sci-fi classics and then makes them its own. References from *The Quatermass Xperiment*, *The First Men in the Moon*, *E.T.*, *Close Encounters of the*



Sharlto Copley attempts to deal with the aliens in "District 9."

Third Kind, *Cloverfield*, and even some of Peter Jackson's early low budget offerings can be easily spotted if you know the films.

It's not the references or the borrowings but what co-writer and director Neil Blomkamp does with them

that makes *District 9* so special. The film was sold on Jackson's name in the trailers but it is Blomkamp's film all the way as it is an extension of a short film that he made earlier.

The setting is present day Johannesburg, South Africa where aliens from another planet are kept in squalid, sub-standard housing. The slum area is known to everyone as District 9. The apartheid allegory is intentionally obvious but there are many other concerns here including attitudes toward illegal aliens, the power of the military-industrial complex, and a government's willingness to turn a blind eye to highly illegal activities.

Utilizing a no-name cast (the principal character had never acted before), an unusual setting (Johannesburg), and remarkable but modest CGI effects, director Blomkamp has created a totally believable scenario made even more realistic by shooting in actual slums and using a CNN like live news approach in the beginning. All this was done at a fifth of the cost of the recent *Transformers* sequel and illustrates the different approaches between Hollywood and the rest of the world.

For all its achievements, *District 9* is not without its flaws. Just as it was with *Moon* and its first time director Duncan Jones, first time feature director Neil Blomkamp is not yet an assured cinematic storyteller and the film goes on a little too long, becomes a little too manipulative, and is extremely violent. Nevertheless it's a breath of fresh air which might just show Hollywood that downsizing is good and that you can make a good film without all the bloat.

Rated R for bloody violence and pervasive language.

Review by Chip Kaufmann

The Hurt Locker

Short Take: The most real and effective story to date of the war in Iraq.

REEL TAKE: Watching *The Hurt Locker* at a small press screening at Carolina Cinemas a few weeks ago was one of the most unique cinematic experiences I've ever had. I settled in thinking I had a pretty good idea of what I was about to see. Content-wise, it was pretty much as anticipated, but *how* they presented it was both striking and remarkably effective. To say I was shell shocked afterwards would be fair.

The Hurt Locker is the story of the last 39 days in a tour of duty for a Bravo Company's bomb disposal unit, stationed in Baghdad. We meet Sergeant Sanborn and Specialist Eldridge, men who have formed a bond, the kind of bond that only in brothers in arms share. Sanborn is stable and a textbook soldier. Eldridge is having a rougher time of it but he's a good soldier. They are comfortable with each other, they trust each other and they are counting the days until they go home. When a new bomb expert and tech leader Staff Sergeant Will James (Jeremy Renner) arrives on the scene, he turns the unit on its ear.

Renner, who I believe I have only ever seen before in *The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford*, gives an utterly unique, real and absorbing performance. It's the layering of the aspects of his character that draws the viewer in to him. He is seemingly reckless and yet the unit's best hope of getting home alive. He's a provocateur yet deeply reflective.

The film is shot almost entirely with hand held cameras, so much so that I actually became physically ill watching it. However, the camera work is spot on in this film. It realistically conveys the chaos and confusion and the constant feeling of being on your guard in a strange, volatile corner of the world. As I fought through my nausea and bolted from the theatre afterwards to get a breath of fresh air, I still couldn't help

but think how truly appropriate and effective the camera work was.

I've talked to several people since seeing the film that were surprised that the film was directed by a woman. *The Hurt Locker* is directed by Kathleen Bigelow, an interesting filmmaker who seemingly picks and chooses her projects very carefully and directed such films as *Strange Days*. I believe it is her direction and vision that so deftly shows the outward soldier and the inward man of each of its main characters. She infuses the story with shockingly short

lived cameos by better known actors.

Interestingly though, this is not a device to bring big names to the film but rather to better illustrate the experience of American soldier in Iraq. The film does not possess the characteristics of more melodramatic movies a la Steven Spielberg

or Oliver Stone. Instead Bigelow delivers a piercing, streamlined depiction of war that you won't soon forget. You may want to pack your Dramamine, but *The Hurt Locker* is truly a film worth seeing.

Rated R for war violence and language.

Review by Michelle Keenan



Jeremy Renner delivers an absorbing performance in "The Hurt Locker."

Inglourious Basterds

Short Take: Inglourious is right. Quentin Tarantino's latest opus is a major disappointment.

REEL TAKE: *Inglourious Basterds* (the misspelling is intentional) is Quentin Tarantino's attempt at mythmaking a la John Ford ("When the legend becomes fact, print the legend"). Sorry Quentin, but you're no John Ford. He's not Robert Aldrich either whose *Dirty Dozen* (1967) is an obvious candidate for the film's point of departure. There is also Enzo G. Castellari's *Inglorious Bastards* from 1978 and he does provide a cameo for Bo Svenson who was the star of that film.

'Movies' continued on next page

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

movie reviews

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Lieutenant Aldo Raine (Brad Pitt) addresses his "troops" in Quentin Tarantino's "Inglourious Basterds."

As one would expect from Tarantino, there are numerous references to other films and filmmakers throughout the movie. Everything from Brad Pitt's hanging scar (Clint Eastwood's *Hang Em' High*-1968) to the victory music from the end of *Zulu Dawn* (1979) can be easily spotted if you're paying attention. What you don't expect is boredom.

There are several instances where the movie stops dead in its tracks to allow scenes of endless dialogue that are neither amusing nor even coherent. One scene inside a Parisian bar basement goes on forever. Director Tarantino should have exercised tighter control over writer Tarantino.

In between the dull stretches there are several action set pieces that include a lot of unpleasant violence. I realize that this is a war movie but close-ups of heads literally being scalped (*The Mountain Men*-1980) or repeatedly bashed in with a baseball bat (*The Untouchables*-1987) is going over the top for no good reason.

One thing *Inglourious Basterds* does have going for it are a number of fine performances especially from the female members of the cast. Melanie Laurent and Diane Kruger are outstanding in their respective roles. The male acting honors go to Christoph Waltz as a high ranking member of the Gestapo with many talents while Brad Pitt is obviously having a good time as the leader of the group.

The movie builds to what should have been an impressive finale set inside a Parisian cinema. It is quite impressive but alas it's not the finale and the film has nowhere to go for the last 20 minutes or so. A number of the main characters are treated quite badly throughout *Basterds* and that for me was one of the bigger turn offs. As far as I'm concerned, *Inglourious Basterds* is a major disappointment and is Tarantino's worst film to date.

Rated R for graphic violence, language and brief sexuality.

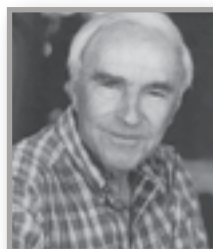
Review by Chip Kaufmann

In Praise of "The Fixer": Richard Fleischer

To people who enjoy watching something other than the latest movie releases, the name Fleischer means Max Fleischer, the animator responsible for Betty Boop and Popeye. But to Hollywood insiders there was another Fleischer who was known inside the industry as "the fixer". This was Max's son Richard Fleischer (1916-2006) whose movie career lasted over 40 years. You may not be familiar with his name but I'm willing to bet that you are familiar with many of his films.

Although an established director since the early 1950s, it was his work during the 1970s and early 80s that earned him his unofficial nickname. When a studio needed help with a film they would say "get me Fleischer". Most of the movies from that time that bear his name were not started by him. He was brought in to finish them when other directors either walked off the picture or were fired. Those in charge knew that he was a thorough going professional with no discernable style who was able to get the job done.

If that sounds like I'm being critical



Richard Fleischer, director

of him, nothing could be further from the truth. While the auteur theory of filmmaking is a valid one, I am one critic who has nothing but respect and admiration for the journeyman professionals like Fleischer, John Sturges, and Don Siegel who started in the old studio system, knew how to manage actors and technicians, left it all behind when they went home, and then came back the next day and started all over again.

While I'm quite sure that the annals of film history could easily do without such films as *Mandingo*, *Conan the Destroyer*, *Amityville 3-D*, and especially Neil Diamond's 1980 remake of *The Jazz Singer*, Richard Fleischer made these films better than they had any right to be. When he inherited a project, he treated it as if it were his from the very beginning. All of these movies are solid, well made films. Unfortunately that approach often made the lousy scripts most of them had even



BY CHIP KAUFMANN

more apparent. Fleischer didn't care. He'd finish up a project and then cheerfully move on. This attitude kept him steadily employed for over 40 years

An overview of the 46 films he made (or inherited) from 1948-1989 show a special affinity for the crime and science-fiction genres. Titles such as *20,000 Leagues under the Sea*, *Violent Saturday*, *Compulsion*, *The Boston Strangler*, *Fantastic Voyage*, *The New Centurions*, and *Soylent Green* (see DVD pick on page 26) bear this out and are classics of their kind that can be enjoyed over and over again. Noteworthy films outside of those genres include *The Girl in the Red Velvet Swing*, *The Vikings*, *Barrabas*, *Doctor Dolittle* (the Rex Harrison one), and *Tora!, Tora!, Tora!*

Not a bad legacy for a man who was content to let the chips fall where they may and who was always ready for the next hand he was dealt.

Julie & Julia

Short Take: A most delightful and delicious story of two women saved by food – Julia Child and Julie Powell.

REEL TAKE: *Julie & Julia* is not a great cinematic feat, but it is a perfectly delightful way to while away a couple of hours. I took an 82 year old friend with me, who couldn't remember the last time she had gone to the movies, and both of us thoroughly enjoyed this tasty afternoon matinee. To that end so did the whole audience – there was a lively round of applause at the end, peppered with Julia Child-like squeals of, "Wasn't that just wonderful!"

Julie & Julia tells the intertwining stories of two women – Julia Child as she moves to Paris in 1949 with her beloved husband Paul and begins her discovery and mastery of French cooking, and Julie Powell is an aspiring writer in 2002 stuck in a post-9/11 bureaucratic job.

The contrast of their two worlds is striking. Julia's world is utterly charming in that oh so 1950's Paris pretty kind of way. She delights in every bit of their life and



Stanley Tucci and Meryl Streep enjoy life as Paul and Julia Child in "Julie & Julia."

with good reason. Julie, on the other hand, lives in shabby apartment above a pizza parlor in Queens with her husband, is verbally abused daily at her job and (facing her 30th birthday) feels like an aimless failure who's about

to turn 30. Her one solace aside from her husband is cooking.

In need of a purposeful project, Julie turns to Julia Child's first cookbook, "Mastering the Art of French Cooking" for inspiration. She decides to give herself one year to cook all 564 recipes in the cookbook and blog about the experience. From there the story jumps symbiotically between the two women's lives – Julia inspired by Paris and food and Julie inspired by Julia, and their culinary adventures begin.

Prior to seeing the film I was a little worried that the presence of Nora Ephron at the helm [as director and screenwriter] would result in a somewhat schlocky, two-dimensional telling of the story, but instead

her light touch works well here and she lets the charm of the tale reveal itself naturally. It also helps that she cast Meryl Streep and Stanley Tucci instead of Ephron company regulars Meg Ryan and Tom Hanks.

Meryl Streep captures Julia's famous bellowing, near operatic voice and her lumbering stature perfectly without making it a caricature. Amy Adams' Julie on the hand was rather whiny and self absorbed, but then again that was part of her character.

Two interesting items of note are that the characters are all genuinely likeable and Paul and Julia's relationship is absolutely wonderful. It made me realize how seldom we see a truly happy marriage on the silver screen. For those of us raised [pre- Food Network] to think of Julia as the gold standard of cooking, the story will hold particular appeal. *Julie and Julia* can be summed up in two words, "Bon appetit!"

Rated PG-13 for brief strong language and some sensuality.

Review by Michelle Keenan

Ponyo

Short Take: Another animated work of art from director Hayao Miyazaki.

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movie reviews

'Movies' continued from page 25

REEL TAKE: There is just something about hand drawn animation that generates an emotional response in me that current CGI features haven't been able to do. Movies like *Up* and *Wall-E* have emotional resonance but lack the childlike sense of awe and wonder that is so readily available in *Ponyo*.

The movie was a number of years in the making (*Howl's Moving Castle* was in 2004) as hand drawn animation even with the assistance of computers still takes time. Like the Disney animated classics of old, Miyazaki's films have their own distinct look and from the opening frames, it's like having an old friend come back to visit you.

The story is a variation on Hans Christian Andersen's *The Little Mermaid*, only set in the modern world. Ponyo is the goldfish daughter of Fujimoto, an underwater sea



Cate Blanchett provides the voice of the sea fairy in "Ponyo."

being whose job is to keep nature in balance which is becoming increasingly difficult thanks to pollution. Being naturally curious, she sees a young boy playing on the shore and becomes

interested in him. After escaping her father's underwater ship and being rescued by the boy Sosuke, she longs to become human.

Sosuke lives with his parents in a house on top of a cliff (the full Japanese title is *Ponyo on the Cliff by the Sea*). His father is captain of a freighter and his mother works at a Senior Citizens Center. Once Ponyo is rescued and spends time with Sosuke, the harmony of nature is thrown out of balance and the continued existence of Earth is threatened unless she returns.

Enter Ponyo's mother, the sea fairy Guranmamare who waits to see if Sosuke is worthy and if Ponyo would be willing to forgo the magic powers that are her birthright. The animation of Guranmamare is one of the highlights of the film and having Cate Blanchett voice the English version certainly doesn't hurt. Disney has chosen a number of other ideal voices for their version including Tina Fey (Mother), Liam Neeson (Fujimoto), Frankie Jonas (Sosuke), and Noah Cyrus as Ponyo.

I attended a Monday matinee and by the time the film started and even afterwards, people kept coming in until the theater was almost full. Parents with their children, young people in their 20s, and even older people made up the audience. Nobody left until the end and everybody left happy proving that you're never too old or too young for fairy tales especially old-fashioned hand drawn animated ones.

Rated G for all audiences.

Review by Chip Kaufmann

Tetro 1/2

Short Take: Francis Ford Coppola's latest offering is a remarkably self-conscious and unbelievably pretentious arthouse bore.



REEL TAKE: *Tetro* is the kind of movie that a once highly regarded filmmaker makes in order to show the critics that he still has it. There are stylistic touches galore such as gorgeous black and white photography, deliberate references to other celebrated filmmakers (Fellini, Bergman, Antonioni, even Coppola himself), and most significant of all, absolutely no commercial potential whatsoever.

The story, which is credited to Coppola and contains a lot of autobiographical material, concerns a young man's search for his older brother, a writer who had disappeared several years earlier. After tracking him down in Argentina, he moves in with him only to discover that things aren't what they seem.

Tetro is the name the older brother (Vincent Gallo) has adopted in order to cut all ties with his family. He and his companion (Maribel Verdu) live in a small apartment in Buenos Aires and he is not pleased to see his younger brother Bennie (Alden Ehrenreich who looks so much like Leonardo DiCaprio that it has to be deliberate) show up on his doorstep. What is meant to be a short visit becomes, thanks to an accident, a voyage of self discovery which leads to a surprising but not wholly unexpected conclusion.

The movie is deliberately overheated in an operatic sort of way with emotions and reactions that are larger than life. *Tetro*'s mother is even an opera singer while the father is a celebrated conductor (just as Coppola's father Carmine is in real life). Deliberate is the ideal word for describing *Tetro* and for me that was its greatest failing. Everything about it seems so calculated and artificial that by the time it was over I just couldn't wait to get out of the theatre.

It's not a total fiasco. Coppola is too talented a filmmaker for that. There are some good performances especially from Klaus Maria Brandauer as the father/uncle/conductor and Maribel Verdu as the lover while the music score by Osvaldo Golijov recalls Wagner and Astor Piazzola. The cinematography of Mihai Malaimare Jr utilizes the latest digital techniques to make the film look like the European New Wave offerings of the early 1960s. While definitely not a mainstream film, it tries too hard not to be and that is its biggest problem.

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Chip Kaufmann's Pick:
"Soylent Green"

September DVD Picks

Michelle Keenan's Pick:
"Portrait of Jennie"

Soylent Green (1973)

Having done a feature article on director Richard Fleischer this month, I decided to make my DVD pick his 1973 sci-fi thriller *Soylent Green*. It is one of those movies that people my age (57) remember seeing when it first came out and that younger people have heard about even if they haven't seen it.

The setting is the year 2022. The Earth is overcrowded and polluted, the victim of global warming, corporate greed and political corruption. Charlton Heston (in the last of his 3 iconic sci-fi roles) plays Thorn, a NYC policeman who tries to keep the peace while trying to survive in a city that resembles Hell. Women (the lucky ones) are regarded as pieces of furniture that come with the few luxury apartments that are only for the privileged few.

The murder of a corporate executive leads to an investigation and then a cover up to keep from having an ugly secret revealed. Aiding Thorn in his attempt to uncover the truth is Sol Roth (Edward G. Robinson), an elderly man known as a book because only the elderly can read in this future society. It was Robinson's final screen role and he's the heart and soul of the picture.

The movie's key scene involves Heston and Robinson who has decided to "go home" a euphemism for legalized euthanasia. How it is done and what Heston discovers during it moved audiences in 1973 and it still does today.



In addition to Heston and Robinson, *Soylent Green* features a strong supporting cast including Chuck Connors, Leigh Taylor-Young, Brock Peters and Joseph Cotton. The final line of the film has passed into cinematic lore but if you don't know it, I won't tell you here. You'll have to rent it or buy a used copy as it isn't currently available.

Portrait of Jennie (1948)

I'd planned on recommending Robert Mitchum classic *Night of the Hunter* this month, but after seeing the oh-so disappointing *Time Traveler's Wife*, I decided to recommend another time traveling romance of sorts *Portrait of Jennie*. I hadn't seen this movie in many years but thought maybe it would be a good DVD pick for the month. Shortly thereafter, as if to affirm the thought, I turned on Turner Classic Movies and *Portrait of Jennie* had just started. I was

immediately sucked in, just like I was all those years ago.

It's 1934 Depression-era New York. Joseph Cotton plays Eben Adams in a talented artist who has yet to reach his potential. One day in the Central Park he meets Jennie Appleton, a young girl who fascinates him and inspires him. While she references things from long ago and dresses in outmoded styles, he doesn't really make much of it. He sketches her from memory and his manager (a lovely performance by Ethel Barrymore) sees the long needed spark which will make him an important artist. Meanwhile Eben hopes that he will see Jennie again and they do, only with each visit Jenny gets older. It's as if Jennie transcends time, but as they both try to understand what's happening, they realize it is their love that transcends time.

As Jennie becomes an adult she is sometimes winsome and ever more mysterious. Eben meanwhile is entranced and grows more and more obsessed with her. He works feverishly on her portrait (the film is in black and white but the portrait is shown in Technicolor). There is ethereal, haunting quality to the story and it is also reflected in the production. The cinematography is wonderfully atmospheric and ahead of its time, as seen in the color tinted climatic storm sequences. I don't want to tell you anything more other than *Portrait of Jennie* is worth a couple hours of your time.

movie reviews

'Movies' continued from page 26

This film is not rated as it was not submitted for MPAA approval.

Review by Chip Kaufmann

The Time Traveler's Wife

Short Take: The popular novel of the same name gets a big screen adaptation that was better left on Oprah's Book Club list.



Isn't this romantic? Eric Bana and Rachel McAdams star in "The Time Traveler's Wife."

REEL TAKE: I took a devotee of the novel with me to see *The Time Traveler's Wife*. Of the two of us I expected it was she who might be more disappointed with the movie. On the contrary, because she could recall the emotional depth of the book, she was able to infuse her viewing of the movie with emotion, while I was left stupefied by the film's lack thereof. What does it tell you when a sci-fi alien flick (see Chip Kaufmann's review of *District 9*), which opened on the same weekend as TTTW, stirs the heartstrings more than a movie whose sole purpose is to do so.

The premise is far fetched but interesting. As young boy Henry DeTamble discovers he has uncontrollable time traveling abilities just as he and his mother are about to be struck head on by a truck on snowy night at Christmastime. His mother of course dies. From there he leads a rough life, never knowing when he'll time travel next.

On one such trip, a now grown up Henry (Eric Bana) lands (always naked by the way) in a thicket at the edge of a meadow. He meets a little girl there (yes, a little creepy by today's sensibilities). After making himself decent by way of a borrowed blanket, they strike up a friendship and he continues to visit her over the years (she always leaving clothes out for him just in case). Eventually they meet in real time.

Ironically a now grown up Clare (Rachel McAdams) knows him, but he doesn't know her because it was an older version of himself that always went to visit her. His older self has told her what to say to his younger self when she meets him. They fall in love, get married (although it's his older self that makes it to that one too), try to share a normal life together – as normal as you can when your husband constantly disappears leaving only a heap of clothes on the

TEEN REVIEW by Sierra Bicking

500 Days of Summer

College beckons, so this will be my last teen movie review. Somehow it seems fitting that the movie I've chosen is as eccentric and unpredictable as the future.

500 Days of Summer examines the relationship between an eccentric young woman named Summer (Zoëy Deschanel), who doesn't believe in love, and an earnestly romantic young man named Tom (Joseph Gordon-Levitt) who falls madly in love with her. (...This can't be good...) Warning that this is not a love story, the film goes on to depict their relationship over the course of 500 days.

It doesn't take long to realize that this is not your normal American movie where boy meets girl, girl is hard to get,

eventually they fall in love, and BAM!—they marry and live happily

ever after. Instead, this film depicts a different and perhaps more realistic scenario where "boy meets girl, boy falls in love, and girl doesn't." Tom can't help but fall in love with Summer, even though she says right up front that she doesn't want a serious relationship. Blinded by love, he agrees to keep things casual but then keeps trying to change her mind. Here is where things start to get interesting. On



Joseph Gordon-Levitt and Zoëy Deschanel star in "500 Days of Summer."

500 Days of Summer

one hand, Summer appears to send mixed messages, but on the other, Tom is breaking the rules, and the audience quietly begins to take sides.

500 Days of Summer is a thought provoking movie with an unpredictable ending that will make for some lively discussion on the car ride home. Go to see it with someone you'd like to get to know better – but beware, how you think the movie will – or should – end will tell a lot about you.

Rated PG-13 for sexual material and language.

Sierra Bicking is an arte aficionado extraordinaire.



SIERRA BICKING, OUR TEEN REVIEWER, IS MOVIN' ON UP

BY MICHELLE KEENAN

This month we bid farewell to our teen reviewer Sierra Bicking. Chip and I have been very impressed by our young colleague. Sierra is poised, creative, insightful and funny. Now she's all grown up and off to college. We wanted to thank her for everything she's done and bid her a fitting farewell. Please see her final 'Teen Review' for *500 Days of Summer* above. We hope you'll join us in wishing her well.

We also thought you might enjoy learning a little bit more about her as well as her hopes for her generation's contributions to the film industry.

Sierra started reviewing movies for *Rapid River* when she was 15 years old. Former film editor Marcianne Miller recruited the young scribe and she's been with us ever since.

She says that her reviews have changed over the years, "I've learned to be more fair-minded, realizing that a lot of people may like movies that I don't

like for reasons I haven't even thought of. Now I try to view films from all different perspectives, and this has made me a more open-minded person in general."

I try to view films from all different perspectives...

Sierra, a budding filmmaker in her own right, has hopes for her generation's contribution to film, "So many films now seem to be directed towards the obnoxious and the immature. I sincerely hope there will be more films with deep thought involved and fewer cheap sex jokes. I'm hoping that my generation will inspire the film industry to come out with more interesting films.

She says that she has sincerely enjoyed reviewing movies and working with everyone at *Rapid River*, "Having done it for so long has taught me to think more deeply about the movies I see, rather than

just viewing them as entertainment. When I first started, I didn't know what to think and didn't really have a considered opinion. Now when I see a film, even if I'm not reviewing it, I experience it on many different levels—not just as entertainment, and this makes for a much richer movie-going experience.

Sierra will be attending UNCA. "I have no idea what I am going to do in the future. I guess I will follow wherever life leads me. Who really knows what the future holds? I'm trying to live by the phrase, 'live life to the fullest.' That's my ultimate goal in life: to live it up and enjoy it through and through, and then give something back to society."

We hope she knows how much she's already given back to *Rapid River* and *Reel Takes*. Please join us in wishing Sierra all the best. We know the future holds great things for her.

floor. Add to it a daughter who shares her father's genetic anomaly and it's quite a tale.

So with all this to work with, why doesn't it work? For starters it's not for lack of trying, but Eric Bana and Rachel McAdams have zero chemistry. For such an unusual premise the story is cliché, rote and predictable. With the exception of the scenes between Henry and the little girl that plays his daughter, the movie is strangely devoid of any authentic emotion; the story didn't so much as raise a flutter in my heart

or tweak even a drop of moisture from a tear duct. I blame director Robert Schwentke and screenwriter Bruce Joel Rubin for an utterly lackluster film. My friend said she thought they did a pretty good job adapting the screenplay considering the time traveling sequences were so complicated in the book. I retorted, "Well ok, but if you don't imbue a sweeping romance with romance, what's the point?"

I'm sure hopeless romantics and fans of *The Notebook* (Rachel McAdams' most

popular movie to date) will flock to *The Time Traveler's Wife*. My advice is stay home and rent *The Notebook* for the umpteenth time. Or, if you feel like broadening your horizons, rent another time traveling romance, *Portrait of Jennie* (see my DVD pick on page 26).

Rated PG-13 for thematic elements, brief disturbing images, nudity and sexuality.

Review by Michelle Keenan

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Andie MacDowell Brings Awareness about Sexual Violence

"I am overwhelmed by the magnitude of the problem and feel obligated to do something," said Asheville resident and actress Andie MacDowell.

Women and girls suffer rape and mutilation everyday in the African Democratic Republic of Congo. Increasing awareness about these sexual violence atrocities is MacDowell's goal. She will host three public screenings of Lisa F. Jackson's documentary, "The Greatest Silence: Rape in the Congo," at the Fine Arts Theater in downtown Asheville.

For eight dollars, movie-goers will see heart-wrenching interviews with victims of sexual violence, plus comments from some of the men committing these crimes.



Andie MacDowell will host three public screenings of "The Greatest Silence: Rape in the Congo."

BY CHERRY HART

"John Prendergast (co-founder of the Enough Project) told me about the film at an event in Los Angeles," MacDowell said. "After I watched it," she continued, "I knew I had information I could not ignore." On the suggestion of Prendergast, she began showing the documentary to small groups in her home.

"The greatest gathering was the nurses," she added.

From this, the idea evolved to have public screenings in order to inform more members of the community.

Filmmaker Jackson, a victim of gang rape herself, sought to shed light on the rape, torture, and enslavement of hundreds of thousands of Congolese women and girls, who are then shunned by their husbands and entire villages. "The Greatest Silence" won a Special Jury Award for Documentaries at the 2008 Sundance Film Festival. The film also received two 2009 News & Documentary Emmy nominations. The winners will be announced in New York on September 21.

MacDowell will make introductory and post-screening comments for all showings. Mayor Terry Bellamy will attend the September 24 screening as MacDowell's special guest. Prendergast will speak at the September 24 event and provide contact information for those interested in using their voices to affect changes in America's consumption of conflict minerals. "I want to do work that makes a difference," MacDowell said. "I know this will have a ripple effect and increase awareness."



The screenings will take place Thursday, September 24 at 7 p.m., Saturday, September 26 at 1 p.m., and Sunday, September 27 at 1 p.m. Advance ticket sales will begin on September

17 at the Fine Arts Theatre box office from 12:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Proceeds will be donated to the local organization Our Voice, Inc., which offers assistance to area victims of rape. MacDowell wants to acknowledge the common brutality of rape regardless of global location by benefiting Our Voice.

Cherry Hart is a local writer and the organizer of Andie MacDowell's Congo Awareness Campaign in Asheville. Contact Cherry at cherryos@bellsouth.net.

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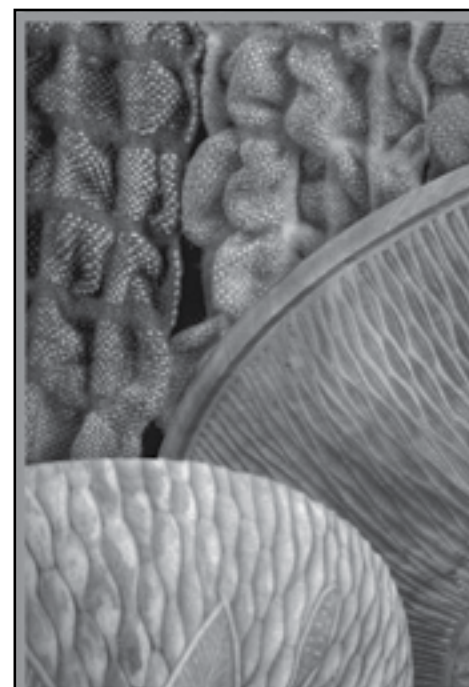
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Insight Meditation

Bedrock for Buddhist psychology is the Insight, or *Vipassana*, tradition of meditation. Whether it is the Zen, Tibetan or Southeast Asian variant, this tradition teaches insight into the true nature of reality and the workings of the mind, hence, its name.

Another term for this form of meditation practice is Mindfulness, because of its emphasis on being mindful at increasingly subtle levels as to what is occurring around us and within us.

The centerpiece of this tradition is sitting meditation, with its emphasis on the dignified, relaxed and alert posture seen in classical Buddhist statues and paintings. It is the fundamental practice ground that leads to insights concerning calming and focusing the mind called *Samatha* practice, or single-pointed concentration. While many meditators believe this to be the extent of meditation, it is really only the necessary beginning point for the ultimate realization of Buddhist meditation - insight into the workings of the mind, the nature of reality, and who we are at our deepest level.

Through sitting meditation, we begin to awaken out of the semi-sleep we are accustomed to as our ongoing experience of life. This occurs when in the stillness of our sitting in *samatha*, our unexamined ways of thinking, doing and being stop. This stopping opens us into an awareness that witnesses the pull of these habits, but does not get caught in them. The *Vipassana* practice only truly comes alive, however, when it can be brought out of the sitting and into our active everyday lives.

The Tibetan term for *Samatha* is "Peaceful Abiding", and it is when we sit, walk, work, play, interact and relate from peaceful abiding that an entirely new level of awakened living opens. With it, we develop a calm skillful presence and deepened capacity for insight into the workings of our mind, as well as human interactions.

With the first level of insight, we notice how incessant the activity of the mind is. Most of us have a dim awareness of how constant the activity of the mind is, but when we deliberately sit with the goal of calming and quieting the mind, the tenacity of mental activity can be startling and discouraging. As we develop skill with *Samatha* practice, we learn that through focusing relaxed, alert awareness onto a single experience, typically into the sensations of our breathing, we gain the insight that we can quiet the mind.

This is particularly true when the breath focus is supported by our sitting

technique, and sometimes with a meditation recitation, or a *mantra* - a word or sound that corrals the mind's discursiveness and is meant to evoke our natural unity with life.

As we sit, further insight opens into the realization of gaps in the thought stream that can be entered with awareness and expanded to discover what is beneath the mind's activity. There, opening into the inherent stillness that surrounds and contains the activity of each moment, both mentally and in the world, we begin to glimpse new truths about who we are. With this discovery of stillness, a remarkable world of expansive and subtle possibilities opens.

"Breathing in, I am aware that I am breathing in, and breathing out, I am aware that I am breathing out," teaches the Vietnamese Zen Master, Thich Nhat

Hanh, in one of his meditation recitations. "Breathing in, I calm my mind. Breathing out, I relax my body." He continues. "This moment is a perfect moment. This

moment is my refuge". We find that while breathing is an excellent focus for developing concentration, it also brings its legendary capacity for calming us as well. Further, it opens into something mystically peaceful and deeply personally healing.

Focusing calmly, contacting the moment through the senses, not thinking about it or evaluating it, a person becomes one with the world in this moment, an experience called *samadhi*. We are no longer distanced or at odds with what is occurring - whatever is occurring - seemingly good or bad. The alert focus of *samatha* now opens to embrace all within the field of perception. This is true Mindfulness.

Miraculously, in this state, the moment can be seen for what it is, as is our personal perspective within the moment. Problems, even disaster, seem to dissolve as we experience that the moment, just as it is, held in expansive awareness, is always manageable. We begin to have insight into how it is the adding of our personal story, with its perspective of anxiety, fear, anger, despair or frustration, into the moment, that is causing us so much distress.

Story also implies and carries with it the factor of time superimposed on the moment. We realize that rehashing the past

and anxiety about the future mark much of our mental landscape. By realizing the awareness that exists as timeless witnessing stillness, and watching thoughts interrupt the stillness, we learn about the nature of the constant forming and passing of thoughts.

We learn that thoughts (and the emotions that resonate from thoughts) do not have the solidity and validity we tend to give them, and that thinking is frequently out of place in time.

It tends to be past or future-oriented, or when of the present moment, very often in judgment, creating the experience of separation.

We can see our minds creating the drama of "I am here, looking at and judging that phenomenon over there," whether the phenomenon is a circumstance, an object or another person. We also see how we compulsively are reconstructing, moment-to-moment, a structure of thoughts we believe to be who we are, relating to the world out there according to a script emerging out of our past, then projected into the future. The present moment, where life is actually lived, is being paid only enough attention to support the theme of our story. This is not real life, nor is it who we really are.

We discover that this moment, calmly focused upon with deepening sensory subtlety, experienced in pure awareness, is free of all that. Further, a much-ignored dimension of mind in Western culture, often referred to as intuition, is being activated. This contains the knowing and experiencing of connection, of belonging within the unfolding of the moment. It is the source of insight, wisdom and spiritual experience, and is the refuge being referred to by Thich Nhat Hanh, not, as some might see implied, a passive withdrawal. Life is not to be escaped, but to be engaged fully with a peaceful and effective mind certain of the interconnectedness of self within all of life. This is why this form of meditation practice is also associated with a tradition known as "Engaged Buddhism." It requires we express ourselves as connected in a world that is experienced as all interconnected.

By watching the workings of the mind, insight is achieved as to how the thinking mind is the instrument of the ego, that dimension of mind that experiences the world as abstracted separate objects, with our sense of self likewise experienced as a separate object, always in contention with the other separate objects of the world. Insight is gained as to how ego is the source of all our insecurity, and that this insecurity is fundamentally about whether we are enough and

have enough. We begin to see how we react emotionally to whether what the ego wants is being gained or not, and then how this drives more neurotic thinking, emotional response and dysfunctional behavior.

Within quiet mind, achieved in *samatha* practice, insight (*Vipassana*) can be gained as to the existence of a deeper, calmer, wiser, more authentic and intuitive dimension of Self beneath and surrounding the thought stream. We experience being an inseparable expression of a unified consciousness or energy that is Life, where nothing more is needed (*Samadhi*). We are complete just as we are. We gain insight that who we are is not contained in the thought stream, but rather, we are the awareness within which the thoughts and emotions arise and pass. AND... we learn that we also have this life as an individual in society that needs to be managed with skillful application of the tools of thought and interpersonal interaction.

We realize that thoughts are tools to represent and engage the world of form. We have thoughts, like we have hands. The important question is whether we are being skillful with the tool of thought, or, as most of us are, very, very sloppy in a way that creates very, very sloppy emotions and results. Thoughts are not who we are. But how we use them tells a great deal about who we think we are, and what we think the world is about.

There is a Zen teaching that asks, "Are you aware of your thoughts and emotions? If so, who is it that is aware?" This teaching, when understood, can help shift us from identification with our thoughts and emotions to identification with the awareness that experiences them. And it is this shift in perspective and insight that can liberate us from being caught in the anxiety and unhappiness that plague us.

It can restore a sense of placement and belonging in the world. With the support and guidance of a masterful teacher, this practice can truly help heal the confusion and hurt that weighs down our lives. Breathing in and breathing out, know that you are alive, aware and well. Know that all you need is that which supports the basic experience of Life. This insight is the base of who you are. Everything else is manageable and optional.



Bill Walz is a UNCA adjunct faculty member and a private-practice teacher of individual 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, personal growth and healing instruction, or phone consultations at (828) 258-3241, or e-mail at healing@billwalz.com. Visit www.billwalz.com.

book reviews

...in which the Reviewer Reads only Fiction

I'm not much of a fiction reader, as a general rule. It's a shame, really, because I work in a bookstore and one of the perks is a near-endless supply of advance reader's copies of new books. And an awful lot of those are fiction. So after a winter and spring of reading mostly non-fiction, I found myself drawn to some interesting new fiction titles.

Reading for pleasure. I highly recommend it.

"The Physick Book of Deliverance Dane" by Katherine Howe has gotten a lot of industry buzz and is enjoying brisk sales nationwide. I'm always a bit dubious about books about witches and also books about colonial-era Salem, but it is the summer of fiction and, well, there it was, with all that promo and a neat website. The book has two story lines — one in 1991 and the other in witch-ridden Salem in the late 17th century.

The two storylines weave together to give us a tale of a Harvard grad student and the twist that there really were practicing witches in early America. (No surprise there for anyone who has an interest in vernacular religion and traditional healing modalities. Or Thomas Morton and the story of Merrymount.) A good, if uneven, read with a nice mother-daughter theme that traverses both time periods. But if you can't abide reading dialect, avoid this book.

Alice Hoffman is one of my favorite and



least favorite writers. Her use of magic realism is either enchanting or annoying, depending on the book. In the case of **"The Story Sisters"**, I forgave her some of the unevenness in the writing and the sometimes predictable plot maneuvers because I fell hard for the idea of three sisters who create a language and choose to live in the same attic room, instead of the "small separate bedrooms on the first floor".

Sometimes I was unsure if it was magic or demonic possession or simple puberty that was affecting the eldest sister. And that was alright. Hoffman has a gift for making the ordinary world magical and vice versa. That's why I will always read her.

The next two aren't released yet, so you'll have to hold yourself in patience. Both are worth it, but in different ways.

"The Book of Illumination: a Novel from the Ghost Files" is by Mary Ann Winkowski and Maureen Foley. Winkowski is a paranormal investigator and consultant for "The Ghost Whisperer"

and Foley is a film director and writer. Anza O'Malley is a single mom who has the ability to see and speak with discarnate spirits, er, I mean, ghosts. And they help her as she saves her friend Natalie's professional bacon

by locating a lost and extremely rare illuminated manuscript.

The book reads like a TV script — light, entertaining, characters that are easy to understand and like. Normally, that would be my way of damning this book with faint praise but in this case all those attributes make for a bright little summer read. It won't be released, though, until October. No doubt to take advantage of that whole ghosts/Hallowe'en thing.

Tracy Chevalier has a string of well-received novels to her credit, including "Girl with a Pearl Earring" and "Virgin Blue". Her next one is slated out in January and is called **"Remarkable Creatures"**. Written in alternating chapters, it's the story of two women, fossil-hunters named Mary Anning and Elizabeth Philpot. Historical, both of them, and the novel is peopled with geologists and scientists of the 19th century.

Chevalier has taken a bit of artistic license in telling the story but we come away from the book with a sense of who these women were and how the era in which they lived affected their work and their lives.

The place is Lyme Regis during the early part of the 19th century and Chevalier writes beautifully of the place and the era. I was grateful for the postscript but am finding it necessary to do more research on both of them. There are so many important contributions in every field that we would never know about unless we dug for the information. Chevalier has given me a reason to dig deeply for this.

As the days shorten, I will no doubt return to my non-fiction habit. But I'm



BY H. BYRON BALLARD

thinking I can manage Bernard Cornwell's story of Agincourt before I succumb to the lure of poetry by Mayan women. After all, one of the first historical mentions of the Ballard name was on a pay stub for Gregory, an archer who rendered some service or other during that campaign.

Read for pleasure. In the speedy-quick world of mobile phones and Tweeting, there is nothing so rebellious as sitting down and reading. You won't burn calories, you won't be a triathlete, you may not bring the world peace.

But then again, you might.

Byron Ballard is a bookseller at indie Accent on Books, a writer and an organic gardener. Her writings have appeared in local and national print and electronic media. She is currently at work on a primer called "Earth Works."

Byron blogs for the Asheville Citizen-Times as the Village Witch (www.citizen-times.com/villagewitch) and lives in historic West End with her husband Joe and daughter Kate.

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Brown bag lunch with Wayne Caldwell, author of "Catalogue."

Friday, September 4, 7 p.m.
Art after Dark. Lorraine Conard will play some fantastic music.

Saturday, September 5, 7 to 10 p.m.
Block Party

Tuesday, September 8, 6 p.m.
Mountain Writers Alive meets the 2nd Tuesday of every month.

Saturday, September 12, 1 p.m.
David Pereda author of "Havana Top Secret" will sign and discuss his book.

Monday September 14, 7 p.m.
Women's book club will meet to discuss "Secret Scripture" by Sebastian Barry. New members are always welcome.

Monday, September 21, 7 p.m.
Nonfiction Book Club will be discussing "Long Walk to Freedom" by Nelson Mandela.

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poetry

Poet Tony Morris

BY TED OLSON

Presently Assistant Professor of English at Armstrong Atlantic State University in Savannah, Georgia, and Managing Editor for the *Southern Poetry Review*, poet Tony Morris was born in western North Carolina. After growing up elsewhere, he returned to western N.C. to work, and he soon began writing poetry; his first poetry collection, a chapbook entitled *Fugue's End*, received the 2004 Mary Belle Campbell Poetry Book Publication Award from the North Carolina Writers' Network.

His second collection, the 2005 book *Back to Cain: Poems* (The Olive Press), was an artistically successful expansion of *Fugue's End* in that the poems from the earlier volume formed the core of the later book. *Back to Cain*, however, featured many memorable new poems by Morris, some of which concerned Appalachian people and places.

While Morris' poetry hasn't yet gained the national audience it deserves — likely because of its primary choice of subject matter: rural Appalachia of yesteryear—small-press literary journals across the South have been publishing his poems for several years. Those editors have rightly recognized that Morris' "regional" poems are in fact universal because they depict a rural community from the viewpoint of a dramatist—that is, the poet presents that community as a stage upon which people act out their lives in ways that transcend the particularities of time and place.

Those editors have also been impressed by the manner with which Morris' poems — though mostly set in the past — possess some of the stylistic markers associated with the finest contemporary poetry: irony, humor, flexible poetic form, and a use of language that ranges from the vernacular to the elite (often juxtaposed in the same poem). Morris' "The Old School, 1937" can serve to illustrate how the poet balances the aforementioned qualities:

The one-room schoolhouse was a white clapboard building with rough pine floors and oak rafters, built for children aged six to sixteen— most not educated beyond the Bible, or bushels.

Then a teacher named Paul Bloom came to town and packed the cold, spare building with words—people, places, ideas far removed from the stony fields of the clay-banked mountain.

In the cold schoolroom he'd thread the names of Homer, Virgil, and Plato through the fabric of the farms and mills,

dressing Wordsworth and Keats in russet yellow, greens that covered the hills and valleys in a tapestry brought to life through his telling.

And in spring before planting, when all the children changed their books for buckets and reins, he taught them

Act 1 of a play called *Hamlet*, gave each a chance to perform, and over the next four years, through each new act, braided the community in a web of pride.

O, that this too too sullied flesh would melt, Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew! moaned the barefoot Hamlet making his slow way to the barn for morning milking,

or the muddled Ophelia, slopping hogs and singing, *How should I your true love know...?* or the red-handed Queen, at the washboard, *Be thou assured, if words be made of breath, And breath of life, I have no life to breathe, What thou hast said to me.*

—These were the scenes of our hamlet that first spring, and four springs after, until the war took Bloom away in '41.

First appearing in *Back to Cain* as one of 23 lyrics in "The Eye is Not Satisfied with Seeing" (a cycle of poems inspired by stories told by two Appalachian quilters), "The Old School, 1937" illuminates the convergence of "high culture" and "folk culture" in a Depression-Era Appalachian community. Neither condescending nor sentimental toward its subject, the poem is objective yet empathetic;

the poet seeks to more fully understand that Appalachian community in order to gain deeper insight into human nature.

Such philosophical inquiry might have generated rather abstract poems, but Morris is a storyteller who chronicles major as well as minor events within that community by providing a wealth of revealing detail. Perceptively representing those events and assessing their meanings, the poet honors the memory of all that community's citizens.

In the above-quoted poem and in the other component poems of "The Eye is Not Satisfied with Seeing" (such as the intriguing poem "Picture Window," which relates the impact of photographers from the Smithsonian Institution upon a rural Appalachian way-of-life), Morris yearns to understand the motivations of all the people associated with that community — the "natives" who form the heart of the community, and the "outsiders" who, because of their "otherness," serve to define it.

Back to Cain features two additional groupings of Morris' poems. The book's opening section, entitled "Premonitions of Fall," contains 17 poems, each of which offers a distinctive interpretation of a given event; some poems respond to various phenomena (such as "The Cabin Poems," in which the poet describes the terrible, cleansing power of fire), and other poems assess events of a more personal nature (such as "Fairies' Wheel," concerning the poet's recognition of the psychic reason for his daughter's wanting to ride a Ferris wheel). In the concluding section, entitled "Return and Retreat," 13 poems explore a range of autobiographical topics; for instance, in "Seedtime," the poet remembers playing Indian as a child with his father, while in several other poems the poet recalls moving to California when still a child.

The final poem in "Return and Retreat" — which renders it the closing poem in *Back to Cain* — is "A Prayer for Salt," which begins:

If I am what I eat, then let me feed
On dove, sparrow, hawk, and heron,
Ride currents through the sky, dive
Into canyons, above green peaks, snatch
My dinner from ponds, streams, rivers
And never look back at what I've missed.

Lest those lines be read out of context as advocacy for carnivorous gluttony, that poem eventually concludes as follows:

Let me season all my senses with the salt
Of all that creeps, crawls, flies, swims
Or runs, and suck the bone down
To the marrow of a life that soon will end.

Those final lines reveal that "A Prayer for Salt" — as well as the book in which that poem appears — is a challenge for one poet and his readers to (quoting that memorable phrase from Thoreau's *Walden*) "live deep and suck out all the marrow of life."



Ted Olson is the author of *Breathing in Darkness: Poems* (Wind Publications, 2006) and *Blue Ridge Folklife* (University Press of Mississippi, 1998). His experiences as a poet and musician are discussed on the following webpages: www.windpub.com/books/breathingindarkness.htm and www.SonicBids.com/TedOlson.

Poets who would like their poetry to be considered for a future column may send their books and manuscripts to Ted Olson, ETSU, Box 70400, Johnson City, TN 37614. Please include your contact information and a SASE with your submissions.



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Saturday, September 5, 7:00 p.m.
Joanna Smith Rakoff author of "A Fortunate Age." A group of Oberlin graduates coming of age in Brooklyn during the late 1990s.

Sunday, September 6, 3:00 p.m.
Robert Morgan and Friends reading from "Southern Appalachian Poetry: An Anthology of Works by 37 Poets."

Friday, September 11, 7:00 p.m.
Josh Weil author of "The New Valley." Three very different men confront love, loss, and their own personal demons.

Saturday, September 12, 2:00 p.m.
Keith Donnelly, author of "Three Days Dead: A Donald Youngblood Mystery." The Second Donald Youngblood Mystery takes readers on a roller coaster ride from the hills of Tennessee to the electric streets of Las Vegas and the vastness of Southern Utah.

Saturday, September 12, 7:00 p.m.
Stuart Albright

Sunday, September 13, 1:00 p.m.
Reif Larsen, "The Selected Works of T.S. Spivet." Debut novel tracing twelve-year-old genius map maker T.S. Spivet's attempts to understand the ways of the world.

Thursday, September 24, 7:00 p.m.
Ed Southern

Friday, September 25, 7:00 p.m.
Pisgah Review Poetry

Saturday, September 26, 7:00 p.m.
Tomie dePaola, "Strega Nona's Harvest," an all-new Strega Nona picture book.

Sunday, September 27, 3:00 p.m.
Carole Boston Weatherford, NY Times best-selling author of "Becoming Billie Holiday."

Friday, October 2, 7:00 p.m.
"The Story of Merge Records." Meet founders Mac McCaughan and Laura Ballance. First-person accounts of their work, their lives, and the culture of making music. Hundreds of personal photos of the bands, along with album cover art, concert posters, and other memorabilia are included.

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Silent Auction
Dinner / Live Auction

Costumes Encouraged but Not Required

For info: wncap.org/ryh



fine art

Haywood Open Studios Tour Celebrating 4th Year

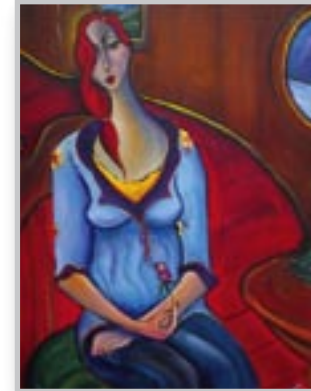
The Haywood Open Studios Tour invites participants to visit studios throughout Haywood County, introducing them to the wide range of artists and craftsmen that work and live in Haywood County.

During the two-day driving tour, artists open their workspaces to the public so visitors can experience the creative process and see the studios where artists fashion beautiful works of art.

The tour weekend begins with an artist's reception from 6 to 9 p.m. on Friday, October 2 with a preview show at Gallery 86, located at 86 North Main Street in Waynesville. The preview show opens Wednesday, September 23 and runs through Saturday, October 17, so visitors can see samples of the tour artists' work. Gallery hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Saturday.

Newcomers to the 2009 tour include potter Cathey Bolton-Moore; painter Elisa Holder; paper maché artist Jean Littlejohn; cartoonist James Lyle; the Mainstreet Artists Co-op; painter Char McNamara; woodworker Steve Schearer; and painter Janice Swanger.

Returning artists include fiber artist Karen Bell; jeweler Diannah Beauregard; metal sculptor Grace Cathey; painter Mari Conneen; woodworker Roy DuVerger; Flying Cat Studio; painter Jo Ridge Kelley; Mud Dabbers Pottery; potter Terance Painter; woodworker Gregory



"Rosebud" painting by
Elise Holder of Earthworks



Narrative tapestry by
Karen Bell



Table by Desmond Suarez
of Sabbath Day Woods

BY KAY MILLER

Paolini; painter Lil Parks; potter Dennis Pitter; potter Sarah Rolland; painter Joyce Schlackohl; woodworker Jere Smith and clay artist Bonnie Smith; potter Kaaren Stoner; woodworker Desmond Suarez; jeweler Kim Thompson; and, students in the Professional Craft Program at Haywood Community College.

Guides containing studio information and maps will be available in mid-September at the Haywood County Arts Council, 86 North Main Street in Waynesville, as well as other locations throughout the county. For map locations and additional information about the tour visit the Arts Council's website at www.haywoodarts.org or call the Haywood County Arts Council office at (828) 452-0593.

The Haywood County Arts Council is funded in part by the North Carolina Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts which believes that a great nation deserves great art.

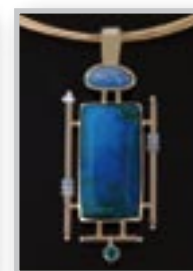
Lead sponsors for the 2009 Haywood Open Studios Tour are Haywood Builders Supply and United

Community Bank. Additional sponsors include Haywood Insurance Services, Laurel Ridge Country Club, Keller Williams-Shirley Kelley; and, Rug and Home of Asheville.



Haywood County Arts Council presents the 4th Annual Haywood Open Studios Tour & Gallery Exhibit. Saturday, October 3, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday, October 4 from noon to 5 p.m.

Gallery exhibit on display from Wednesday, September 23 to Saturday, October 17, 2009. Opening artist reception on Friday, October 2 from 6 to 9 p.m. The exhibit and tour are free to the public.



Left: Tea pot by Dennis Pitter of Pitter the Potter. Right: Necklace by Diannah Beauregard of Studio Thirty Three.

noteworthy

A Celebration of Southern Appalachian Culture

The 29th Annual Heritage Weekend will be held September 19-20 at the Blue Ridge Parkway's Folk Art Center.

This free festival sponsored by the Southern Highland Craft Guild features traditional music, dancing and heritage craft demonstrations.

A highlight of the weekend is the 29th Annual World Gee Haw Whimmy Diddle Competition on Saturday, 2 to 3 p.m. Joe "Colonel Buncombe" Bly will emcee the competition.

Learn from area experts about beekeeping, canning and preserving, coopering, heritage toy making, blacksmithing, natural dyeing, spinning, quilting, whittling, basket weaving and folk pottery.

BY APRIL NANCE



Apple Chill Cloggers Photo by Stewart Stokes

Musical entertainment will include the polished sounds of Buncombe Turnpike as well as Cary Fridley and Down South. The Apple Chill Cloggers will thrill the audience with traditional mountain dancing.

The Blue Ridge Parkway's Folk Art Center is the ideal place for Heritage Weekend with plenty of free parking, access to hiking trails and grassy areas for a picnic. Spend an early autumn weekend in WNC honoring and learning about crafts of yesteryear while enjoying the beauty of the region.



The 29th Annual Heritage Weekend will be held Saturday, September 19 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Sunday, September 20 from 12 noon to 5 p.m.

Folk Art Center, Milepost 382, Blue Ridge Parkway, Asheville, NC. For more information, call (828) 298-7928 or visit www.craftguild.org.

Entertainment Schedule

Saturday, September 19

11 a.m. Blue Eyed Girl

12:30 Southern Crescent Bluegrass

1:30 Apple Chill Cloggers with Cary Fridley and Down South

2:00 29th Annual World Gee Haw Whimmy Diddle Competition

3:00 Apple Chill Cloggers with Cary Fridley and Down South

Sunday, September 20

12:30 Sheri Lynn and Friends

1:30 Level Ground Gospel

2:00 Buncombe Turnpike

3:30 Split Rail

310 Art Features Contemporary Works



"Laguna Verde", oil on canvas by Fleta Monaghan

Paul Bauman's paintings feature local urban and rural landscapes. Alicia Chatham is showing her dream-like symbolic abstract oil on canvas works. Bob Martin's Sumi'e paintings blend a modern aesthetic with an asian feel. Fleta Monaghan, founder of 310 ART, is showing her colorful abstracts.

310 ART is located at Riverview Station, 191 Lyman Street, in the River Arts District of Asheville. For more information call (828) 776-2716 or visit www.riverdistrictartists.com.

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Tickets: \$4 Kids, \$5 Adults

thoreau's garden

The Pot Marigold or Calendula

With such a long season of bloom calendulas have been favored annuals for centuries finding success when grown in small pots, large containers, herb collections, and gardens.

The cheery flowers should be familiar to almost anyone who has ever gar-



Peter examines the blossoms of early-blooming Lenten roses.

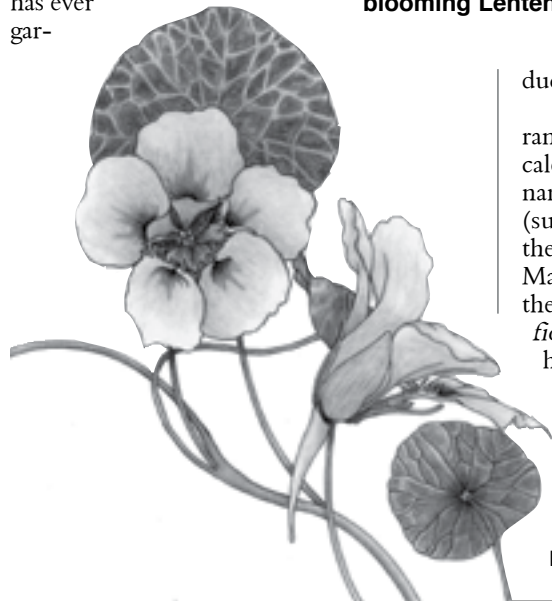
BY PETER LOEWER

dened because of the combination of the pale-green leaves topped by the golden orange flowers.

And they are long-blooming. On my desk, in a small vase, I have a pot marigold blossom that I picked today from a plant set out in the garden last June; imagine an annual in bloom for seven months, still producing magnificent flowers.

Originally natives of the Mediterranean regions and Southern Europe, calendulas salute sunny climes. Common names include golds, ruddes, *Solsequium* (sun-follower), *Solis Sponsa* (bride of the sun), *Oculus Christi* (eye-of-Christ), *Mary Gowles* (from the Virgin Mary and the medieval word for gold), and in Italy, *fiore d'orni mese*. Unlike many flowers of history it was not originally named after the Virgin Mary. Rather marigolds is a miss-reading of the old Anglo-Saxon word *merso-meargealla*, another name for the marsh marigold (*Caltha palustris*). It was not until

Illustration by Peter Loewer



the seventeenth century that the religious association became the vogue.

The genus *Calendula* is taken from the Latin *kalendae*, referring to the first day of the month because the flowers were in bloom on the first day of every month, year round. Another explanation refers to the blossoms opening around 9:00 AM and closing towards sunset, thus they acted as a kind of calendar or clock. The first explanation sounds reasonable while the second, I think, is stretching it just a bit.

Linnaeus noted the ritual opening of the flowers but had them closing about 3:00 in the afternoon. And Shakespeare writes of them in *The Winter's Tale* saying:

"The Mary-budde that goes to bed with' sun, And with him rises weeping."

It should be remember that until recent times these flowers were not usually grown for their charm or beauty but were cultivated almost exclusively for medicinal purposes.

In Macer's *Herbal* he writes that just by looking at marigolds, you will benefit from evil humours leaving your head and, in so doing, strengthening your eyesight.

According to Mrs. M. Grieve's book *A Modern Herbal* (Dover, 1971), some physicians noted that marigold medications must be taken only when the moon is in the Sign of the Virgin and not when Jupiter is in the ascendant, for then the herb loses its virtue. And the gatherer, who must be out of deadly sin, must say three Pater Nosters and three Aves. Following these instructions will also allow the person who wears a flower, will have a vision of anyone who has ever robbed him.

Mrs. Grieve also writes the only the deep orange flowers are of medicinal value, the parts being used are the flowers and the leaves. Leaves should be gathered only in fine weather, in the morning after the sun has evaporated the dew. The ray flowers should be quickly dried in the shade, spread out on sheets of paper (petals not touching), gently surrounded by warm air currents.

Among the many medicinal uses for calendulas, their best features include aiding open wounds to heal and great for the treatment of internal and external ulcers. The petals and leaves have antiseptic properties and improve blood flow to affected areas. As an anti-fungal agent, it can be used to cure athlete's foot, and I can personally attest to this great quality.

A *tincture* (tinctures are alcoholic extractions of the chosen herb) is helpful in healing cold sores. Beauty crèmes containing calendulas are good for acne. An *infusion* is good for digestion and is helpful in relieving the discomforts of colitis.

And if that's not enough to recommend this plant, an *infusion* of the petals can be used as a rinse to lighten and brighten hair.

Plus pot marigolds make great cut flowers, continuing to bloom in water for days on end. And plants are grown in the vegetable garden to help with insect control.

A friend of mine (who wishes to remain anonymous as her complexion is flawless) gave me the following recipe for a great skin cleanser using marigolds.

Take four tablespoons of olive or almond oil, two tablespoons of dried pot marigold flowers, a few drops of violet, orange blossom or rose water. Warm the oil in the top part of a double boiler. Then stir in the dried flowers and continue to heat gently for thirty minutes. Remove from heat, allow the mixture to cool, and stir in the flower water.

Calendula petals are used fresh or dried to give color to soups and custards. Because of their yellow coloring, they are often used as an inexpensive substitute for saffron. Flower heads can also be used to make a salad vinegar. The leaves, although bitter, are sometimes used to flavor soups, broths, and salads.

Finally, there are the magical uses of pot marigolds. By stringing garlands of the flowers over doorjamb, evil is prevented from entering your house (although what happens during the winter is anybody's guess).

Keep a blossom in a vase by your bedside and you will gain protection while asleep and, possibly, good dreams will come true.

If added to your bath water you'll win the respect and admiration of everyone you meet while just staring at the flowers strengthens your eyesight. And if a maiden touches the petals with her bare feet, she will suddenly understand the language of birds.

Pot marigolds love mild to cool weather, adapting to full sun or (especially in the South), light shade. They prefer a moderately fertile soil. Set out seedlings about a foot apart. And to keep calendulas blooming, especially those set out in spring, cut it back by one-third and fertilize in summer. They will continue to flower in a sunny window but with reduced sunlight they will get rather leggy.

Sow the seeds outdoors in early spring or in mild climates in the fall. Or start seeds indoors, beginning about eight weeks before the last spring frost.

Almost every fresh garden year sees the introduction of new cultivars. 'Radio' goes back to the 1930s with petals of a very deep orange; 'Golden Princess' had double golden-yellow flowers and prominent black centers; and 'Art Shades', featuring blooms of cream, peach, and apricot shades.

The only problems pot marigolds seem to have is a penchant for fungal disorders when days are damp and air circulation poor. Aphids, too, find them attractive but are easily dislodged with a stream of water from the garden hose.

Peter Loewer is a well-known writer and botanical artist who has written and illustrated over twenty-five books on natural history over the past thirty years.

1st Annual West Asheville Garden Stroll

The popularity of urban gardening has been expanding recently and West Asheville reflects this abundantly and with a quirky edge. The First Annual West Asheville Garden Stroll, Saturday, September 12, will spotlight the astonishing garden diversity in this urban setting.

The event begins at West Asheville Branch Library at 10:30 a.m. with a ceremony honoring the library's longtime volunteer gardener Tom Jordan. NC Arboretum Horticultural Director Alison Arnold will speak on "The Resurgence of Urban Gardening: Bringing Community, Creativity, and Connection into Our Hearts, Homes, and Lives."

Asheville's zany comedy tour bus, the LaZOOM bus, will be available to transport strollers between neighborhoods. Approximately 15 gardens will be on view across five areas of Greater West Asheville: Vermont/Sulphur Springs, Falconhurst, Brucemont/Louisiana, Burton Street, and East-West Asheville.

Gardens on the tour include community gardens, art gardens, business gar-

BY ANNE HIGGINS

dens, rock gardens, school gardens, and gardens with recycled and permaculture features. Strollers can learn from gardeners' varied experiences through demos, talks, guided tours, question-and-answer sessions, and first-hand viewing. Strollers are also invited to participate in planting a new Haywood Road pocket garden.

Maps of the tour and information about the featured gardens will be available at West Asheville Branch Library on Sept. 12. All featured gardens are within a couple of blocks of Haywood Road in West Asheville.



Garden Stroll, September 12, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. rain or shine. Kickoff ceremony at West Asheville Branch Library, 942 Haywood Rd. at 10:30 a.m. The Stroll is FREE. For more information call (828) 250-4750 or visit www.WestAshevilleGardens.com.

fine art

Award-Winning
Metal Sculptor
Dale Rogers

Award-winning metal sculptor, Dale Rogers, will be at Grovewood Gallery on Saturday, September 26 from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. Dale is a returning, featured artist in this year's Sculpture for the Garden exhibition, that is showing now through December 2009 at Grovewood Gallery.



Dale Rogers
"Bea Girl"



Dale Rogers
"Olive Branch"

steel such as the eye-catching *Bea Girl* and the thought-provoking *Olive Branch*.

Each piece is designed and handcrafted in his studio in Massachusetts. His pieces have a graceful sense of motion, with a more organic, softer feel than is found in much contemporary metal work.



Opening reception, September 26 from 3 to 6 p.m.

This event is open to the public and free of charge. Call the gallery for more information (828) 253-7651 or visit our website at www.grovewood.com. Grovewood Gallery, 111 Grovewood Rd. in Asheville, NC.

Those who dwell among the beauties and mysteries of the earth are never alone or weary of life. ~Rachel Carson

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Sones de México Ensemble • Mamadou Diabate • The Horse Flies • Red Stick Ramblers
Billy Jonas • River Guerguerian Project • JC Brooks & The Uptown Sound • Ol Hooty
Suní Paz • Cary Fridley & Down South • Skinny Legs & All • Special Kids' Village Performers
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what to do guide™

September 4 & 5

Asheville Shakesperience

The Asheville Shakesperience, the resident repertory touring company of The Montford Park Players, returns to the stage of the Hazel Robinson Amphitheatre for an evening of The Best of The Bard.

Directed by Mandy Phillips the Asheville Shakesperience represents some of the best actors from North Carolina's longest running Shakespeare Festival, presenting scenes from 12 of Shakespeare's plays ranging from the comedic to the sublime.

All productions begin at 7:30 p.m. and are free to the public. The Hazel Robinson Amphitheatre is located in the historic Montford District at 1 Gay St., in Asheville. For more information call (828) 254-5146 or visit www.montfordparkplayers.org

Sunday, September 6

The Lexington Avenue Arts and Fun Festival

Arts 2 People is excited to bring you the 8th Annual FREE, Lexington Avenue Arts and Fun Festival (LAAFF)! Join us in the annual end-of-sum-

mer celebration of Asheville's artistic and musical communities. Local art, food, beer, music, street performers, and random acts of creativity from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Lexington Ave. between College Street and the I-240 overpass. For more information visit www.lexfestasheville.com

Sunday, September 6 Chamber Music Concert

There will be a concert of chamber music for string quartet and sting quintet at 3 p.m. at St. Matthias Church in Asheville. The St. Matthias String Quartet will play Haydn's String Quartet, Op. 71 No. 1 in B-flat. The players are: Brent Yingling, first violin; Judy Vlietstra, second violin; Brenda Phetteplace, viola; and Ron Lambe, cello. They will be joined by Day Ann Emory on viola for the Mendelssohn Viola Quintet, Op. 87.

A free-will offering will be taken for the restoration of the beautiful and historic church. St. Matthias' Church is over 100 years old and is on the national historic register. The church is located in Asheville just off South Charlotte Street at Max Street on the hill across from the Asheville Public Works Building (1 Dundee St.).

Saturday, September 12 Classics & Chocolate

The Haywood County Arts Council announces this year's Classics & Chocolate performer, pianist Frank Iogha in concert beginning at 7:30 p.m. at the Performing Arts Center, 250 Pigeon Street in Waynesville, NC. Tickets are \$15 per person with a limited number of FREE student tickets available.

The yearly concert is famous for partnering stellar classical performances with a decadent chocolate reception where concert goers can meet the artist. Tickets may be purchased at Gallery 86, Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 86 North Main Street in Waynesville, or by calling (828) 452-0593.

Sunday, September 13 Organic Fest

Celebrating everything organic. Live entertainment, 80 organic and green vendors, natural health and arts, organic Edutainment. Kids garden parade at 1 p.m. Organic drawings. Battery Park Ave., downtown Asheville. For details call (828) 253-2267, or visit www.organicfest.org.

Meet the Candidates

Monday, September 14

The Asheville Branch-NAACP & League of Women Voters of Asheville/Buncombe County will present the city council candidates and mayoral candidates from 7 to 9 p.m.

This event is being hosted by the YMI Cultural Center, 39 South Market Street, Asheville. It is free and open to the public. parking is available at Mount Zion Church, 47 Eagle Street. For more information about this event, please call Pat Wille, (828) 252-5170.

For more information about the League of Women Voters, contact Sandra Abromitis, (828) 686-8281, abromitis@msn.com or Barbara Panarites at (828) 236-5987, bpnarites2@charter.net

Tuesday, September 15 Earn Extra Income

Become debt free. Attend Asheville interview meeting. Call now (828) 768-5600, or (828) 545-3950.

Copyright 2009 www.financialwellnessforum.com

September 18 & 19 21st Annual Craft Show

Waterfall Crafters will hold their 21st annual craft show and sale in Breward, NC. It will take place indoors, at St. Timothy Methodist Church, located on the corner of Asheville Hwy. and Hospital Dr. The hours are from 10 am to 4 pm.

Juried crafters offer a wide variety of locally-made, quality items for all ages. Lunch, snacks and beverages will be available for your convenience. Any questions, call Lucie at (828) 877-3065.

September 25-27 Cartoonists "Mad" About Asheville

The annual meeting of the Southeast Chapter of the National Cartoonists Society (www.secnscs.com), will be taking place in and around Asheville September 25 through the 27, 2009.

Plans for the weekend include a visit to the Asheville VA Hospital by a number of the cartoonists on Friday, Seminars on Saturday at the Ramada Inn Biltmore West's "Laurel

Room", as well as a silent auction to benefit the Milt Gross Fund and the Mimi Paige Foundation. Saturday's keynote speaker will be famed Mad Magazine artist, Jack Davis. For further information email WorksAsociates@aol.com

Deadline: September 25, 2009 Call for Funniest Home Short Film

The Asheville International Children's Film Festival is looking for the funniest home short film in Western North Carolina. The film needs to be no longer than 3 minutes in length and feature children or pets in a fun, non-harmful way. The funniest movie will be featured in November at the Asheville International Children's Film Festival. Submit film as a QuickTime Movie file to info@aicff.org to be considered.

Saturday, September 26 National Public Lands Day

The Cradle of Forestry celebrates with guided walks in Spanish at 10:30 a.m. and 3 p.m. English at 1:30 p.m. Each walk is followed by an activity focusing on the water cycle and its importance to living things.

The Cradle of Forestry is located on Hwy. 276 in the Pisgah National Forest six miles north of Looking Glass Falls and four miles south of the Blue Ridge Parkway Milepost 412. The Forest Discovery Center has 15 hands-on exhibits, a scavenger hunt, a firefighting helicopter simulator,

historic cabins and antique equipment on two paved trails. For more information call (828) 877-3130 or visit www.cradleofforestry.org

Thursday, October 8 An Evening with John Muir

"Conversations with a Tramp," hosted by the Western North Carolina Alliance at 7 p.m., at the Crest Pavilion in Woodfin. A live, repeat performance of this one-man show by Lee Stetson will be presented by the Jackson-Macon Conservation Alliance October 9 at 7 p.m. at the Highlands Playhouse.

Tickets are \$30 in advance, \$35 at the door, and \$25 for WNCA members. Admission includes a reception and a tour of the Villages at Crest Mountain, Asheville's newest eco-community. The public can reserve a seat or learn more by calling WNCA at (828) 258-8738 or visiting www.wnca.org.

Happy Birthday Rapid River!

Founded in September 1997

Join us
next month
for "Fall Back
Into Art"—
Local Artists,
Galleries,
Organizations
and Events



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. 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.



Animal Moments at the WNC Nature Center

Come by and catch an "Animal Moment" at 11:30 a.m. and 3 p.m. daily at the Western North Carolina Nature Center. Meet Art the barred owl or Nibbles the Groundhog. Learn all about our Nigerian Dwarf Goats.

These interactive, staff-led programs allow visitors a chance to experience an animal enrichment activity as well as ask our educational staff questions. The animals and programs change constantly, but the enrichment activities include watching animals receive things like:

- Ice blocks with fruit or other food frozen inside
- Cardboard tubes with peanut butter stuffed inside
- A corn husk rope for the raccoons
- Closed cardboard boxes that have an animal scent rubbed inside
- Treats inside of a pumpkin or squash for the otter

For more information, please contact Keith Mastin, Education Curator, at (828) 298-5600 ext. 305.

Western North Carolina Nature Center
75 Gashes Creek Road in East Asheville

SEPTEMBER EVENTS ~ ANNOUNCEMENTS ~ CLASSIFIEDS

what to do guide™

Viva España!

Saturday, September 19

With Zuill Bailey and Mary Persin. Opening night is always a special time for the Asheville Symphony. This September, Music Director Daniel Meyer and the ASO begin with a musical based on the anticipation of a toreador as he is about to take the ring for an epic bullfight.

Turina's Bullfighter's Prayer is a dramatic score, inspired by the heritage and passions of old Spain. To cap a festive evening, we will perform some of your favorite moments from Bizet's score to Carmen. Who can forget the sultry Habañera or the wild Danse Bohème? It's opening night, after all. Olé!

For tickets call the Asheville Symphony Orchestra at (828) 254-7046. Discounts available for students. For more details visit ashevillesymphony.org.

The Asheville International Children's Film Festival



November 2-8, 2009

The mission of the festival is to provide children and families with value affirming culturally diverse cinema. Friday, November 6 from 6:30 p.m. 11 p.m., is the opening night Gala which will be held at the DoubleTree Biltmore. This fundraising event benefits Little Pearls and AICFF. Celebrity MC, entertainment, screenings, ors d'oeuvres, and silent auction will be offered. Tickets are \$50 per person.

For more details, movie information, and to purchase tickets, visit www.aicff.org. For information on Little Pearls visit www.littlepearls.org.

FW Front Gallery at Woolworth Walk

For the month of September, 2009 artists Laura Lorcher and Pamela Haddock will be displayed in the F.W. Front Gallery at Woolworth Walk.



**Pottery by
Laura Lorcher**



**"Catawba Falls"
by Pamela Haddock**

Laura Lorcher, potter, has lived and created pottery in North Carolina's Appalachian mountains since 1997. Laura enjoys working on a large and small scale forming both miniature dishes and magnets to elaborate pots and trays. Laura often uses leaves and shells to texture her pieces. All of her pots are food, fridge, microwave, and dishwasher safe.

Pamela Haddock, watercolor artist, paints scenes of nature and buildings local to the mountains of North Carolina. Her style is impressionistic, preferring to paint in a wet and loose manner.

Come see the works of local artists Pam Haddock and Laura Lorcher at the opening reception Friday, September 4 from 5 to 7 p.m.

Woolworth Walk

25 Haywood Street in Asheville, (828) 254-9234
Mon-Thurs. 11-6, Fri. and Sat. 11-7, Sun. 11-5.

Best in Show



by Phil Juliano

Callie & Cats



by Amy Downs

Corgi Tales



by Phil Hawkins

Dragin



by Michael Cole

Flat Rock Wine Shoppe and Back Room

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Every Wednesday – Open Mic, 8:30 p.m.

Every Thursday – Bluegrass, 8:30 p.m.

The Back Room

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

flatrockwineshoppe.com

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Violent Crime Shows Steeper Rise

The Washington Post - September 25, 2007
The FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting Program found robberies surged by 7.2% and homicides rose 1.8 percent from 2005 to 2006. Violent crime overall rose 1.9%, homicides increased more than 10% and robbery was up 12.2%.

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fine art

Speaking of Paperwork...

A Simple Business Plan is of Great Personal Benefit to Artists

BY GREG VINEYARD



Greg Vineyard Photo by BobPazdenPhotography.com

Jot down things you know regarding your goals, yourself and your intentions.

The term "Business Plan" can evoke a wide array of reactions. In the world of the individual artist, some might respond: "This is just a hobby for me," or: "I'm not a real business," or even just flat-out: "Who cares about *that*?"

Some folks do not feel the need to address the topic, and that's fine; others, though, might really want their artistic passion to reap enough financial payback to at least cover expenses, but aren't sure where to start, and may have unintentionally settled on accepting that their situation won't or can't change.

A comprehensive business plan has many components, such as summaries and analyses, and is often geared toward winning investors and customers. Some of the most basic terms we hear are "Mission Statement", "Vision Statement" and "Values". While I interpret "Mission" as an entity's reason for being, "Vision" as over-arching and long-term goals, and a listing of "Values" as how we go about our business with integrity, many sources overlap these areas and offer differing advice on how to tackle them. Writing *anything* is a good start, even one sentence, and it can be helpful to jot down from a personal perspective things we know regarding our goals, ourselves and our intentions at this moment.

I recommend simplicity: myself, I'm a yellow-pad guy. An easy Mission statement could be: "To own a sustainable art business where sales of my valued (insert artwork type here) pays the bills." For Vision: "My creations in hundreds of homes and offices throughout Western North Carolina." Values? Topics like "quality workmanship, on-time delivery and fair prices" come to mind. Additional time-worthy efforts include strategizing how to support what you've just written with actionable items, carefully considering how your work fits within the competitive marketplace, where you'd like to be showing and selling your work and what an ideal advertising plan might look like.

Jotting some planning down on paper is a great way to: 1) feel more organized, 2) reduce economic and informational stress, 3) have some data-gathering started if and when the time comes to develop your plan further, 4) provide some focus regarding your creative output and 5) increase your

artistic fun-factor.

There's a lot of good information out there – the Small Business Administration offers on-line courses that take one through a very thorough business plan set-up. Asheville's own Mountain BizWorks offers real, hands-on tools for entrepreneurs and business owners. April's Hatchfest is a four-day mentoring wonderland for the arts. Plus, every day we have our friends to rely upon for feedback.

Creating a business plan does need time carved-out from the art activities many of us would much rather be doing 24/7. And wouldn't it be ideal if those of us wrestling with sales, taxes, expenses, payables and planning had some help? It turns out many artists DO have help, and it's probably because somewhere along the way they worked on... you guessed it, a Business Plan.

Repeat after me: "I'm an artist, I'm worthy, and I deserve to reap the benefits of my own good planning!"

Greg Vineyard is a visual and ceramic artist in the River Arts District who escaped to Asheville after 20+ years in corporate creative positions focusing on creative direction, design, identity, branding and design project management.

Greg's consulting slogan is "Branding Triage & Creative Wayfinding: Unflinching Analysis of Your Visual and Marketing-Communications Materials", and he can be reached via the web.

Work on display at Constance Williams Studio & Gallery, 12 Riverside Drive in the River Arts District. Hours: 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily. Visit www.riverdistrictartists.com.

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your health

Stretch to Stay Fit

Do you remember those long nights studying for that tough exam? Remember how good it felt to stretch, your arms up over your head, your fingers interlocked? It turns out that stretching is one of the four types of exercises that are essential for a good work out.

Stretching like all other types of exercise helps relax the body and the mind, helps lose weight, helps improve metabolism and helps increase blood flow. But stretching does something the others do not do. Stretching protects. Stretching s-l-o-w-l-y challenges and gently strengthens the connections between the muscle and the joint cartilage where it attaches – the connective tissue.

These connections are vulnerable to small tears when stretched rapidly and can be very painful (imagine the twisted ankle or the plantar fasciitis syndrome). Connective tissue – when damaged – can take a long time to heal (as long as a fracture – 6 weeks). This can be avoided by stretching before you exercise. But how best to do it?

Rule # 1 – Never stretch a cold muscle. Warm up first with a few easy aerobic moves – NOT jumping jacks that ballistically stretch muscles – that get the blood flowing and muscles warmed up.

Rule #2 – Think about the major muscle groups and move to stretch them specifically, especially the muscle groups you will be using in your exercise – hamstrings for football, lower back for golf, shoulder muscles for tennis, etc.

Rule #3 – Don't use static stretches (prolonged holding of muscle in stretch); use dynamic stretches – moving a muscle slowly into the stretched position, to full extension and then slowly return to the relaxed position. If you are thinking yoga moves or tai chi moves, you have the right idea. Specific moves might include: goose-stepping to stretch the hamstrings, knee lifts to stretch the gluteus muscles, and butt-kicks to stretch the quads.

BY MAX HAMMONDS, MD

Rule # 4 – Do not stretch to the point of pain. Stretch to increase the length of the muscle which increases range of motion. Challenge it but don't tear it.

Stretching serves another important purpose not connected to a workout. Stretching muscles can be relaxing – remember the exam?

Sitting at the desk all day or standing in one position for hours on end can tighten up muscles, leading to headaches, backaches and other muscle pains. Try these few simple stretches to relax those muscles and give you a middle-of-the-day pickup – a mini-vacation – that can give you a boost of energy.

From the sitting position at your desk, stand up – without using your hands. Shrug your shoulders – up and around and down – and roll your head around to loosen the shoulders and neck tension.

Extend your arms and your hands and make little circles in the air. Then extend your fingers palm up and gently stretch the fingers down to the floor with the opposite hand. Then extend the fingers with palm down and stretch the fingers up to the ceiling with the opposite hand. This will stretch the hands and forearms (really good for arthritis pain.)

Twist your upper body at the waist to the left and to the right, then give yourself a big bear hug, hands on opposite shoulders and squeeze. Then extend an arm in front of you, grab it at the elbow with the opposite arm, and pull it across your chest. Repeat on the other side. These relax the upper body and shoulder girdle muscles.

While sitting in a chair, extend your legs straight out in front of you. Point your toes at the ceiling five times and relax.

And – oh, yes – studying for that exam. Sit up tall, stretch both arms over your head, fingers interlocked and palms pointed at the ceiling. Look up at the same time.

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