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Guest Editorial

by John Hickenlooper : Mayor, City and County of Denver

Sustainability in the Mile High City

The Mile High City at dusk.
Photo courtesy Denver Metro Convention & Visitors Bureau.

Sustainability is a central value in the Mile High City. By focusing on the interconnectedness of the social, economic, and environmental impacts of our policies and programs, we in Denver seek to ensure that our future generations will enjoy a quality of life characterized by environmental beauty, economic opportunity, and resource abundance.

As an exploration geologist-turned-small businessman, I learned early in my career that the best solutions often balance economic, environmental, and social considerations. As mayor I am excited to convert this principle into systemic action.

Denver's Lower Downtown (LoDo). Photo by Randy Brown, courtesy Denver Metro Convention & Visitors Bureau.

The City of Denver has supported innovative sustainable development strategies for many years and was recognized this year by the national group SustainLane as one of the top 10 sustainable cities nationwide.

Some highlights of Denver's historic and ongoing commitment to sustainability include:

- In the early 1990s, the City of Denver created the first Green Fleets program in the nation by purchasing alternative fuel vehicles. In 2004, we expanded the program with a biodiesel pilot for 60 heavy duty vehicles; and in 2005, we increased our use of biodiesel from one fueling location to four, putting the City on track to utilize about 500,000 gallons of the cleaner-burning fuel this year and to decrease the City's dependence on foreign oil by 4%.

- Denver International Airport realized award-winning success in 2004 by becoming the first major airport in the

country to implement an environmental management system—regularly recycling 19 substances and monitoring environmental performance for continuous improvement.

- Denver is a pioneer in the use of light-emitting diode (LED) traffic signals. With the largest LED traffic signal inventory in the country, we saved nearly $800,000 in energy, material, and labor costs in 2003 alone, and reduced pollutants by an amount equivalent to the effects of planting more than 777 acres of trees or the permanent removal of 371 automobiles from local roads. Our City buildings use LED exit signs and are transitioning to more efficient indoor lighting sources, resulting in lower costs, longer life, better light, and less energy consumption.

- We are developing new green building standards for all City buildings. Experience has shown that a small initial investment in design and materials will reap years of energy cost savings and improved worker productivity. Our forthcoming Justice Center—Denver's largest capital project in nearly a decade—will be built to the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED standard.

- Last fall, the seven-county Denver metro region passed FasTracks—the most ambitious local transit project in our nation's history, with 119 new miles of light- and commuter-rail. Once completed, with a redeveloped Denver Union Station as its multimodal hub, this regional transit system is expected to benefit over half a million riders a day. Regionally, it is estimated that 51 of 57 FasTracks stations have transit-oriented development potential.

- Denver is home to two national models of innovative urban infill development. Our former Lowry Air Force Base and former Stapleton International Airport have been redeveloped into thriving, sustainable communities, with diverse housing stock, vibrant retail opportunities, schools, job centers, recreational amenities, and open space.

Denver is among the nation's big-city leaders for the number and quality of parks.
Photo by Randy Brown, courtesy Denver Metro Convention & Visitors Bureau.

- This summer, we converted our citywide recycling program to a single-stream process, enabling us to expand the number of materials eligible for recycling and increase convenience by eliminating the sorting requirement. Thanks to aggressive marketing of our ReThink Recycling campaign and the active participation our residents, we have already recycled 268 more tons than during the same five-week period in 2004, an 18.5% increase.

It is important to ensure these are not random actions, but part of a larger citywide strategy that benefits all taxpayers. That is why we launched the City's Sustainable Development Initiative this spring, to honor Denver's environmental record and promote sustainability's "triple bottom line" of economic, social, and environmental benefits.

Denver International Airport.
Photo by Chris Carter, courtesy Denver Metro Convention & Visitors Bureau.

Our Sustainable Development Initiative is convening stakeholder groups, catalyzing new projects, and promoting the importance of sustainability. It concentrates on three main areas of activity—water, energy, and land use/transportation—as these basic drivers of economic and environmental health offer opportunities for government innovation and leadership.

The initiative's earliest efforts have focused on water, a precious resource for Colorado residents and businesses. With increasing awareness of a potential regional water crisis, as well as debates statewide on trans-basin diversions, in-stream flows, and a host of other issues, it is clear that the decisions made in the next five years about the region's water are likely to shape the next 50.

It is also clear that, while Denver Water and other municipal utilities are leaders in innovative water management approaches, there is also a role for local government to play. We can utilize best practices for conservation, identify cooperative opportunities with other cities, and advance public awareness.

One preliminary effort in this area has been our "Community Conservation Gardens" project with a youth water corps. Since more than half of Denver Water's treated drinking water is used on private landscapes in the summertime, Denver Parks and Recreation—with help from our Workforce Development Division, Denver Botanic Gardens, and Denver Water—launched a program this past summer to convert four prominent public landscapes to model "water-wise" gardens. Local at-risk youth helped to build and maintain these gardens, while being trained in job skills for the growing green industry.

Redevelopment of Lowry Air Force Base in Denver is both innovative and successful.
Photo courtesy Denver Urban Renewal Authority.

The second project underway is the South Platte Water Quality Initiative. Denver's Departments of Public Works, Environmental Health and Parks and Recreation are developing strategies to reduce

pollution levels in the South Platte River through aggressive intervention measures, monitoring, and public education. In addition to targeting problem storm-water outfalls, our Departments of Parks and Recreation, Environmental Health, and Public Works are coordinating efforts to ensure that ongoing maintenance and new capital projects in parks and other public spaces maximize water quality benefits wherever possible.

In the realm of public education and outreach, we partnered with the Denver Museum of Nature and Science this summer to offer a speaker's series on the best ideas in Western water, featuring regional experts discussing their programs and possible lessons for our area. We are also engaged in a longer-term effort with the Metro Mayors Caucus to develop best management practices for water conservation in the region.

Denver Mayor John Hicklenlooper unveils the "One City, One Denver" reading proejct at DEnver Public Library.
Photo by Marianne Goodland, courtesy Silver & Gold Record.

In November, the City of Denver will co-host the first national conference on peak oil production in nearly a decade. It is my hope, as a former petroleum geologist and as mayor, that this gathering will attract not only scientists interested in the world's oil reserves, but also local and national policy makers and businesspeople who can help us be proactive in addressing the challenges and opportunities presented by potential shifts in our economy related to energy.

Denver's history as an oil industry hub is well known, but we are fast becoming a premier center for alternative fuels. With the National Renewable Energy Lab in nearby Golden, the recent statewide passage of a renewable energy standard, innovative transit agencies like our Regional Transportation District, and many local companies focused on alternative energy sources and related technologies, we already have tremendous local resources on which to capitalize.

As our Sustainable Development Initiative continues to grow, we look forward to working with our local, regional and national partners to ensure that our efforts related to water, energy, transportation, and land use are successful.

There is an old proverb that says, "We have not inherited the world from our forefathers—we have borrowed it from our children." If we in the public, private, and non-profit sectors commit to sustainable practices, we will be proud of the communities that future generations will inherit.

John Hickenlooper is the Mayor of the City and County of Denver, Colorado. In April 2005—less than two years into his first term—TIME Magazine named Mayor Hickenlooper one of the top five "big-city" mayors in America. Hickenlooper's passion for Denver began in 1981 when his career as an exploration geologist brought him to Buckhorn Petroleum, where he worked for five years. After the collapse of the oil industry in the mid-1980s, he spent two years developing the Wynkoop Brewing Company, the first brewpub in the Rocky Mountains. A respected entrepreneur, Hickenlooper was also involved with numerous downtown Denver renovation and development projects and is credited as one of the pioneers that helped revitalize Denver's Lower Downtown (LoDo) historic district. In recognition of his efforts supporting preservation in Denver and downtowns across the country, Hickenlooper received a National Preservation Award from the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1997.

Column: The Literal Landscape

by Simmons B. Buntin, Editor / Publisher, *Terrain.org*

Anonymous Metropolis: A Patchwork Quilt

> *You know I'm*
> *the result of*
> *forces beyond my control*
> *I don't hold it against you*
> *I said*
>
> — A.R. Ammons, from "The Wide Land"

It has been a wonderful—and wonderfully violent—monsoon season in the desert now spreading before me like the colors and texture of a Navajo blanket. Just this evening, there's a subtle volley of lightning in the lurid green clouds above the Santa Catalinas, the shadow of the east's Rincon Mountains shrinking with the rise of the thinly veiled moon. To the northwest—toward the city that spreads its asphalt tendrils from the century-dry Santa Cruz River, toward the city that is Tucson—green gives to brown gives to orange: a blanket of a different type and color altogether.

In this metropolis of Tucson, there is a boulevard that stretches east to west, or west to east. It is not a grand boulevard, though it spans the city's commerce and academies. There are, at the university, tunnels beneath it. There are some houses of history, now converted to professional offices, in the palo verde shadows of thin paseos beside it. There are uncountable retail centers: power centers and drive-thrus, restaurants and supermarkets. And of course there are strip malls upon strip malls.

In one such mall there is an independent bookshop that opened on October 1, 2000. Its goal then was "to be a general interest bookstore with a strong commitment to supporting local writers and the Tucson community at large, as well as to provide a space where 'outside the mainstream' books, ideas, and individuals could flourish."

Five years and 21 days later, Reader's Oasis—at 3400 East Speedway Boulevard—is closing. The owners admit that a sluggish economy and a nationwide downturn in book sales, as well as increasing online and chain store competition, are too much to overcome. This news is like a stifling wool blanket on a Sonoran summer night.

To the surprise and certain delight of acquaintances, I recently removed myself from political life in the Civano community where I live. I turned the keel and rudder of the neighborhood association over to another neighbor. It floats soundly. I stepped back from the jagged discourse with the home developer to the south. The plans are done, beyond saving. I resigned from the consortium of dealers and players that is our regional planning and coordinating committee. It plans and commits just fine without me.

This, I'm discovering, is freedom quite divine. Time for family and friends and writing and the intricacies of the desert—the sphinx moth courting the salvia at dusk, the quick banded gecko snapping spiders from the ledge.

But it didn't take long to draw me in again. Our fledgling farmers market, it seems, was about to close for the summer, and perhaps forever. Certainly not, I cried. A Sunday farmers market can be a model of sustainability, that ever-elusive triangle of economy, environment, and culture. With no one to take the lead, I stepped forward with another neighbor, and together we have steered the new Civano Artisans and Farmers Market down a safer road. Still young and elastic, it's a success nonetheless, and keeps on growing. The market full of produce and regional delicacies and handmade crafts fits like a blanket on a newborn. It's just right for this place.

Among the promises and offers of today's riotous mail, I discovered a credit card bill stamped with a $15 late fee, a notable amount for a total balance under $100. Still, the penalty is something I'm willing to pay, this once, because it offsets the 15% I saved on my first purchase when I signed up for the card in the first place.

More importantly, it helped deliver some cherished books: The Apple That Astonished Paris by Billy Collins, Owls and Other Fantasies by Mary Oliver, and New and Selected Poems, 1956-1996, by Philip Appleman, among others.

Indeed, the virtual card is securely hardwired to my Internet account, so there's no need to slide it from my wallet when I "Click here" to order. That saves me seconds, at least.

Except: As I browsed the top of the bill, I felt a sudden constriction, like waking from a nightmare, twisted tightly in the damp tangle of my sheets and blanket. My charges, you see, are from Amazon.com, the world's largest online book retailer.

Reader's Oasis' closing is disheartening for many reasons: It offered an excellent selection of books from local and Southwestern authors. It hosted an admirable events calendar packed with author readings and signings. The owners were great supporters of local literary arts in a town chock full of literary talent.

Yet I'm sad also because the closing of every independent bookstore, every local restaurant, every unique corner market, is a compounding loss of Tucson's—or any location's—sense of place.

With our streets lined with Barnes & Nobles, Applebee's, Starbucks, McDonald's, how will we tell Tucson from Tacoma from Tulsa? By the one lone saguaro we save in a roundabout—yet by doing so cut off circulation to its roots? By a scrubby patch of pseudo desert, the original rocks replaced by obnoxiously red gravel, the creosote and brittlebush cut for blooming birds of paradise, beautiful but not native? By the new signs pointing to downtown, el centro, but directing me through block after anonymous block of big boxes and faceless strip malls that could be anywhere and everywhere?

The local bookstore, like the farmers market, helps define where we are, and therefore who we are. All of that is easily undone, as this closing portrays, by the borderless and seemingly limitless plains of the Internet and sites like Amazon.com. The incentives to purchase online are plenty: discounted credit, hassle-free shopping, one-click purchasing, easy home delivery.

What we don't receive is true interaction, even with live online support, chat rooms, real-time blogging. What we can't receive is a physical sense of place. We can purchase books and electronics and even blankets online, but we cannot purchase atmosphere, nor aroma, nor the casual conversation between aisles of books.

We can't live online, but we're learning that our best local haunts can die for our trying.

I'm delighted by poetry websites that feature the spoken in addition to the written word. Hearing a poet read her work takes the art form to the next level. Yet broadband connection or not, a two-inch-wide QuickTime window doesn't replace a metal chair five rows back from the live poet, breathing and reading and making direct eye contact. So perhaps it serves me right—with my Amazon.com wish list and shopping cart and credit card—that my own poetry reading, once scheduled for Reader's Oasis, has been canceled.

Void of local bookstores and farmers markets and any place that is visceral in design and dynamic, the Internet has defaulted to the anonymous metropolis that our cities seem so eager to become. That virtual credit card, then, doesn't seem like such a good deal. It can't keep my blanket dry for all this revealing rain.

Simmons B. Buntin is the founding editor of Terrain.org: A Journal of the Built & Natural Environments. With a master's degree in urban and regional planning, he is—logically—a web program manager for the University of Arizona. His first book of poetry, Riverfall, was pubilshed in May 2005 by Ireland's Salmon Publishing. He has also published in Southern Humanities Review, Sou'wester, Bulletin of Science, Technology, and Society, and others, and is a recipient of the Colorado Artist's Fellowship for Poetry.

Column: Bull Hill
by David Rothenberg, *Terra Nova* Editor

Fifteen Minutes of Freedom

In November, 2003, I performed the following text as part of a musical performance at the Nyyd Festival of Contemporary Music in Tallinn, Estonia, the country my wife comes from. It all started with a joke a Russian French horn player told me, and it goes on to explore the idea of metropolis in a country small enough so that its very existence must confront provincialism. I read the text in English and Estonian, a language I do not understand. I do not know whether anyone in the audience got the point. Perhaps I am unsure of what the point is. You tell me

— DR, September 2005

One Estonian is sitting on a train
sitting in a carriage across from one Russian.
"Excuse me, how far is Tallinn?" He asks.
"Not so far," says the Russian.
The train goes on for half an hour.
"Excuse me," he asks once more, "how far is Tallinn?"
"Oh, almost there, not so far at all."
The train goes on.
The train goes on just as long as it did before.
The train goes on an hour or more.
"Excuse me, sorry, how far is Tallinn?"
"Oh, not so close anymore."

That train went right by the city, never even stopped.
You know what that's supposed to mean?
The world passes us by.
Our city passes us by, this city right here.
Everyone else misses the point.
Everyone else misses the city because
what do they know about the city?
They know nothing of this world, this language,
this place at the edge
of East and West
The edge of occupation and release,
of independence and self-control
Where the revolution felt itself as song.

The terror of control is in your eyes.
You may not know it, but it's in your eyes.
I see if there, like fifty years of evil weight telling you
exactly what to do.
Overnight the names of street signs changed.
Overnight the opportunities changed.
The rulers changed, the names changed,
we cooperate with whoever makes it easiest for us to live.
Who wants to remember all this?
Not so close anymore.

We're all in it together, with freedom and possibility for all!
The possible world unfolds with no more borders!
Every side says things like that, makes you wonder why words should be used to shape dreams at all,
if language so easily hides the truth of who is making, who is taking,
we will bring our people, so the land is everyone's, we will take anything away from those who have too much.
It's only fair, is it not, we are all one with the world?
Grandma was booted out of her house at ninety years old,
"This place is too big for you," the leaders said.
So many others were sent thousands of miles from home, only because they had done too well or something differently,
from the image of how all should be.
Prison doors are everywhere, on display, in museums,
in the remade town.
Not so close anymore.

In the hope that finally we are once more free.
Freedom rages in music but it's never all that new.
Listen on, haven't you heard all this before?
If evil is so easy in the name of good then
everything we wish for insists on care.
What are the borders of the country, who knows when
we will arrive or of what we should be sure?

What is small about a small country?
What it contains.
What is large about a small country?
What it must listen to and know.
What is dangerous?
When it pretends to be the whole world.
What is best?
How it may be most open to everything that laps at its edges.

Don't deceive yourselves on this, don't imagine anything more.
Track the line between liberty and law,
Be sure it's you this time who chooses where it is you belong
where the trains of decision will stop and what they skip,
on the journey to a future with no more East or West.

I give you my fifteen minutes of freedom,
Funny, it seems more like an hour or more.
that's as long as you're supposed to be famous, that's it.
Not so close anymore.

David Rothenberg is the author of Sudden Music: Improvisation, Sound, Nature, *Hand's End: Technology and the Limits of Nature*, and Always the Mountains. His latest book, Why Birds Sing, will be published in five languages. The paperback, which includes a CD of his own music, is now available.

Column: View from the Summit
by Catherine Cunningham, *Terrain.org* Editor

The Mobile Metropolis

Hate 'Em

I felt the tingly, hot gush of adrenaline when I looked into the rear-view mirror. How could that behemoth be gaining as if I were standing still? I was, after all, traveling at a pretty good clip—maybe 60 miles per hour—on the downhill side of westbound I-70 between the Eisenhower Tunnel and Silverthone, Colorado. The road was clear and dry and the weather was perfect.

I looked again, hoping I was mistaken. No, it was a large recreational vehicle. Judging from the reflection, occupying my entire mirror, it was the approximate size of the Metrodome. Dwarfed by the outline of their own windshield were a woman, on the passenger's side and a man on the driver's side. The man had his arms extended wide, apparently to the steering wheel. Through their spectacles, I couldn't tell if their eyes were as wide and fearful as mine but oddly, their mouths were simple lines drawn across their faces, as if nothing special were happening. At very least, one would have expected their mouths to be saying something like, "Lookie there Edna, we're going to drive over top of that teeny little car ahead of us—hold on to yer belly-button 'cuz you might feel a little bumpity-bump."

Time paused, for a moment, as I thought of the circumstances and of my options. What kind of people would be driving down the hill at 90 miles per hour in the middle of the afternoon with all this traffic? Could it be some crazy people? Perhaps they'd stolen the Metrodome and Johnny Law was in hot pursuit behind them. I realized this was unlikely, as the thieves would be frantically watching their own rear-view mirrors. Instead, their emotionless faces made them look as though they were watching a movie for which they'd already seen the ending.

More likely, the situation had something to do with brakes. I guessed the man, at that very moment, was probably trying to push the brake pedal right through the floorboards. Likely, the passenger was also pushing her invisible brake pedal with all her might. The driver had probably been successful in burning those brakes to hot, smoking, worthless scrap within a couple miles of riding the brakes down the steep grade.

The RV's speed increased with the irresistible pull of gravity on a 20,000-pound vehicle. Presumably, the couples' feet kept pushing down on non-existent brakes. I, in my teeny car, looked for an exit route but found a car to my right and the interstate highway median ditch to my left—with high-speed oncoming traffic just further to the left. Determining neither of these directions to be good options, I hit the accelerator, urging my straining four cylinders to fire faster.

It was hopeless. The RV was gaining too fast. The bad news is that the RV hit my car with startling force. The impact, well above my car's bumper, crumpled my trunk to obstruct my entire rear window. The good news is that I had slowed the giant rig down for a moment as it bounced me forward, separate from the behemoth. I checked my side mirror and craned my head around, searching the lane beside me for a chance to get over. By now the nearby drivers watched the spectacle with clear exclamations on their lips of "Oh!" and "Gee wiz!" The view of my trunk blocked the view of the RV for the moment, but I knew it would ram into my car again if I didn't get over.

Once I pulled safely into the next lane, the RV cruised past, picking up speed again until it hit it's next obstruction, an old red and white Ford pickup. The RV continued its bumper-car assault on at least one other car before careening past the bottom of the hill and beginning its momentum-killing climb up the next hill. It finally ground to a halt a half-mile up the steep incline.

In the meantime, I was not able to see well behind me. Things were disoriented. The impact had caused my body to press the driver's seat to a reclined position so I fell back when attempting to lean against my seatback. The impact had also apparently jarred the engine of my car, as it would not restart; it coasted to a stop at the exit at the bottom of the hill. One driver who saw it all followed me to my stopping point, asking if I was okay. She was appalled at the scene and offered to be a witness, should I need one.

This episode was one in a long series of encounters to foul my image of recreational vehicles. Of course, it is the bad apples that ruin the bunch. In my experience, there seem to be a disproportionately high number of bad apples in this class of vacationers and site-seers. I have long wondered how we insist that motorcyclists maintain a special driver's license to allow them to lawfully operate a motorcycle while operators of these massive weapons on wheels are mostly free to roam on standard driver's licenses.

On one popular RV website is an encouraging statement describing that anyone who can operate a car well would be a good candidate to drive an RV. The website remains suspiciously silent about the safety issues surrounding operation of a 20,000-pound vehicle, including turning, braking, and runaway-truck ramps (which the RV of my incident had available but did not use).

Love 'Em

On the other hand, my parents own a fifth-wheel trailer. It is used for numerous outings during the hot, buggy, Dakota summers. Sometimes it travels to a horse show or rodeo to provide economical lodging for multiple family members. Perhaps the favorite outing is the annual pasture camping trip. The camper is set up in the cattle pasture east of my brother's house. Everyone turns out for burgers, hot dogs, and roasted marshmallows. As the sun fades into the purple horizon, the grandchildren—as many as 14, to date—put on pajamas and claim a spot in the camper. Grandpa is the only adult with the courage to spend the night.

The mornings are festive with shifts of kids eating pancakes and finding lost articles of toys and clothing. I'm told there isn't much sleep for anyone. Most of the kids are pretty grumpy the next day. Grandpa usually spends his recuperating on the sofa. Nonetheless, it is an event surrounded by much anticipation and excitement each year.

Love 'em or hate 'em, thousands of these vehicles hit the road for destinations near and far each year. They have become popular for all classes of people, with a model to meet every budget from meager pop-ups to motorized Metrodomes, identified as "Class A" motorhomes. They travel from remote and populated places to populated and remote places, carrying families, large and small.

A few years ago, I journeyed to a location in western Arizona. I beheld a stunning sight, though I couldn't, at first, tell what it was; something reflecting the mid-morning sun as I drove west. As I drew nearer, I caught my first glimpses of the outskirts of town—sporting row after row of campers. During winter months, the southern states are popular destinations and these vehicles arrive by the droves. The town I encountered, whose base population is just over 3,000 people, boasts an estimate of 1.5 million people during peak season. There are other attractions to draw the crowds to this location, including flea markets, crafts, and gem and mineral shows. Most of the influx arrives and is accommodated in campers and RVs. While there are some private campgrounds, the Bureau of Land Management manages much of the camping surfaces.

It is a remarkable gathering of people who make up this community. With it come many of the challenges and successes of major metropolitan areas. Traffic, air pollution, and basic services, like law enforcement, medical and emergency services, and waste management would be taxed beyond the capabilities of a typical town of 3,000. Fortunately, they've been doing this for years and have evolved a routine.

On the other hand, it meets the inherent, nomadic needs of people from varied backgrounds and cultures to blend with others. While it is no Metropolitan Museum of Art, it must be heaven on earth for geologists and gemologists. Like any metropolitan area, it must be great for people watching.

Like any large, vibrant city, this mobile metropolis will morph and grow and shrink and grow again, over time. It will be the place people gather for their own good reasons. Just watch out for the teeny cars and their innocent drivers.

Catherine Cunningham is an environmental specialist with the U.S. Department of Energy's Western Area Power Administration, a federal agency responsible for marketing hydroelectricity produced at large dams throughout the West. She is also a planning commissioner for her mountain town.

Interview

Terrain.org interviews

Terry Tempest Williams

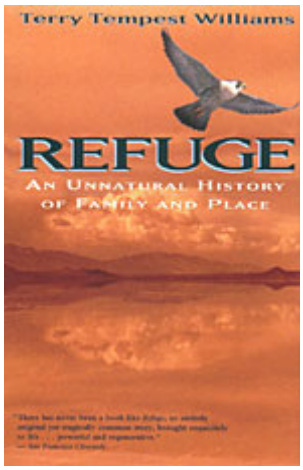
author, naturalist & environmental activist

About Terry Tempest Williams

Terry Tempest Williams is perhaps best known for her book Refuge: An Unnatural History of Family and Place (Pantheon, 1991), where she chronicles the epic rise of Great Salt Lake and the flooding of the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge in 1983, alongside her mother's diagnosis with ovarian cancer, believed to be caused by radioactive fallout from the nuclear tests in the Nevada desert in the 1950s and 60s, and which is now regarded as a classic in American nature writing.

Other books include The Open Space of Democracy (The Orion Society, 2004); Red: Patience and Passion in the Desert (Pantheon, 2001); Leap (Pantheon, 2000), a collection of essays, An Unspoken Hunger (Pantheon, 1994); Desert Quartet: An Erotic Landscape (Pantheon, 1995); Coyote's Canyon (Gibbs M. Smith, 1989); and Pieces of White Shell: A Journey to Navajoland (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1984). She is also the author of two children's books: Secret Language of Snow (Sierra Club/Pantheon, 1984); and Between Cattails (Little Brown, 1985).

Williams' work has been widely anthologized, having also appeared in The New Yorker, The Nation, Outside, Audubon, Orion, The Iowa Review, and The New England Review, among other national and international publications.



She has served on the Governing Council of the Wilderness Society and was a member of the western team for the President's Council for Sustainable Development. She is currently on the advisory board of the National Parks and Conservation Association, The Nature Conservancy, and the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance. She has testified before the United States Congress twice regarding women's health and the environmental links associated with cancer, and has been a strong advocate for America's Redrock Wilderness Act.

As an editor of Testimony: Writers of the West Speak On Behalf of Utah Wilderness, she organized twenty American writers to pen their thoughts on why the protection of these wildlands matter. When President William Jefferson Clinton dedicated the new Grand Staircase-Escalate National Monument on September 18, 1996, he held up this book on the North Rim of the Grand Canyon and said, "This made a difference."

She was recently inducted to the Rachel Carson Honor Roll and has received the National Wildlife Federation's Conservation Award for Special Achievement. The Utne Reader named Terry Tempest Williams as one of its Utne 100 Visionaries: "a person who could change your life." She has been a fellow for the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation and received a Lannan Literary Fellowship in Creative Nonfiction.

Formerly, naturalist-in-residence at the Utah Museum of Natural History, Ms. Williams now lives in Castle Valley, Utah, with her husband Brooke Williams.

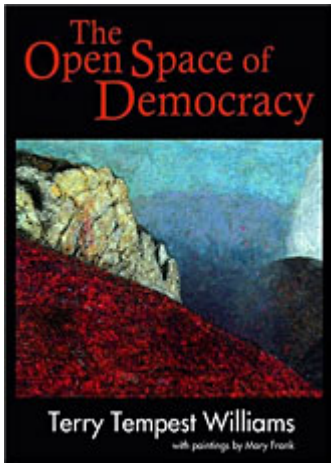
Interview

August 27, 2005, Castle Valley, Utah

Terrain.org: In the essays of The Open Space of Democracy, we are urged to commit to the open space of democracy, where there is “room for dissent… for differences,” where beauty is “essential to our survival as a species.” In your work to save Utah’s redrock wildernesses—the millions of acres across Southern Utah as well as those lands just outside Castle Valley—you faced at times insulting resistance from elected representatives, government officials, and others. How do you respond to those who don’t appear willing to allow for, let alone acknowledge, differences and dissent? How can the landscape be used as a facilitator of a common good, where bureaucracy, corporate profit interests, and sense of community are so often at odds?

Terry Tempest Williams: Perhaps the most important qualities in protecting wildlands are patience and perseverance. We must speak in a language that opens hearts rather than closes them. And we need to build our cases for environmental protection around broad-based community concerns like

health, quality of life, the protection of our watersheds and wildlife, and the total education of our children. Environmental issues are social issues, economic issues, issues that honor a quality of life. Our challenge is to bring the idea of wilderness into the discussion of "life-sustaining principles" to quote Michael Soule, and how we can think creatively for the long view, rather than the short term.



How do we respond to those who do not share these values or who are not interested in a civil dialogue within the Open Space of Democracy? We just keep meeting them within the context of community, trying to articulate not only why wilderness matters but how we can protect it so that the care of wildlands becomes a positive expression for the town, becoming a model of what it means to live in place, what it means to be responsible citizens mindful of other forms of life. This kind of community organizing depends on partnerships, building a deep, broad coalition of support. It's about changing minds, opening minds. And it takes time.

This is the model we tried to create for the Castle Rock Collaboration. Our partners included The Nature Conservancy, Grand Canyon Trust, The Access Fund, Patagonia, Black Diamond, Petzl Company, The Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, Utah School Institutional Trust Lands, the Cowboy Caucus—it was a coalition that was irresistible drawing from many facets of the community from both ends of the political spectrum. Patience and perseverance were asked for and a lot of time spent in meetings, planning, listening, and not only articulating a vision, but figuring out how to make it happen on the ground.

Terrain.org: The Open Space of Democracy was published "on the eve of a defining national election [when] we are asking ourselves what is the true nature of democracy," according to Laurie Lane-Zucker, The Orion Society's executive director. Did the results of the presidential election surprise you? Do you see a difference in those working for a more compassionate environment following this election—more persistence and vigor, perhaps, or just the opposite: a disgust that is resulting in a lack of action?

The Salt Lake City skyline, with the Wasatch Mountains behind.
Photo courtesy Salt Lake Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Terry Tempest Williams: I am always surprised by elections, especially living in Utah. I keep hoping that just once before I die I can be part of a majority! Bill Clinton came in third, twice, in the state of Utah, when he ran for president. Utah loves George W. Bush. But the tide is turning. President Bush spoke to the National Guard Conference here in Utah on August 21. He was met by a healthy protest of around two thousand people led by Salt Lake City Mayor Rocky Anderson, who quoted Edward Abbey, "Sentiment without action is the ruin of the soul." Even my father, a devout

republican is talking about impeachment.

On the surface, we appear to be a nation divided, red states, blue states. This is too simple. I believe most Americans do care about the environment and love the open spaces near their homes as places of peace and positive memories with their families. I believe we want equitable health care and good schools. And I do not believe this war in Iraq has broad support. The lies of the Bush administration are now beginning to smolder, catch fire, and are burning away the fortress of deceit they have been hiding behind.

We are suffering from a crisis of leadership in this country. Since this administration will not deal with climate change, nine states in the northeast are taking it in their own hands. If the administration won't deal with the immigration crisis on the border of the US and Mexico, the states along the borders will. We are hungry for creativity and imagination, inspiration that can carry us forward to places of possibility. We want to act, create, and make meaning out of our lives that can help and be part of the Common Good. Instead, we are being pulled into a large collective arena of fear that breeds paranoia, isolation, and despair. We must not fall prey to their manipulation of mind and habit that is creating a sense of inertia and denial.

Terrain.org: Following the terrorist attacks of 9/11, America was full of fear and distrust and question—and yet there was also a sense of hope. "It is no longer the survival of the fittest but the survival of compassion—to extend our humanity to include honor and respect for plants, animals, rocks, rivers, and air," you said in an interview just four weeks later. We were awake, and could be "conscious of our connection to the world." Four years have now passed. Did we miss the opportunity, passing on the "exquisite tenderness" and the incredible coming together as a nation? Or are there still forces of hope at work—indeed are we extending our humanity?

New York's World Trade Center towers, pre-9/11.
Photo courtesy Leslie E. Robertsno Associates, R.L.L.P.

Terry Tempest Williams: As difficult as this time is in our history, it is also a very creative time. People are alive, engaged, and wanting to change the climate of this country to one of hope. We are a nation at war. That war is now being questioned by both liberals and conservatives. I look to the power of individuals to make a difference within our own communities. This is where true leadership dwells. The heart is the first home of democracy. In the town of Blue Hill, Maine, for instance, there is a man named Rufus Wanning, an arborist, who almost single-handedly is responsible for saving the American Elms that are still standing in this little coastal village. He inspired the community to donate $10,000 a year to care for these majestic trees that line their streets as elders. Over 100 million American elms have been lost in this country. Rufus Wanning was determined to take care of those in his own community. He knew each tree personally. Every week, he checked on them. He was vigilant. If he saw the slightest sign or symptom of Dutch Elm disease on the trees, a wilting of leaves, he would immediately, in his neighbors words, "nip it in the bud."

Rufus Wanning is also responsible for donating a piece of his land on Main Street to the Peninsula Peace & Justice Group in the creation of a memorial for the soldiers who have been killed in Iraq. A field of small white flags has been erected between the First Congregational Church and the Blue Hill Library. Each time a soldier dies, a small white flag is planted in the field. It now looks like an ocean of tiny sails. Each week, the numbers of American and Iraqi casualties are updated, painted black on a white sign. I find this kind of mindful action in the name of community very hopeful. It holds us accountable, allows us to reflect on what is happening and how we are responsible. I also believe the same impulse to save American elms is the same impulse to offer up one's land as a reflection of peace. The question becomes how to live our lives with greater attention and intention on behalf of life.

Terrain.org: Tell us about your move in 1998 from Salt Lake City—that "city of salt and granite"—to Castle Valley, with its sign warning, "CAUTION: FALLING SKY." What spurred the move? Following the community's rally to preserve its open space, of which you and your husband were a keen part, has your perception of your role in community—the built environment, if you will—changed?

Castleton Tower outside Utah's Castle Valley. Photo by Grant Collier.

Terry Tempest Williams: My husband Brooke and I moved from Salt Lake City to Castle Valley, five hours south, because we wanted to be closer to wild country, we wanted to live in a smaller community with a greater sense of engagement and accountability. And we have found it. There are difficulties to be sure, how to make a living, how to live more sustainably together, but we are working through these questions as a town—be it through a survey of our watershed, town planning, or the caretaking of the open space that surrounds us. We have to take care of our relations. We have to be civil with one another because we rely on each other in times of fire, drought, and sickness. We also have a good time. But the desert is harsh. There is no place to hide. Refuge is found in our relations neighbor to neighbor. I love the intimacy and intricacy of living here. The light changes hourly on the redrock cliffs. Storms come in. The sun bears down. Ravens cavort on currents rising from the desert floor. The stars at night keep one in a constant state of awe. Last night, I woke to get a glass of water and ran into a tumbleweed that had blown into our living room. We leave our doors wide open.

Terrain.org: If the essay "Ground Truthing," which originally appeared in Orion and then in The Open Space of Democracy, is any indication, your trip to Arctic National Wildlife Refuge was life-changing. Tell us about that journey. How did your visit impact you as a writer, as a woman, as a citizen of the world? How does it still impact you?

Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska.
Photo courtesy U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Terry Tempest Williams: In 1977, I testified in Denver, Colorado, on behalf of the Alaska Lands Settlement Act. I was 22 years old. I remember saying to Congressman John Seiberling from Ohio, that although I may never see the Arctic National Wildlife Range (it was not designated as a refuge until 1980) or much of Wild Alaska, I believed it deserved our protection and respect. Just knowing it was there was enough, more than enough. And the Athabaskan and Inuit cultures who have lived on these lands for millennia, have a right to carryon their traditions without the press of development imposing its agenda on to theirs. It was very moving to be able to participate in this kind of democratic process and to listen to hours of testimony rendered by citizens.

It was a thirty year dream to one day be able to go into the Brooks Range and visit the Refuge. In 2003, we had the opportunity to do so. It wasn't so much life-changing as it was life-affirming. To stand in the center of such wholeness. To realize what a tragedy it is that we have politicized a place to the point that we can no longer see it for what it is—original, unaggitated nature—biologically intact and self-sustaining. It was an immersion in Beauty, simply that.

Every day we awoke with a sense of wonder and every day, we witnessed the surprise of a wolverine track, a grizzly foraging in the tundra, caribou crossing the Canning River, arctic terns about to make their journey south. It was a mosaic of the most beautiful, elemental, I don't even have the language... a mosaic of perfect relations... snowy owls hunting meadow voles, the migrations of snow geese, tundra so rich with a diversity of plants you found yourself on hands and knees for a closer look. Everything had a grand integrity about it—from the sweeping vistas that stretched from one mountain range to another—to the delicacy of lichen on a riverstone. The near and far were seen in one embrace of wildness. Never have I felt my humanness in such perspective. It was deeply humbling and deeply spiritual. I remember placing my hand in the paw print of a wolverine. I remember standing on top of a ridge watching thousands of caribou crossing the horizon, moving as the great herds have always moved through the landscape through time.

That the United States Congress is on the verge of opening this last refuge to drilling is a sacrilege, a small-minded act of greed based on the same oil relationships. If this truly happens, we will look back on this as a dark moment in the soul of this country. Where is our restraint on behalf of other species, other cultures? It is a giant tear in the fabric of what makes America a free country. The open space of democracy requires open space.

Terrain.org: In 1995 you visited Hiroshima, Japan—a dual exploration of the A-bomb's continuous impact on the region's people, and the death by cancer of your mother, who was exposed to the fallout of America's A-bomb tests in the 1950s. How difficult was it to put that journey into words, ultimately into the powerfully moving essay, "Hiroshima Journey?" Do you find other parallels between your life—between the anticipated and unanticipated impacts of technology on people and place—as strong as this one in locations far from home? Have or will you return to Hiroshima?

Hiroshoma's Atomic Dome, a skeletal reminder.
Photo courtesy The Yamasa Institute.

Terry Tempest Williams: My journey to Hiroshima was a deeply personal one. My grandmother's birthday was August 6. Every year, I celebrate her and pay my respects to those who died on that same day in 1945 by our country's nuclear hand. My grandmother was a peacemaker who saw a larger world. She was also a member with my mother and aunts of the Clan of One-Breasted Women. Breast cancer caused by radioactive fallout in the above-ground testing in the Nevada desert in the 1950's and 60's. We are all bound by the wind.

In 1995, I traveled to Japan. It was the fiftieth anniversary of the end of World War II. It was also the fiftieth anniversary of when America dropped nuclear bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. To stand with Shoko Ito, on the banks of the Hiroshima River, both of us profoundly affected by the atomic bomb as "hibakusha" (explosion-affected people) changed my life. The isolation I felt as a "downwinder" disappeared. The inability to articulate what this horror had meant in her life as a baby who survived was shared. We emerged as two women, an American and a Japanese who found our humanity in one another's stories. Both our families have been ravaged by cancer. Both our families honored its governments. Both of us had been in denial as to how deeply this had shaped our characters. Both of us turned to writing as a way of creating hope out of despair. Both of us found our solace in nature and the beauty of language bowing to landscape. Both of us found our voices through tragedy made whole through art.

Terrain.org: Earlier this decade you made a conscientious decision to primarily write newspaper and magazine articles and op-ed pieces, so your words may be "entered in the public discourse." Is that still your emphasis, or is there an urge to return to the larger and more complex canvases of books? How has the exponential growth of the Internet impacted not only your writing, but the writing of anyone advocating the open space of democracy?

Terry Tempest Williams: Writing is very versatile and can be called upon to for different purposes and occasions. I love the immediacy of writing for newspapers. It is a way of creating a conversation within community, a way of calling attention to an issue at hand that is still open for discussion. I appreciate the ephemeral nature of newsprint. One day your words appear, the next day they are gone. The paper held in hand around a breakfast table is now being used to house train a puppy. Your words are not precious.

Terry Tempest Williams reads from *Leap* at Dartmouth College, 2003.
Photo courtesy Dartmouth College Environmental Studies.

In contrast, a book is a sustained exploration of ideas that can meander, circle, and deviate through story. They can rise and fall and wrap themselves around our imagination and create worlds unknown before. A book becomes a companion. The words between covers create an intimacy with the reader, change them, transform them and they can seep into the bloodstream of a culture if we are lucky.

The Internet creates an instantaneous community around the world—a shot of light—a way to inform, incite, and organize. It's hard to imagine how our lives have changed since e-mail, Google, and the flood of information we now have through our fingers. The Internet may be our collective addiction, trying to make contact when we feel so isolated. A way to connect as we disconnect.

Writing is a means of keeping in touch, discovering who we are and what we are connected to. And writing finds all forms from grafitti to the film, from a love letter to a declaration of war. I honor the power of words, their revolutionary nature, the way they make us less lonely in the world, their capacity to both destroy and heal. How do use them? A newspaper, a magazine, a poem, a book of ideas—the stories we tell—it's what makes us human.

Terrain.org: It has been more than fifteen years since the death of Ed Abbey, who you described as "our sacred rage," and who continues to inspire environmentalists through his words and ways. In a time when development is expanding across the Western landscape at an almost unfathomable pace—and patterns of American suburban sprawl are appearing like lesions across the globe—is it time again for the crass monkey wrenching of folks like Abbey and organizations like Earth First!? Should there be a land-based civil disobedience as well as a civil discourse?

The desert curmudgeon himself: Ed Abbey.
Photo by Jack Dykinga, courtesy Abbey's Web.

Terry Tempest Williams: In the American West, Edward Abbey is still among us—the shadow of a turkey vulture passes and we tip our hats. Ed was radical in life. He is more radical in death. I think about him every day. Every day. I wonder what he would be thinking, writing, doing. Again, "Sentiment without action is the ruin of the soul." He dreamed of taking down Glen Canyon Dam. Now there is an organization that is planning to do exactly that—legitimately. It's called the Glen Canyon Institute and there's alot of science to support the decommissioning of the dam. He wrote about "industrial tourism." We see it rampantly taking over the interior west. And he deplored war. Desert Solitaire written in 1968 can be read as an antiwar novel written at the height of the Vietnam protests. Today, as we find ourselves as a nation at war in Iraq and a nation at war with the environment led by the Bush administration, I think it is critical to question, stand, speak, and act. Patriots act—they are not handed a piece of paper and asked to comply. Ed did his best to make people uncomfortable. We can do the same.

If civil disobedience is standing our ground in the places we love—then we must do that now. We must say no to drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. We must say no to drilling in our national parks and the wilderness study areas in the fragile redrock wilderness of southern Utah. We must say no to the relaxing of all our environmental laws from clean air to water to the storage of toxic wastes that are affecting the health of our communities. And we must say yes to a engaged populace who sees the ecological crisis as a crisis of conscience and imagination. We have to believe in our own power to affect change. Empathy. Compassion. Engagement. Love. Four words that for me, create a base from which a heightened democracy can function.

Ed Abbey handed us a monkey wrench not as a tool of destruction but restoration. It is time to restore our sense of place in this country with an ethic of place, freedom and liberty for all.

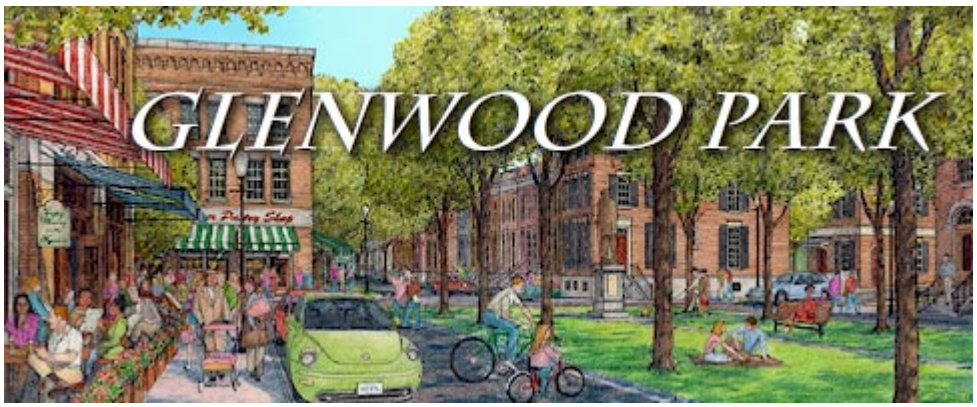
Terrain.org: What's next for Terry Tempest Williams?

Mural by Lily Yeh in Korogocho, Kenya, where the Barefoot Artists work with Mukuru, or "garbage," children at the Boma Rescue Center.
Photo courtesy Barefoot Artists.

Terry Tempest Williams: I am leaving for Rwanda tomorrow. There is nothing in my imagination that can prepare me for what I will see, what I will hear, and what I will feel. I can only go with an open heart and a sincere desire to listen and be of use. I am going as a team member with the Chinese-American artist Lily Yeh and her group of "Barefoot Artists." We are going to Gisenyi to help paint a village, to focus on art as way to restore that which has been broken.

I am taking binoculars for the children. Perhaps we can begin our encounter with birds—mediators between heaven and earth.

UnSprawl Case Study



ATLANTA, GEORGIA

Just the Facts

• 28-acre brownfield redevelopment two miles from downtown Atlanta
• 350 residences in a mix of condominiums, townhouses, and houses at buildout
• 50,000 square feet of retail and 20,000 square feet of office at buildout
• Emphasis on "making great streets where people will enjoy walking"
• Environmental best practices include energy efficient buildings, stormwater management, and recycling certified through the EarthCraft Community program
• Planning began late 2001, infrastructure work began early 2003, and building construction began spring 2004
• Completion expected in late 2006
• Developed by Green Street Properties
• Planning led by Dover, Kohl & Partners and Tunnel-Spangler-Walsh & Associates

Glenwood Park Site Plan.

Overview

The award-winning, 28-acre Glenwood Park is a brownfield redevelopment in an infill location that features a mix of well-designed homes and commercial spaces. The neighborhood is noted for its commitment to traditional neighborhood design, walkability, mixture of residential and commercial uses, and environmental

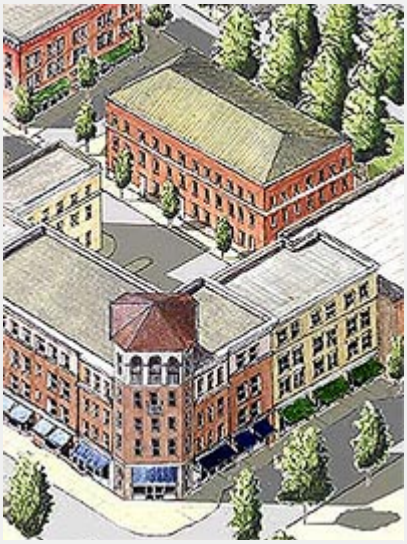
management practices. Glenwood Park is a certified EarthCraft Community for its focus on site selection, water management, planning and design, preservation landscaping, community involvement, and green building.

The community is designed around a classic main street environment—with on-street parallel parking—that culminates in a town square surrounded by three- to four-story buildings "framing a beautiful outdoor room." Alley-loaded, single-family homes with views of the Atlanta skyline face tree-lined streets, public squares, and pocket parks. Townhomes with classic stoops and lofts and condominiums provide a more urban (and more affordable) context, while the large, oval Glenwood Park serves as a gathering place and environmentally benign water retention and filtration area.

Success from Green Street Properties' Perspective
by Charles Brewer

Today, Glenwood Park is still very much under construction, but it is far enough along that one can begin to get the feel of the place. And it is good. People like it. Members of the development team feel like proud parents. The most noteworthy achievement of Glenwood Park is the successful fine-grained mixing of a full range of housing types and commercial buildings on beautiful streets. The intricate nature of the mixing is in itself very important, and is frequently an area where recent mixed-use development projects come up short. Another key is that the neighborhood reads as a collection of individual buildings, each of a manageable scale, rather than a "project." As developer, Green Street Properties has not had to make a lot of compromises at Glenwood Park. We feel fortunate and recognize that New Urbanists frequently have a very difficult time bringing their vision to reality in an un-compromised way. Some of the critical factors that have helped bring about this happy result at Glenwood Park are:

- The location of the site, which has more positive attributes than the design team initially anticipated
- Positive relations with neighbors, who largely supported Glenwood Park's plan from the beginning
- A good working relationship with local permitting authorities, despite some challenges
- An insider-only financing strategy
- A good and diverse team of partners, builders, and architects



Conceptual illustration of Glenwood Park's "town center" area.

Site Characteristics and History

Glenwood Park is a new, 28-acre neighborhood in Atlanta, Georgia, two miles from the center of downtown. It is located on a former industrial site that had most recently been used as a concrete recycling facility. A small amount of industrial land remains nearby, but the community is primarily surrounded by century-old, single-family neighborhoods, including Grant Park to the west and Ormewood Park and East Atlanta to the east. The northern boundary is an expressway—Interstate 20, which has a ramp onto Bill Kennedy Way adjacent to the western part of the site. Glenwood Park also includes a 100-foot-wide piece of land on the west of Bill Kennedy Way as well as the main body of the site to the east. To the south is a collector-level street, Glenwood Avenue. To the east is a single-family neighborhood called North Ormewood Park.

The site is a mile from two different Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) rail stops, and is directly on an active bus route that leads downtown. Glenwood Park is also on the route of the Belt Line, a proposed trail and transit line that would make a loop around in-town Atlanta using the right of way of old rail lines.

The surrounding neighborhoods suffered a sharp economic downturn in the 1960s, but have been on a gradual rebound since. They are racially and economically diverse. Property values in these surrounding neighborhoods have been escalating, though they are still far less than those attained in northern parts of the city and its suburbs.

Novare Group, a successful Atlanta real estate developer, purchased the Glenwood Park land in 2000. Novare created a mixed-use plan for the land that featured a large office component sharing parking with condominiums, and a grocery-anchored shopping center. The land was rezoned to allow the initial mixed-use plan; yet given the economic realities of 2001, the specific plan was no longer feasible.

Glenwood Park's first homes were built on Hamilton Street.

An aerial view of Glenwood Park as construction was just beginning.

By that time, Katharine Kelley, Walter Brown, and Charles Brewer had formed Green Street Properties—sharing a passion for cities, walkable neighborhoods, and environmental protection. In fall 2001, Novare Group invited Green Street Properties to invest in the Glenwood Park project and take over the development.

The Plan

Green Street Properties' vision for the site, documented in November 2001, was clear from the start:

Glenwood Park will be a real neighborhood that features a traditional fine-grained mix of different housing types as well as retail activity, office space, civic buildings, and recreational assets.

Glenwood Park will offer a compelling alternative for those who are dissatisfied with the choices provided by conventional development. Conventional development emphasizes the private realm—privacy, exclusivity, bigger and bigger houses. Glenwood Park will emphasize the public realm—community, diversity, the quality and character of streets, and sidewalks, parks, plazas, and other public spaces.

Glenwood Park will gracefully accommodate cars, but it will be designed for people. It will be very walkable. Cars will travel slowly, and sidewalk and street designs will emphasize pedestrian comfort and safety. There will be plenty of interesting things to walk to, because of the fine-grained mix of uses. And walks won't be too long, because the neighborhood will be relatively compact.

The commercial center of Glenwood Park will have retail establishments that serve the practical everyday needs of both Glenwood Park and its surrounding neighborhoods—needs that are currently not well served. And because of its unique character and easy access, it will also act as home for businesses that are a destination for citizens of the entire metro area and beyond.

Glenwood Park will be designed to allow a great deal of flexibility in how the neighborhood evolves over time.

Green Street Properties organized a design charrette in early December 2001. Dover, Kohl & Partners of Miami led the charrette with assistance from Tunnel-Spangler-Walsh & Partners of Atlanta. Thirty people were invited to participate, representing local neighborhood groups, design professionals, and friends and acquaintances that the design team believed would be helpful. The charrette was "a great success," according to Green Street Properties chairman Charles Brewer, with many people making substantial contributions.

Concrete covered nearly the entire site, and had to be broken and buried.

Over time, however, a number of changes to the plan have been made. For example, the private school that originally planned to locate in the northwest corner of the neighborhood was not able to do so. Additionally, buildings in a central block were reoriented to face east and west rather than north and south. Plans for the commercial center have likewise been modified to accommodate additional building types and parking.

The plan includes brownstone-type townhomes, a unique offering for Atlanta.

"We thought we had the neighborhood pretty thoroughly planned out up front," says Brewer. "But to our surprise each time a new area was ready for building, we found there was in fact considerable planning left to do to get it just right."

Glenwood Park's Neighbors

The new community's neighbors have enthusiastically embraced Glenwood Park,

despite the fact that its density exceeds surrounding neighborhoods. In fact, developers believe the cordial relationship with neighbors has been one of the most gratifying outcomes of the development experience, for many reasons:

- Glenwood Park's neighbors have felt "under-retailed" and have been craving a center—a place to go.
- Neighbors have for the most part chosen their in-town, old urbanism locations because they appreciate the very characteristics that the design team hoped to create in Glenwood Park.
- The site was "such an eyesore before," according to Brewer, that the new neighborhood is a substantial improvement.
- Much of the anticipated additional vehicular traffic from Glenwood Park comes from the expressway. Since the community is adjacent to the exit, however, vehicles are not likely to impact neighbors before reaching Glenwood Park
- Green Street Properties did a good job of reaching out to neighbors and seeking their input on planning—neighbors have been quite helpful, especially in their suggestions for the retail portion of the plan.
- Neighbors have provided strong political support when needed, especially in the permitting process.
- It has been evident since initial planning that Glenwood Park would likely have a highly positive impact on surrounding property values.

Permitting

During 2002, site engineering was completed and site development permits were acquired. Glenwood Park's zoning process went well. The developer's advisor was Bill Kennedy, a retired and well-loved city zoning official. Bill has since passed away, and Glenwood Park's main street, Bill Kennedy Way, is now named after him.

Considerable sewer work was necessary, and almost caused the project to fail.

The design team pursued Planned Development Mixed Use (PDMU) zoning, and with strong neighbor support received it without hassle. PDMU zoning is specific regarding street and block locations and aggregate limits on development square footages, though it is flexible as to what exact type of building goes on each lot. This flexibility has proven to be crucial as the plans were fine-tuned over time.

Beyond anticipated delays, Glenwood Park experienced three major challenges in its permitting process. The first challenge centered on street widths and corner radii. Narrower streets and tighter corners were crucial to the plan's success. The developers had a series of lengthy and at times frustrating discussions with city officials to resolve city concerns. The involvement and subsequent

leadership of elected officials was critical to creating an acceptable resolution, which came in the form of a new city ordinance allowing specific dimensions for qualifying "traditional neighborhood developments."

Prior to construction, 40,000 cubic yards of buried wood chips were removed.

The second challenge involved a drainage ditch that crossed a portion of the site. Prior to construction, the ditch entered the site in a storm sewer that emptied into a deeper ditch gouged into industrial fill. After a short distance, it then re-entered a storm sewer, flowing downstream to a combined sanitary/storm sewer treatment plant. At the lower end of the ditch was an outflow of raw sewage because of a broken sanitary sewer line. Developers wanted to fix the sewers and create a stormwater retention park that would collect stormwater from Glenwood Park in a pond, allowing the water to filter and be used for irrigation before slowly releasing downstream.

It was a strong plan from an environmental perspective, and all parties—including permitting authorities—agreed. Because of jurisdictional confusion and uncertainly regarding was and what was not "waters of the state," however, the design team had a difficult time receiving permission to alter the ditch. The issue, in fact, threatened the viability of the entire neighborhood plan for several months. Ultimately, the developer's proposed changes to the ditch were approved and the project moved forward.

Glenwood Park Groundbreaking Ceremony flyer with Charles Brewer playing the blues.

At Glenwood Park's groundbreaking in January 2003, Green Street Properties chairman Charles Brewer played the following song about the project's permitting process:
The Development Blues

The third challenge involved convincing the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) to sign over Bill Kennedy Way to the City of Atlanta, which was essential to creating a main street environment that includes on-street parking and street trees. It quickly became clear that GDOT was not supportive of the main street approach, and jurisdictional transfer was therefore necessary. Both GDOT and Atlanta agreed to the transfer, but it was an unexpectedly lengthy process nonetheless.

Even accounting for these issues, the infrastructure work at Glenwood Park took much longer than anticipated. Various factors contributed to the delays, including wet weather at critical periods. One particularly vexing problem was the discovery of thirteen unknown underground storage tanks. Each time a tank was found, work stopped and the tanks were tested. Appropriate cleanup and disposal were then required. Fortunately, no tanks presented major contamination problems.

Project Financing

All of the financing for the land development work at Glenwood Park has been provided by a small group of "insiders." No bank debt was used. As a result, the developer has been able to "quickly call our own shots in decisions about the development process without any outside financial pressure to do things in a conventional way," says Brewer. "While we don't know what the process would have been like with other investors, we suspect our financial independence at Glenwood Park has made our life much easier and is one of the things that has helped us stay true to our vision and avoid compromises that would have hurt the neighborhood."

I'm feeling good today, but oh I've had some blues
Yes I'm feeling good today, but oh I've had some blues
Real estate development, I guess it's just for fools.

Some time back around February, I had the broken sewer
    pipe blues
Oh some time back around February, I had the broken
    sewer pipe blues
You know you can't build no neighborhood, if your
    sewer you can't use.

Then later in the springtime, I had the street dimension
    blues
Oh later in the springtime, I had the street dimension
    blues
Can't build no walkable neighborhood, if your street ain't
    got virtues.

Well then in the summertime, I caught the jurisdictional
    road transfer blues
Yes then in the summertime, I caught the jurisdictional
    road transfer blues.
Can't build no main street environment, if this one don't
    go through.

Finally, and for a long time, I had the building permit
    blues
Oh yeah for a long long time, I had the building permit
    blues
But now we got our permit, and the digging will ensue.

I'm feeling good today, but oh I've had some blues
Yes I'm feeling good today, but oh I've had some blues
Now Glenwood Park is happening, and my it's really
    cool.

Southern vernacular and richly detailed trim and materials define Glenwood Park's single family homes.

'Green-Built' Residences

By spring 2004, building construction could begin. After surveying multiple residential builders, Green Street Properties selected Capstone Partners, Hedgewood Properties, and Whitehall Homes. The builders use Glenwood Park's architectural code to create home designs, and Green Street Properties retains design approval. Brewer concludes, "Our builders have really delivered for us."

Glenwood Park features a variety of single-family homes with Southern vernacular architecture and a green building emphasis. All homes meet Atlanta's EarthCraft House program standards (see sidebar). Indeed, Glenwood Park is one of only five projects serving as a pilot for the upcoming EarthCraft Communities certification program.

The community was also selected as the site of a 2005 *Southern Living* Idea House. Featured in the August 2005 issue of Southern Living magazine, the Whitehall Homes-built residence at Glenwood Park reflects "the development's emphasis on the environment, incorporating green-building techniques that reduce operating costs and add value to the home," according to Green Street Properties vice president Walter Brown. "The home is a showcase of environmental construction technology—and just drop-dead gorgeous— displaying a better way of building to the millions of Southern Living readers."

Glenwood Park's green building features—highlighted in the Idea House—include:

- Construction waste recycling, reducing landfill waste by 80%
- Pervious pavement parking areas
- Water-efficient landscaping
- Rainwater harvesting and reclamation
- Graywater irrigation system
- Recycled wood fiber exterior trim
- Porch decking made from reclaimed waste wood and recycled plastic

- Photovoltaic (PV) system (Idea House)
- Reclaimed wood flooring (Idea House)
- Pre-finished and low-VOC (volatile organic compounds) flooring and low- or no-VOC and bio-resistant paints (Idea House)
- Super-efficient insulation, including spray foam insulation, sealed and conditioned crawlspace, airsealing, and high-performance windows
- 100% recycled drywall (Idea House)
- Tankless water heaters
- Programmable thermostats and lighting control system
- Energy Star lighting fixtures and appliances
- High-performance HVAC systems
- Energy recovery ventilators
- High-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters and ultraviolet air cleaner (Idea House)

Whitehall Homes' *Southern Living* Idea House under construction.
Photo courtesy Southface.

The Idea House itself uses 38% less energy than a comparable home, with 15% generated from PV panels on the residence's roof. It also has "a higher standard of indoor air quality, comfort, and durability due to the care taken during the home's construction process," according to Idea House literature.

Glenwood Park's first residents moved into the neighborhood in October 2004.

Mixed-Use and Retail

Green Street Properties partnered with The Meddin Company—an Atlanta leader in understanding and developing street-facing retail—to develop the mixed-use and retail portions of the community, located around Brasfield Square, the community's "town center." Three different sets of architects have worked on these buildings to ensure both compatibility and uniqueness.

building, below left, with mixed uses after…

Fifty condominiums ranging in prices from $170,000 to $300,000 are offered in four buildings surrounding the square. The one- and two-bedroom units feature bamboo floors, nine- and ten-foot ceilings, granite countertops, and large windows. Like the single-family homes, they comply with the EarthCraft House program.

"The condominiums provide the opportunity to live in an exciting Main Street environment that overlooks retail stores and shops and a beautiful park reminiscent of the squares in Savannah," said

Katherine Kelly, Green Street Properties president.

The one pre-existing building on the site was sold to Parkside Partners, which has successfully converted it into an office condominium building. The building was "nearly windowless, and remarkably ugly, though solid," said Brewer. "Parkside has done a great job renovating it, and it is turning out to be an exceptionally beautiful addition to the neighborhood," he says.

Glenwood Park's retail provides attractive and useful shops and restaurants that bring life and vitality to the streets, provides residents with walkable destinations, and reduces the number of local daily trips. There are currently three retail tenants, owned and operated by local entrepreneurs, in Brasfield Square:

- Vino Libro—a wine bar and bookstore focusing on cooking, art, and design
- Babalu's—a Latin restaurant with international bar
- Perk—a neighborhood coffeehouse

The remainder of the 50,000 total square feet of retail and 20,000 square feet of office space will be filled with "unique neighborhood retailers and restaurants" as well as "offices and retail shops that will not only serve the needs of the residents, but also those of visitors and the surrounding communities," according to Kelley.

Environmental Design

Making Glenwood Park as "green" as possible was Green Street Properties' objective from the beginning. The dedication to environmental design is manifested most clearly through the fact that Glenwood Park is a brownfield redevelopment dedicated to urbanism. The project is relatively high density—even for a location near downtown Atlanta— providing the opportunity for residents to drive less. By one estimate, Glenwood Park will save 1.6 million miles of driving per year over what residents would have driven if they instead lived in a "typical" new Atlanta development.

Brasfield Square features first-floor retail, upstairs residential, and open space.

Glenwood Park's stormwater is routed to a pond in the neighborhood's central park, where it has a chance to settle and filter before slowly releasing downstream. Water from the pond is also used for common space irrigation.

Popular and Award-Winning

According to Brewer, "Sales of all residential types and office condominiums are strong. Retail

Glenwood Park's central, oval-shaped park features wastewater filtration as well as traditional neighborhood gathering amenities.

leasing is going very well with high-quality tenants. Perhaps even better, people are really responding positively to the experience of simply being in Glenwood Park. Sometimes it amazes me, because the place is still a very active construction site and is far from complete and still takes a good bit of imagination to visualize."

Brewer's highest aspiration for Glenwood Park is that it helps restore confidence that people "can once again create wonderful, walkable, loveable places. So many of us visit the wonderful old neighborhoods of our country, or the wonderful old towns and cities of Europe, and come back home raving about how much we love them. But too many of us have allowed ourselves to believe that it is impossible to create that kind of place anymore. Well, it's not. And I hope that Glenwood Park will help raise our collective confidence level and aspirations about the kind of places that we can build today and in the future."

The awards indicate that Brewer's aspirations are right on. In the past two years, Glenwood Park has received numerous awards:

- 2005 Charter Award, Congress for New Urbanism
- 2005 EarthCraft House Development of the Year
- 2004 Community of the Year, Greater Atlanta Home Builders Association
- Outstanding Community, Georgia Urban Forest Council
- 2004 Best Atlanta Real Estate Developer (Charles Brewer), Creative Loafing's Best of Atlanta
- 2004 Distinguished Conservationist Award (Charles Brewer), Georgia Conservancy

Benches line the interior square and front retail space at Brasfield Square.

Rather than singing the blues as Brewer did at Glenwood Park's groundbreaking, the Atlanta building industry, community residents and tenants, and nearby neighbors are now singing the praises of Glenwood Park.

For more information, visit the Glenwood Park website at www.glenwoodpark.com.

EarthCraft House Program

EarthCraft House is a voluntary green building program of the Greater Atlanta Home Builders Association. By providing rigorous certification, inspection, and testing, it "serves as a blueprint for healthy, comfortable homes that reduce utility

bills and protect the environment."

The values to homebuilders are fourfold:

• Reducing "callbacks" primarily due to comfort or moisture problems—the EarthCraft inspection and testing procedures reduce the need for costly callbacks

• Differentiating the home—demonstrating to consumers that the "homes are superior" because they are energy efficient, durable, and healthy

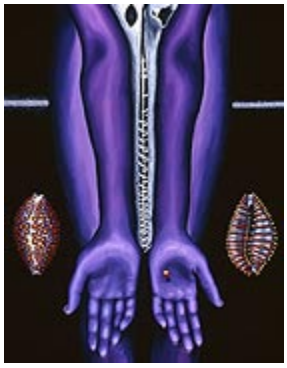
• Increased profit through the "sales" of energy efficiency, indoor air quality, and durability based on the "true cost of home ownership"

• Access to energy mortgage programs that reduce a buyer's mortgage payments, increase the loan amount buyers can quality for, and may even eliminate the need for down payments

The new EarthCraft Community program helps address a number of environmental and economic issues—including suburban sprawl, water quality and conservation, multimodal transportation, energy and materials consumption, green space preservation, and community education—by providing guidelines designed to "protect the environment, enhance the quality of life, and improve local economic vitality."

ARTerrain Gallery

Ten paintings and murals by Stephanie Johnson



Stephanie Johnson, a Tucson, Arizona resident of four years, is an artist and teacher inspired by the life forms of both the Sonoran desert and Atlantic coast's Outer Banks.

She received her B.S. in art in 1992 from James Madison University in Virginia, after a painstaking switch from majoring in biology.

Stephanie taught high school art in the Shenandoah Valley for five years before leaving to stay home with her now eight-year-old son, Zane. While a stay-at-home mom, the artist began painting commissioned murals for various businesses in Virginia.

Artist Stephanie Johnson.

Since moving to Tucson, she continues to create her own art as well as commissioned art in the forms of murals, paintings on canvas, sculpture, and commercial illustrations. Stephanie's work can be found in various private homes and businesses, including the Community of Civano's neighborhood center, Body & Soul, and several magazines and books. She also teaches art classes to the students of Civano elementary and middle schools in the Vail School District. Stephanie currently has her head in the books as she works toward getting back into teaching either art or biology full time.

Many personal interests and experiences shape the artwork of Stephanie Johnson. Although she was raised in the heart of the Shenandoah Valley, it was her family's frequent trips to the Outer Banks of North Carolina that most generated her curiosity in the world of small living things. The instant her dad taught her how to scoop burrowing, alien-looking "sand fleas" (mole crabs, actually; a relative of shrimp) she was hooked on the enigmatic minutiae. The deaths of Stephanie's parents when she was just out of college, as well as the untimely death of a sister several years later, heightened her appreciation of the mysteries of living and of living things. It is this passion that inspires Stephanie to create the images she does. Basically, art is what she does, but biology is what she loves.

Like many visual artists, Stephanie finds it challenging to talk about her art. She would like to believe that her work is successful enough as a visual language to stand on its own before the viewer. However, she can say that, artistically, she tends to focus mostly on organic forms, unusual (perhaps surreal) juxtapositions, and arbitrary colors. Though Stephanie's work often contains many secret personal memories and symbols, she hopes that others—taking the time to consider her art—would find their own individual thoughts and memories automatically stirred. Additionally, she desires to give a general sense of the beauty and sacred value of often-overlooked or perhaps even misunderstood forms of life, as well as a sense of humankind's similarity to these other, seemingly disparate creatures.

For more information, visit Stephanie Johnson's website at www.ACloserLookIllustration.com.

View full ARTerrain Gallery online at www.terrain.org/arterrain/17.

Poetry by Marianne Poloskey

Early Evening, Allison Park

High on the Palisades, early evening
slants everything toward the truth,
the Hudson below flowing and flowing south,
healing Manhattan's shore.
This distortion lengthening the hour,
intent on pushing away
any reminder of what transpired,
blurs the lines to keep us calm,
and although the wind is lazy,
moving only the outer branches of trees,
there is a sense that we cannot grasp
what may be coming toward us.

The path is straight, but striped by trees
and narrow sunlight jittery with dust,
we seem to be going downhill.
On the way to the gates
that will be locked at the rim of night,
people halt and gaze around
as if searching for something lost,
their voices little hammers
striking snippets of thoughts,
interrupted only now and then
by a low-flying plane
whose engines still sing in our blood.

Marianne Poloskey's poetry has appeared in The Christian Science Monitor, Connecticut Review, Louisiana Literature, Paterson Literary Review, The Spoon River Poetry Review, Valparaiso Poetry Review, and War, Literature & the Arts, among others. Her book, Climbing the Shadows, was published in 2001 by Chi Chi Press.

Poetry by John Horváth, Jr.

Kosciusko Park

The elders who sit along this street around spiked canon, suck with thin
breath on clay pipes, talk forgotten tongues spiced with children's words.
With wrinkled suits, holes in soles of Sunday shoes, holes in thin socks
on bone skinny feet on bone tired men, they talk of days when these feet
took them seeking after gold cobblestones. Three old men on benches six
feet long watch children waiting for their seats on childhood streets
where I tramped as a child—how very long they seemed not long ago.

Still the elders fill their pipes and wait for fresh fire and smoke to stir
dead souls while in each rust-screened window a white-scraffed widow,
whose womb turned dust in some now dim barely remembered past, knits,
her rheumy eyes not looking, dreaming children half naked in streets
begging and starving—no better off really no my childood streets
where I tramped as a child; How long they seemed not so long ago.
And there are the bars and pool-halls empty as the hearts of the players
who wet their lips and let raw liquid brew in bellies to burn out memories
of children trampling childhood streets. These my childhood streets—
how long they seemed not so long ago—where I ran for a spell then caught
my breath lagging behind, having to wait for it to come up to hiding places,
old ghosted houses whose layered roofs were made to jump across.

It was a good grand invincible city then, before I knew its tenements
and slumlord misery, before I knew the damn thing was a prison
whose snowdrifts piled high over the heads of the biggest of us
where we'd run through the stuff, eat it like cottoncandy before
we knew other snows were white, before mittens and boots and
the street cleaning machines screamed down our childhood streets.
Here are the streets I tramped as a child—my childhood streets
that seemed so long not so very long ago—and there, the children
run like leaves blown into corners, piling high to dry, waiting to burn.

Toward End Time

Over and over in the milk white breast of time
I look forward to good-byes physical as dew
in the mountain mornings on strange rough grass
whose colors turn as the sun creeps into full day.
Over and over on the wide mothering belly of time
I look forward to good-byes small as the whisper
of beetles whose casings litter the forests of days
bent by the summer thunderheaded storms.
Over and over from the waist down toward time
without stopping til the moon mellows full
after beginning a small sliver in the night,
I look forward to good-byes. Good-bye to being
without time for the circumference of you;
Good-bye to wondering whether again you
and I in the ripeness of flesh will cling
as we had—rich with sweat,
with odors of love; you and I, again.
Again waiting for the breath that breaks water,
that orders the moments between life new
and life past, over and over, again.

Domus

He loved no place for what it was
but what he could make of it

I recall a wondrous instant: father planting trees
around two stories tall a dwelling of brick brightened
with roseate windows made of glass, and hard-wooded
floor parquetry from discards; with neighbors from birth
until death. we gathered and we sang, we sang sweet
tunes—the last time such airs were sung—for traveling,
whose rhythms were for wagon wheels and ocean waves.
    he made a strange form as if roof and wall -
    it shelters; we called "house"; it became “home”

nor loved he a man for who he was
but for what he might become

I recall a wondrous instant: father planting trees—
plum, almond, peach, and apricot—around that house
of brick two stories tall with windowpanes of glass
and hard-wood floors while neighbors who'd announce
our future births with pagan song and Christian toasts
gathered and sang sweet airs that none might sing again,
rhythms from the roll of wagon wheels and ocean ships.
    He met neighbors—with bulky shoulders, massive necks,
    broad-chested, full of toughness, health and strength
    like animals and trees of the wet North.

    Each face is like a country:
    plain, an open or a wild waste.

He loved no place for what it was but loved
for what he could make of it; nor loved
a man for what he was but for what he could
become—a wondrous instant, I recall

    I was among the guests;
    beer and wine drank I;
    and, what I saw, I put
    into these very books
    under the thatch of a roof.

It was as if our feet had never touched
the earth; as if no one had come our way.
Revolution in his grasp, his planting,
and his song.

John Horváth, Jr. recently published Golden Hits: 1970-2000 (Pudding House Press), and has also authored Reverend Terrebonne Walker: A Dozen Southern Fried Poems and Iliana Region Poems: Harboring the Enemy.

Poetry by Charlotte Matthews

Readying for the Storm

At the naval yard, before the hurricane,
ships are put to open sea
where they rock as dark clouds build in the east,
strange as the dream of the storm
which scared you into your body,
pulled you back until you stood
so small in the sunlight listening
to the dull sound of the neighbor's mower
cutting grass in the long backyard
that juts from his house.

There's a hill where I live.
But it's more than that.

At the public park
the swings have been looped
motionless over the steel bars.
There they are,
guarded against the wind,
and all the boats,
the supply ships and frigates,
minesweeps and tankers,
sway like a person standing
in line holding a child.

I sailed all night
trying to find your voice.

Out in the rising storm
ships cannot come to harm
against the pier, the wharves.
Think of a tree felled.
It's already lying down.

Temagami

Once, in August, far out on the lake
where we had paddled for weeks beneath tall pines,
searching for dead, standing trees we called chicots
as if the name itself could bring us to them,
where there was no one for days
until, portaging through muskeg,
we would pass a couple, their heads down, walking straight,
a thunderstorm spread across the lake so fast
lightning came before the cool.
Shore was far.
And it was then words came back
like an old house that finally settles on its foundation.
What we said to each other once we reached shore
must have been something about luck
or speed, I don't know, but it was that
the words themselves were filled with our listening.

Metamorphosis

In first grade we rubbed textures
on thin sheets of paper:
the impressions of cinder
block, a white oak leaf, the palm
of Mrs. Lindsten's large hand.
The smell in the hallway was always
the same and words from the
science class came up to us odd
and startling as their teacher explained
eggs, larvae, pupa, adult.
How unlike what we are doing,
as we press firmly with
crayon, how strange to first
be one thing and then another.

Charlotte Matthews' chapbook A Kind of Devotion was published by The University of South Carolina's Palanquin Press in 2004. Other poems have appeared in Virginia Quarterly Review, Tar River Poetry, The Mississippi Review, Shade, Sou'wester, Meridian, Potomac Review, and Eclipse.

Poetry by J.D. Smith

Urbis

We came from farms, from small towns,
distant countries, and we were various—
the sodomites, the bored,
the bookish and unmarriageable,
and mostly, those who knew
that, wherever they had come from,
the pies had been cut long ago.
We made from level land, fresh water
a place that would embrace us,
our coin of effort
held in common currency.
From it, docks and bridges rose,
tracks webbed a continent,
a fist of skyline broke the plain.
Our want outlined, we brought it
to a brittle gleam
with theaters and stadia
spreading wide and filling full
of cliques enough for everyone
to find one of his choice,
and others whose postal code,
or skin, made the choice worthwhile.
Only on free evenings
do new wants arise—
to visit parents' graves
and buy a nearby plot,
to have the pleasure of, besides a dog,
space to let him run.

On Wide Plains

There are two elevations to know:
a man's height
and the height of grain.

Trees occur as exceptions.
No principle extends from them
to the next unshaded mile.

By day, a standing figure
casts a shadow that can tell the hour.

Unseen, he might strip, go on four legs,
and, for a time, attempt
the grazing of vanished buffalo.

At night, he might shout,
waking no one, and fall asleep
waiting for the echo—

while unbounded syllables
dissolve into the breeze,
the broad dark.

Beatitude

Blessed are the broad-leaf weeds
that erupt from cracks in flagstones,
for they attest to the persistence of life
even in scant dirt, underfoot,
where others have appeared
between attacks with sharp trowels
and treatments with well-aimed sprays.

Blessed, again, are the unknowing.

J.D. Smith is the author of Settling for Beauty (Cherry Grove Collections, 2005) and The Hypothetical Landscape. He also edited the anthology Northern Music: Poems About and Inspired by Glenn Gould, and has published poetry and prose in numerous journals.

Poetry by Jake Adam York

Panoramic: Landscape With Repeating Figures

Scroll of darkness, power out, down, a fog set in, no stars or lightning bugs, no sodium haze. Unearthly dark few will remember.

Then, at left, static, subatomic streams scatter and resolve, a copse, contradictory spread from the blank: boxwood, sumac, smilax, suckle, scrub oak, dogwood, saplings: a dim explosion with a calf nested in its jets, a single face clouded by warmth.

Face in a crease of rising bank as the pasture shoulders free, the lens swinging around to catch her, the rise shielding movement. The light

comes to reveal feed grass and weed, shock of blades and tall stalks bending in slight wind, blur, expressed from every inch of hoof-beaten ground, variable to graph the chewing and movements otherwise uncaptured here.

In the thickening grass, legs sharpen upward, cropped with plaid and fleece-lined denim, and beneath the ball-cap the eyes, carved and carving, in early light. The pastureland falls toward the pond dug so the cattle could cool in swelters, a morning like this, frost glazing in silver-gelatin tones,

ideal for the half-ton bulls, leather and wool. The clouds of their breathing smudge, like the ghost of his walking along the dark thicket edge of the field, tangle where coyotes wait.

Rise. Rise. Flash off the tin roof of the cabin, walls dropped, opened, screened again for a room open to the wind, and the barn, framed and rebuilt again and again, and the horse whose mane catches latening sun like grass or corn tassels, the strands caught and blurred in wind. Where ice has frozen in hoof-wells and tire-wells, light gathering to molten.

Crest, fall. Terraces dim beneath the grass and strew of hay. Shock of pine and oak rising from creekbed. Slow grade of day into shadow and canopied dark, tangle and reticulation haunted by thrashers, flickers, snakes, dogs, stray calves drowning in separation.

Slowly, the house resolving, a light in a window, a face framed but moving, lost in the grain. A boot, crusted with mud, by the door, pasture crusting off. Ghost of a foot blurring in the door. Yard and road, hay-barn, power-lines. Constellation of subdivision lights. Expanse of golf-course and empty lots. A silence of bulldozed earth, fading, masked and failing, vaporizing into thinner and thinner films, until the salts are altogether dry and quiet, dark.

Unearthly. Black.

Double Exposure

Not even a father yet
my grandfather leans against
the grille of his ’46 Packard,
new chrome blinding

even in black-and-white.
His white slacks billow
like a skirt in the wind.
His hair is perfectly still.

The war is behind him.
The road winds up from the farm.
One cornhusk hand
slips from the fender

and into the fingers
that ghost his fingers,
the thin, delicate lace
that haunts his hems.

The more I look, the more
he looks like someone else,
ringlets massing in his hair,
the gaze gone strangely tender,

and the smile now doubly bright—
bright as the rings on his finger
casting what they cannot hold,
as if ready to part, to say

what’s hidden’s never hid
but beating like a second heart,
a second pulse in the pulse
that runs through everything.

Elegy for Little Girls

Sloss Furnaces, Birmingham, September 16th 1963

Puncture the mud, the iron pours out

§

tongue of fire, not a word

§

stays still but breaks along the channels

§

pressed in the cast floor’s sand.

§

Now it’s pigs suckling at the sow’s

§

iron teats, so many children blind

§

to the air and world that harden them.

§

A gift. Dark come on. When

§

the slag-man pulls the plug, fire

§

explodes, its violent, molten light

§

bathes the irons, a glow on their spines

§

like stained glass or twilight fades

§

on headstones' crests, row on row on row.

Jake Adam York is an Alabama native now living in Denver, where he teaches for the University of Colorado at Denver and Health Sciences Center. His book of poems Murder Ballads will be published in November 2005 by Elixir Press. He is a co-editor of storysouth.com.

Poetry by Michael J. Vaughn

Precipitous

Long before I intellectualized
everything into a
windstorm of rods and cones
I recall

standing in the rain
watching a slick of oil as it
snakes down the gutter like a
long, liquid cypress tree.

Framing the surface to a
lunchbox-size lake,
I spot a single pockmark landing and
reverse the telescope

winding it back on a
kitestring path to the clouds
where it balances in the vapor like an
English riding champion
waiting for gravity to deliver its
unassailable marching orders

Around the corner my gutterstream
breaks loose, a centrifugal fan
fingering the asphalt for flaws and seams
tracking south to an unseen ocean

I picture myself on a beach
six months later.
I spy my single drop on a
sea lion's nose and exclaim,
"Friend! How are you?
You're looking well."

At what height did I stop
watching the rain?
Five-two? Four-foot-eight?

Short enough only today, only now
to set aside my junk mail
see a thing for a thing and
inventory the small dramas at my feet.

Postmark

Salieri tut-tutting Mozart at the
volleyball match and
the apartments so regally named

Duxbury, Cambridge, Wilsonion

Armed with a ballcap
scouring the treetops for
bald eagles make this special make this
deeper than a looped-over cowpath to the
library the coffeehouse the
bookstore the café the
biblioteque the roasting company like a
volleyball match like a

bald eagle at a piano
pecking out Figaro
string over string in a chickenwire weave
mixing up the streets to
cheat the demon backtrack

Tacoma Yakima Ruston McCarver the

boxcar line the salmon fry the
raccoon wood and the
bald eagles hanging in the air like
volleyballs

I roost at the Windsor regally named and
scour the mailbox for bald eagles

Salieri was no slouch.

Secession

God bless the Japanese
the elderly ceramicist
Steve the mechanic

who have conspired to
give me a car that's
old enough to drink

spry enough to graze
the left side of America.

God bless the winemakers of
Sonoma County who have
felled the autumn trees of Pittsburgh

lain them in orange yellow
stripes over the green of
California's first rain

This my national flag
this my windsock antenna I
fly north, seeking sovereignty

your cool spiderwebbed song
a narrow whisper in the
creep of radio static

Michael J. Vaughn lives in Tacoma at the Windsor Apartments (regally named). He is the author of six novels, including the road novel Rhyming Pittsburgh. Vaughn is a regular contributor to Writer's Digest, which will publish his roundtable with author-poets Diane Ackerman, Naomi Shihab-Nye, and Kim Addonizio this fall.

Poetry by Margarita Engle

Archetype

Is it true that nothing reveals more
about a person's secret heart
than the adult memory of a favorite
childhood fairy tale?

I never understood all the fuss
about princesses poisoned
or rescued from dragons.
Hansel and Gretel seemed like a recitation
of the sorrowful evening news
a serial killer, the ovens, absent parents
a famine, crumbs...

Instead of magic beanstalks and man-eating giants
or wolves disguised as gentle grandmas
I chose the tale of a bird with a voice that could soothe
the melancholic spirit of an emperor
helpless despite his wealth and power.

Of all tales, only The Nightingale felt
like a story I knew before I was born
about Orpheus calming wild beasts with his lyre
King David's harp easing Saul's despair
Saint Francis with his curious flocks of birds
singing back and forth in a language of wishing
that even the wolf understood.

Memory

When songs were alive
they needed no mouths
to send them flying.

Melodies grew
their own wings.

Rhythms knew
how to leap.

The lost tribe
of lyrics
rose without effort
seeking its own form
of peace.

Variations on a Theme

hanging garden
sunken garden
floating garden
flying garden

cool, dark, mysterious
underground garden
treetops at toe level
a reverent gardener bows down to meet
midsummer's
hot earth
the search
for ripe fruit

Margarita Engle is a botanist and agronomist and the Cuban-American author of Singing to Cuba (Arte Publico Press), Skywriting (Bantam), and The Poet-Slave: A Biography in Poems of Juan Francisco Manzano (Henry Holt). Her work has appeared in Atlanta Review, California Quarterly, Caribbean Writer, and Thema. Her most recent book is Word Wings, a collection of poems for children (Elin Grace Publishing).

Poetry by Yvette A. Schnoeker-Shorb

Upper Limits of Urban Gardening

To get to the garden on beet-red mornings,
when I was a girl, we took dirt paths
not elevators. To fill our watering cans,
we used long, green hoses
not barrels labeled Rain and Gray.
And we did not wonder what would happen
if the root vegetables raced each other
down beyond the soil's embrace. Back then,
the cultivated plants kept company
with native shrubs, not like these carrots
and edible comrades sharing a separate bed,
being pampered by captured solar caresses.
I confess it's an effort to feel grounded
enough—without getting dizzy—to wave
back to my neighbor pulling weeds,
tending tendrils within the next Plexiglas case
when our "backyard fence" is the empty space
of a ten-story drop from rooftop to busy street
below that which we dutifully grow to eat.

Feminine Ecology and Population Growth

I water these wild rose weeds,
a woman out of place,
one more human
attempting grace in the garden,
her stay overgrown,
hair wilting, thighs moist
in the fire heat of the season;
damn this breeding need
to bring one more flower
into a struggling paradise.

Originally appeared in Heliotrope: A Writer's Summer Solstice.

Yvette A. Schnoeker-Shorb's poetry has appeared in Wild Earth, Weber Studies, The Blueline Anthology, The Midwest Quarterly, Poems for a Livable Planet, and many others. She works as a mentor and co-editor of Sustainable Ways at Prescott College, and as co-publisher of Native West Press.

Poetry by Lynn Strongin

We Interrupt This Program

(rain & snow blowing like lit numerals)
to tell you the news:
Ladies & Gentlemen: we make mention that Mavourneen our "Fragile X"*
baby is making some progress

Still seems of another Century
in huge billowing baby gowns

But despite her disability, retardation, she's got a high enough sense of Ceremony
not to have a *melt-down*
during her brother's Baptism.

Tilting toward the Father's holy waters
in hallucinatory fascination

She struggles to make human sounds but sounds like a small trapped animal.
She catches the eyes of all
which are pinned like an edict of salvation on the baby.

Her daddy pins all his hopes on her:
while all her thoughts are piled, precarious toys in a pyramid
of colored cubes which begins to topple

the apple-red & whittle-white wood pooling
blue circles:
John the Baptist's head was brought in on a platter.
Not dainty
or nice as ice on lace.

But she holds her flock high in milky air
enjoying the corduroy sound her dress is making
against her plump thighs during their Baptism

like her track suit.
"She wants to be shy again," her brother begins to explain to the Priest who nods, he understands.
Soon she'll be back home spanking her orange jello till the pile shimmers

like taffeta
like an icon
of neon.
Her mother remembers the morning she was delivered
invisible God-prints all over her
like the cellophane, lime green, wrapping one dozen American beauty roses translucent, thorned.

This is KOA, Kansas This show is brought to you by "Cornhusker's Lotion." We now return to our scheduled program:
You can resume your evening's occupation:
reading, ironing.

* Fragile X syndrome is the most common genetic form of mental retardation

At Season's End, sleep is all

after the children

after the people seen off
(& in)
in the quiet of a little mill & mining town

hear weathers shift gears:
Leather stick-shift:

hear tht high hum
almost beyond human

which puts the red-alert on:

logs & sawmills
wood dust drifting everywhere
And this is only the beginning of the onslaught: to blind

Katrina

All the world is a dome of lit burnt copper
Yet the nuance is water. Bright when sun hits it as cracked sugar.

Women & children wear borrowed finery, lampshades for hats & they
taste ash cakes white-clay like Civil War Soldiers.

A circle-saw takes a white disc from sky.
Pavement teeth cutting in the *land of the best sideshow*
the fast greenback flashing, America, the brave:

Lickety-Split. Knock down all nine pines

Nerve squall
like the scare when kids get wired

can't come down: you can almost see the filament glowing. You can see
the wired thread in their bones.

Lynn Strongin is an American poet living in Canada. She has published seven books of poetry, and appeared in numerous journals and anthologies, most recently in the award-winning Visiting Emily: Poems Inspired by the Life & Work of Emily Dickinson. In Spring 2006 the University of Iowa Press will publish her anthology The Sorrow Psalms: A Book of Twentieth Century Elegy.

Essay

by Emily Talen

For those of us concerned with the planning and protection of the environment, there is much in the world that needs our attention. Now, recent events have reminded us that on at least one major front, we have failed drastically: the problem of residential segregation. Uniting the environmentalist and the urban planner in the wake of Hurricane Katrina should be an unambiguous commitment to creating human settlements that are socially diverse—the human parallel of the biological diversity seen as necessary for the sustenance of the natural environment.

For the moment, everyone is focused on the injustice of concentrated poverty—the lack of diversity—that the destruction of New Orleans laid bare. Mark Naison, director of the urban studies program at Fordham University, implored, "Is this what the pioneers of the civil rights movement fought to achieve, a society where many black people are as trapped and isolated by their poverty as they were by legal segregation laws?"

In the weeks and months ahead, we need to make sure that the planner's role in this does not get swept under the table. All of us concerned with the "metropolitan mosaic" need to embrace a united commitment to planning for social diversity.

New Orleans is not the first catastrophe to reveal the gross injustices of residential segregation. The 1995 heat wave that killed so many black residents in Chicago was in part a result of their social isolation. Planners—including New Urbanists and environmentalists—need to get serious about

actively supporting an urban framework that does not foster segregation. That should be seen as fundamental, the cornerstone of our prescriptions for urban reform. The events of the weeks following Katrina have emphasized what we already know—that a lack of social diversity creates neighborhoods that experience concentrated poverty, disinvestment in the built environment, and the perpetuation of an "American Apartheid."

Yet in discussions about how to address segregation—in many ways the antithesis of social diversity—planners and environmentalists have been relatively withdrawn. Unlike in many other countries, planners have not been called upon to address the problems of inner city disinvestment, white flight, and segregation. City design and the social pathology it can produce have been kept separate, as if not related. Plans are conceived of as singular intentions, regarded as incongruous within a diverse society.

It is true that "diversity" is an overused term that has become cliché and ill-defined, described recently in The New York Times as "a trendy code word." And there is no set definition. Diversity can be defined in various ways, using different types of variables like race or income. There may be deeper meanings involving moral commitment, positive social contact, and solidarity. It may be rejected as something impossible to define altogether, or impossible to achieve given the "American preference" for homogeneity. Yet none of these reasons should shelter planners from their need to address the fundamental injustice of the segregated city.

On a numbers of indicators (poverty, employment, income), sorting and separation in the American pattern of settlement is not improving. While racial diversity in the suburbs has increased, and more immigrants now live in the suburbs than in central cities, the gaps between city and suburb, or between one suburb and another, or between one neighborhood and another have widened in the past half-century. For Hispanics and Asians, segregation appears to be increasing. Between 1970 and 2000, there was a 30% net increase in class dissimilarity, an increase, especially, in the concentration of affluence at the neighborhood level. And while downtown neighborhoods are gentrifying, they are not necessarily on their way to becoming mixed-income and multiracial; they are instead on their way to becoming middle and upper-middle class neighborhoods, and in the process simply shifting concentrated poverty from one location to another.

There is also evidence that suburbs are differentiating themselves along race and class lines. We may now have more poor and minorities in the suburbs, but that does not necessarily mean we are integrating people in meaningful ways. Neither does an increase in aggregate diversity mean an increase in neighborhood integration. In the South, levels of black suburbanization are relatively high, but they tend to be in the form of clustered housing at the periphery, separate from new white suburbs.

The pattern of separation is both well-studied and widely critiqued. A wealth of scholarship has focused on the effect of planning policy and regulation on the isolation of poor and minority groups, notably Anderson's The Federal Bulldozer (1964), Frieden & Kaplan's The Politics of Neglect (1975), Kushner's Apartheid in America (1982), Keating's The Suburban Racial Dilemma (1994), or Thomas & Ritzdorf's Urban Planning and the African American Community (1997). These studies and many others document the unfortunate separation that is often only reinforced by the planning response.

Using the physical environment to promote racial justice was a stated goal in post-World War II planning. Books like Charles Abrams' Forbidden Neighbors (1955) were about racial justice through integration, arguing the case for residential social mix in unequivocal terms. Urban renewal programs in the 1950s were actually based on the presumption that social mix could make communities more stable. Famous examples of new town development in the 1960s, like Columbia, Maryland and Reston, Virginia, were planned for racial and economic mixing.

Now, as we contemplate the incalculable effort that will be required to rebuild a large swath of the Gulf coast, we should revive this commitment to social mix, and the use of planning, design, and all the programs and processes we can muster to achieve it. Environmentalists, planners, and all those concerned with the task should focus on the fact that diversity in residential areas is not something to back away from.

New Orleans has reminded us that social divisions are manifested and reinforced in spaces and landscapes that reflect separation. Planners will need to develop a better understanding of the difference between redevelopment that contributes to loss of diversity and redevelopment that genuinely brings increased diversity. To work toward stability and discourage displacement, to simultaneously support homeownership and rental housing, to successfully integrate a range of housing types and densities, levels of affordability, a mix of uses, and neighborhood and social services—all of this together requires holistic attention that includes the physical form of communities and the characteristics that may help to retain diversity. Planners need to be on the front line of these efforts.

Emily Talen is associate professor of urban and regional planning at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, and recently published New Urbanism and American Planning: The Conflict of Cultures (Routledge, 2005). Her research focuses on exploring the spatial patterns of American cities. Prior to earning her Ph.D. and teaching, she worked for six years as a professional planner in Santa Barbara, California, and Columbus, Ohio.

Essay

by David R. Foote [with online slideshow]

Nestled behind the dunes along the southern shore of Lake Michigan is a small community that was built by a Progressive era vision that married the fledgling fields of ecology and sociology through the interaction and friendship of some remarkable individuals. Even though they were vanguards of independent movements in conservation, the arts, architecture, and social reform, they were united by a deeply felt civic duty to heal greater Chicago of its industrial age woes. Today, the Prairie Club's Hazelhurst stands as a testament to both the extraordinary cast who gave birth to that vision, and all those who have kept the spirit of it alive over the decades.

The Prairie Club of Chicago had been encouraging the love of nature for over twenty years when Hazelhurst was founded in 1930. From the beginning, the permanent and seasonal residents, or "dunebugs," have been active participants in their community and have developed a unique lifestyle with a rich culture of traditions. Annual events, storytelling, songs, plays, music, games, Monday morning coffee socials, natural history presentations, and organized work days at regional parks and trails have been cornerstones of Hazelhurst's "dunebug" tradition. Underlying it all is the desire to be good stewards of the land.

Made up of ninety-four private, cottage-style residences set unobtrusively into a 60-acre mixed pine/hardwood forest behind the beautiful dunes of Lake Michigan, Hazelhurst was designed to encourage resident interactions with the natural landscape as well as each other. There are no lawns or fences to separate the Prairie Clubbers from their wooded surroundings or their neighbors. Several common facilities are also tucked neatly into the woods and are maintained by volunteers and open for the use of all the residents and visiting members including a 600-foot beach, converted barn auditorium for special programs, small library, junior clubhouse, open park area, and several hostel-style rental facilities.

Hazelhurst embodies all of the characteristics of a modern cohousing development, yet preceded the earliest by decades. It operates like a community land trust with all the land owned in common, yet

preceded the earliest of those by decades. The land immediately under a private residence is leased to the homeowner in an automatically renewing land-lease.

The remarkable vision that founded the Prairie Club is clearly evident in every aspect of Hazelhurst's physical form and cultural identity. That vision began to form shortly after the turn of the 20th century in the recesses of several minds that came to find themselves in the same place at the same time, and though they hadn't realized it yet, the same purpose.

The City Club

The post Civil War industrial development that propelled the United States into a world power had come with some severe side-effects. In Chicago and elsewhere, economic efficiency and expediency were the rule of the day in determining how urban areas were built. There was little regard to the impact on the human condition or the native landscape. As industrialist influence over land use and politics swelled, a pervasive sense of malaise and powerlessness seemed to settle in among the city-dwellers.

Jens Jensen, an acclaimed landscape architect, was a founding member of the Prairie club.
Photo courtesy Cathy Jean Maloney, The Prairie Club of Chicago.

It was in this environment that the Chicago City Club, the first of its kind, was established in 1903 as a forum for reviving interest in municipal policymaking and developing ways to improve the urban condition. It quickly attracted a diverse group of civic-minded people who steadfastly believed that there had to be a better way for a city to grow.

Some came to the City Club concerned with the ever expanding grid of factories, tenements, and bungalows that were sprawling outward faster than anyone had imagined possible just a few years before, erasing all evidence of the native prairie and forests that lay in its path. Among these were Stephen Tyng Mather, a native Californian who was an active member of John Muir's Sierra Club and had just made millions in the Borax business; Jens Jensen, the soon-to-be renowned landscape architect and the new superintendent of the West Park System (as well as a friend of botanist/geologist Henry C. Cowles, one of the founders of the field of ecology); and Alexander M. Wilson, the Chicago Tuberculosis Institute's superintendent and member of the Appalachian Mountain Club.

The City Club also attracted social reformers who believed society was paying for industrial development through the deterioration of health and well-being. These included Dr. Charles Zueblin, one of the first American sociologists and a student of the relationship between built environments and social condition; Dr. Graham Taylor, a theologian who was active with Chicago's settlement houses (established to help poor immigrants) and who believed that the dismal urban environment was killing morality; Thomas W. Allinson, another settlement house leader, who believed that access

to nature was essential for maintaining a positive outlook and sound mental health; and Paul P. Harris, a lawyer who believed in the value of serving others and the restorative powers of the natural environment.

Finally, a group of architects were present who were exploring better ways to build that could help reverse the deteriorating urban setting. This group included architectural giants like Louis Sullivan, the Pond brothers (who's designs included the settlement houses and the City Club building), Marion Mahony (the first licensed female architect in America), Walter Burley Griffin, and Dwight H. Perkins.

Hazelhurst's beach, dunes, and woods from Lake Michigan.
Photo by Sarah Foote.

A "Committee on the Universe"

Through the City Club, they would build bonds of respect and influence that would last, and in some cases shape, the rest of their lives. Much of that influence began with an ad hoc lunch group that would meet with some regularity, but whose composition would change slightly from lunch to lunch. Dwight Perkins called it a "Committee on the Universe" that brought out all of their best ideas.

They came to see that their individual causes had the same basic need. Specifically they realized a powerful symbiosis: those who would preserve the natural landscape realized that in order to protect it they needed an inspired free-thinking population to value it, and those who sought a better social condition in the city realized that their artificial surroundings were the cause of the prevalent political malaise and social deterioration.

They knew that if they could bring the natural landscape back into the lives of Chicago's residents, they would soon come to value having the trees, blossoms, and quiet places more than anything else in the city. Having attended Massachusetts Institute of Technology, architects Perkins and Mahony were very familiar with the benefits to that urban populace that came with Frederick Law Olmstead's recent transformation of the Boston Fenway into a beautifully landscaped urban oasis of trees, waterways, and footpaths. By making the enjoyment of the natural landscape a part of everyday life, the group could satisfy a deep thirst of residents who had for too long been divorced from it.

Having the positive influence of those special places in common would help diverse individuals (many of whom were first generation immigrants) begin to see themselves as a community. They knew that a community united with shared interests and a common identity would grow strong and fight for things that they believed would make their daily lives better, not the least of which would be their new-found relationship with nature. They envisioned political power shifting away from the industrialists as communities grew stronger and more active. Building for efficiency and expediency without regard to the human condition and natural environment would become unthinkable.

The First Steps Along the Path: 1906 - 1911

An aerial view of the Prairie Club's Hazelhurst based on imagery from a 1998 USGS Digital Orthophoto Quadrangle. Click map for larger image. Image courtesy U.S. Geological Survey.

As superintendent of the West Park System, Jens Jensen (himself a first generation immigrant from Denmark) immediately set to work transforming the existing city owned properties under his care into naturally landscaped treasures. He had spent years studying associations of native plants in the area with his good friend Henry Cowles. He would use this knowledge to design parks that were a human expression of the regional native landscape. His designs would include countless opportunities to encourage a community to interact within the natural setting, such as secluded places to sit in solitude or in small groups for quiet enjoyment, stone “council rings” to encourage conversation among community members in a way that diminished social hierarchy and status, places that encouraged children to play and explore, and players’ greens that used shade trees surrounding a raised grassy clearing to form a natural stage for community and ethnic performances. These designs would help launch a highly successful career in private practice and would establish Jensen as one of the greatest American landscape architects.

The architects Perkins, Griffin, and Mahony were also putting their energies into bringing nature to the city by experimenting with house and building designs that fit the region, and like Jensen’s landscape designs, were an expression of the native landscape and pioneer heritage of the area. In fact, Griffin and Mahony’s design for the Rock Glen - Rock Crest community in Mason City, Iowa (and their later design of Castlecrag in Australia) share some striking features with Hazelhurst, including homes blended into the natural landscape and preservation areas held in common. Griffin and Mahony went as far as to create designs that made buildings physically part of the landscape. In some of their designs it is difficult to tell where the natural landscape stops and the house begins.

In addition to improving the condition of the existing urban area, the group set about to influence future growth. They wanted Chicago to grow in a way that enhanced its regional identity and preserved the high quality of life common to more rural areas. To achieve this they sought to have the remaining natural lands in the path of development preserved so that the native forests and prairies would be the dominant physical feature around which new communities would be built. Just by being there and being easily accessible, they believed the natural lands could influence the development of both the physical form and social condition of the new communities. However, it would take much more leverage than just their little lunch group to push the local and state government to establish a system of urban forest preserves.

In the Spring of 1908 Alexander Wilson (who led guided walks in Maine) brought forward the idea of bringing the public out of the city for walks through the countryside, particularly the areas they

most wanted to see preserved. The city residents would be able to begin to experience the benefits of getting out of their artificial world and into the native landscape, and the small group would be able to build a strong dedicated base of public support. The Saturday afternoon walks were open to everyone, and commenced in locations accessible by public transportation so that anyone could participate. Griffin, Mahony, Jensen, Perkins, Harris, Taylor, Allinson, Wilson, Cowles, and Mather were all active participants and gave the walks a high public profile. Sympathetic members of Chicago's social elite would open up their country estates for the walkers. The popularity of the walks grew rapidly and would regularly draw hundreds of hikers out of the city. In 1911, as the group's membership grew and the focus broadened, they incorporated as "The Prairie Club," a name picked by Jens Jensen.

A number of people from Chicago's arts community were prominent and influential members of the early Prairie Club. They saw in the natural landscape a limitless source of inspiration that added another dimension to the call to preserve remaining natural lands. Among these were the sculptor Lorado Taft, frontier writer Hamlin Garland, painter Frank V. Dudley, and the Art Institute of Chicago's William M.R. French (brother of sculptor Douglas French who created the giant seated sculpture of Abraham Lincoln in Lincoln's Memorial). William French had been a partner of the famous landscape architect H.W.S. Cleveland as a civil engineer in the development of Chicago's South Side Parks; he had also been a neighbor and family friend of Ralph Waldo Emerson.

A Prairie Club Saturday afternoon wal, circa 1913. Photo courtesy Cathy Jean Maloney, The Prairie Club of Chicago.

Great Strides

As its membership grew, the Prairie Club began to push hard for preservation. Now that the natural lands, through the walks, had become important in the lives of so many, Jensen and Perkins with the support of the Club were able to get a bill through the Illinois legislature in 1913 (on the third attempt) followed by a public referendum that created the Cook County Forest Preserves as a greenbelt around a growing Chicago.

Stephen Mather, who was a member of the Club's conservation committee, brought the Club's philosophy to bear on national issues including the condition of the national parks in his native California. Mather would leave Chicago for Washington in 1916 where he went before Congress asking for the creation of a National Park Service that would oversee an expanded park system and provide better public access to natural areas. Mather was then appointed as the first director of the National Park Service. Much of the organizational culture and many traditions of today's Park Service can be attributed to his 12 years as director, as well as the many state park systems that modeled themselves after the federal system.

One of the principle elements of Prairie Club culture is public service and participatory citizenship.

Service was the driving passion of member Paul Harris, who had founded a separate service-oriented social club for professionals and businessmen in 1905. By 1911, his "service before self" Rotary organization had become international with 31 clubs. A decade later Rotary would have 1,000 clubs; and in 1945 would be a vast international organization called upon to help write the United Nations charter. In 1910 he met his future wife, fellow club member Jean Thomson, on a Prairie Club hike.

The idea of the Club establishing temporary and permanent camps in favorite natural areas took root around 1910. Lorado Taft and Hamlin Garland (who was married to Taft's sister, Zulime) had been members of an artist community called Eagle's Nest since 1898. Eagle's Nest was founded for the arts, yet it bears striking similarities to Hazelhurst and the other Club camps in form and function: its land was held in common, small private cottages were set into the native landscape without fences or boundaries, and it too had its own unique culture.

The Prairie Club established its first camp, Tremont, in 1911 in a favorite hideaway, the secluded dunes on Lake Michigan in Northwest Indiana where Henry C. Cowles and Jens Jensen had spent many years exploring (Cowles's theories on plant ecology came from observing dune migrations). Early Prairie Clubbers would escape to Tremont at every opportunity; a "dunebug" society quickly formed as club members began to fully realize the personal and social benefits of frequent escapes to the native beauty of the dune lands. The emerging culture and strong community bonds among club members supported the vision that created the Prairie Club and hinted at the possibilities for nature-based social reform on a larger scale.

This would have been clearly evident to two Prairie Club members in particular, architects Walter Burley Griffin and Marion Mahony. Griffin and Mahony had been working colleagues for some time, but through their shared interest in nature they fell in love among the trails and rivers that the Club frequented. In 1911 they were married in the Indiana Dunes. When an international competition was held that year for the design of a national capitol for Australia, Griffin and Mahony threw together all of their ideas on how a society should function in relationship to the environment and each other. Their submission was of a city that accentuated the native landscape, with an architecture that was an expression of the surrounding environment, where natural features were preserved and served specific societal functions, and where land was held in common. Their design for Canberra, beautifully presented on Marion Mahony Griffin's larger than life earth-toned panels, was announced the winner in the spring of 1912.

The Prairie Club's greatest challenge was to see the Indiana Dunes preserved. It was also the clearest example of the importance for a conservation movement to first be a social movement, and for the natural landscape to be an enriching part of a community's daily life. One can easily imagine how heartbreaking it must have been for the Club's "dunebugs" to see their beloved dunes literally carried away scoop by scoop for sand mining, then replaced with a steel mill that belched out a thick brown smoke without pause. The dunes were part of who they were, part of their identity.

The Prairie Club launched into action; raising awareness by inviting the public and influential people to large-scale masques in the dunes analogous to today's benefit concerts (the performing arts remain a unifying tradition at Hazelhurst). The largest masque, performed in 1917, was written by Thomas Wood Stevens, had a cast of over 600, and attracted a crowd of around 50,000 to the remote

location.

Despite generating a spectacular show of public support and having Stephen Mather as the National Park Service director who was on a personal mission to see the dunes preserved, the Club and Mather could not overcome wartime politics in Congress with a precedent-setting proposal to buy private land for preservation at such a large scale. Though eventually a National Lakeshore would be established, the Club had better immediate luck with the State of Indiana. Indiana Dunes State Park was created over an area that included the Club's Tremont camp that they had agreed to sell at cost to the State.

Hazelhurst

A residence in the Prairie Club's Hazelhurst.
Photo by Sharon Curtis.

Hazelhurst was established in Michigan a few miles north of the Indiana border in 1930 to replace Tremont. It would become a permanent home for some members, a seasonal home for others, and a frequent respite for the rest. Though many of the early members had either died or moved on to other things, the "dunebug" culture would thrive here. The essence of that culture would come from the core values of land stewardship, volunteerism, and reinforcing good moral character. The drive to participate is contagious, and alluring enough to bring even the most hardened souls out of their shells.

What Hazelhurst lacks in individualism it makes up in a celebration of individuality. Participation in the community often becomes an exercise in self expression. Nowhere is this more striking than in the small library where books are donated by residents and visitors as a means to share subjects and interests that are closest to them. If a resident wants to try his or her hand as a playwright or director, he or she only has to set a date at the Red Barn (an actual barn that was converted into an intimate performance hall) and recruit a cast. Prairie Clubbers are always giving of themselves, whether it's telling stories around a fire on the beach, playing music at the Red Barn, or introducing children to a hobby or craft.

For the children of the residents, Hazelhurst has endless opportunities for exploring the natural world. The trails are lined with wild varieties of raspberries, mulberries, blackberries, strawberries, grapes, and morel mushrooms. There is a Junior Clubhouse at the edge of a large grassy clearing and park area where they can play a game of ping-pong or just sit and talk. There are sandy clearings that invite playing, odd-shaped trees that invite climbing, vines that invite swinging, and an endless assortment of nature's little oddities to stir the imagination.

Along the footpaths that lead up to the houses and on many of the fireplace mantles are weird little figures made by children or grandchildren from pockets of sculpting-quality clay that can be found by shuffling feet along the sandy lake bottom. The clay will often become gray war-paint stripes on arms and faces; on occasion one may even see pygmy mud-men covered from head to toe bounding

up the beach.

When the Prairie Club purchased Hazelhurst it was part of a working farm with several existing structures. The main farmhouse, the beach house "Buena Vista," and the second floor of the Red Barn were converted into hostel and dormitory-style rentals with common kitchens that were available to Prairie Clubbers who didn't own a residence.

Residences in Hazelhurst are restricted in size, most are small cottages with one or two bedrooms and a loft. A few are a little larger. One of the striking features that many of the original homes share are colorful rock chimneys. As the massive glaciers retreated thousands of years ago, they left behind coarsely rounded rocks of every color and description. These rocks were smoothed by waves and polished by blowing sand, giving the residences that use them a unique regional charm.

Most of the homes have screen porches that either look out to the woods, or out over the ravine, or border common trails encouraging friendly conversations with passers-by; these are places for evening games or reading, replacing television which is still a rare artifact in the community.

Through time, the concept of owning the land in common with a clear mandate for preservation has proven its worth in maintaining a strong community with a unique identity and a culture all its own. The influence of the remarkable group of Club founders made an indelible mark on Hazelhurst. It was designed preserving most of Jens Jensen's and the Griffins' ideals of how people should live within a native landscape. You can see the influence of Dwight Perkins and Stephen Mather in the active participatory citizenship, and Paul Harris's influence in the culture of volunteerism and giving of self.

The Club retains Graham Taylor's desire to see strong community bonds while promoting sound moral values, and it enjoys Thomas Allinson's positive social benefits from living close to nature. True to Taft, Cowles, and Garland, the Prairie Club members share with each other their fondness for the natural sciences and the liberal, performing, and fine arts. And, of course, there are still hikes every Saturday afternoon.

See Hazelhurst online slideshow at www.terrain.org/essays/17/foote.htm.

Having worked for several years as a park ranger and a natural resource specialist, David R. Foote is currently a land management planner for 1.3 million acres of conservation lands in South Florida and the Everglades with the Land Stewardship Division of the South Florida Water Management District. He has a B.S. in environmental studies and an M.S. in social science. He is also a member of the Prairie Club of Chicago and a third-generation "dunebug" from Hazelhurst.

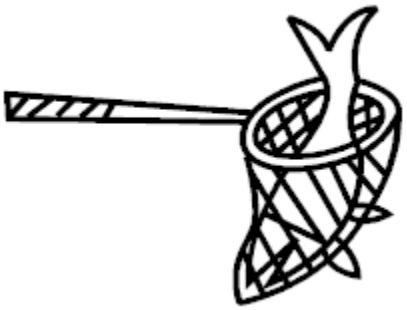
Essay

WU-KUO-YU

by William R. Stimson

I've lived in the small Taiwanese town of Wufeng only a few months. I came from New York because my wife Shuyuan got a job teaching here and because she wanted to come back home to be near her family. Every morning after I finish writing, I bike down to the outdoor pool at the edge of town to do some laps, then come home to read. The swimming pool is on a quiet road that runs along the river. The river looks like every other river I've seen in this part of Taiwan. The forests that must have originally lined its snaking course were long ago cut and the river was channeled into a straight line. The channel gouged out for the river is about 20 feet deep and flanked by high concrete walls or earth embankments. Apparently much of the water upstream has been diverted for agricultural use. What remains is a shallow, often murky stream meandering along the river bottom. Along its banks there are no bushes, no trees, nothing planted, nothing left—just grasses and weeds. In places, gutter water from the town drains from concrete culverts directly into the stream—a soapy blue-white.

One day I noticed a long-legged brown waterbird standing in the stream. "There must be fish," I thought. I studied the murky water closely and was rewarded with a sudden surface turbulence that looked to be a fish. Downriver a ways I saw the same again, and then again. I reached a place where the shallow water was clear. There were lots of large fish. The biggest were a little over a foot long. "How could there be so many big fish in such a little river?" I wondered. Clusters of them fought their way upstream.



Just downstream of a sandbar, I found that some had built concave circular nests in the sand. Each nest owner guarded its spot aggressively and fought off intruders. These "battles" were the cause of the occasional surface turbulence I'd spotted in the muddier water upstream. I figured the fish swam up from the sea like salmon to lay their eggs in these headwaters at the base of the foothills. It touched me deeply to find such a teeming

manifestation of indigenous life in a landscape so mercilessly overdeveloped. In the lush green foothills above town, I'd found every incline, even a slope that seemed too steep to climb, cultivated with longan, lychee, pineapple, betel nut or banana. In the flat plain below town, I'd found a jumble of factories, rice paddies, vegetable gardens, big homes and orchards of mango, guava and papaya. The genius of the farmers amazed me, especially the way they used water and sculpted the landscape to do so to maximum advantage. What unsettled me, though, was that, by their success in using every tiny scrap of land for crops, they'd entirely eliminated nature. The fish were the only sign I'd found that the indigenous hadn't been entirely eradicated here.

When I got home, I mentioned to Shuyuan about the fish. She didn't say much. She didn't seem interested. Come the weekend though, when we set out on a bike ride, her first words were: "Show me the fish."

I led her to the stretch of the river where I'd seen them. "There," I pointed. "See." There were only a few and the sun on the water made it hard to see them clearly. I rode on ahead a ways to find a better spot.

I found a place where the water was perfectly clear and had lots of fish and fish nests. I looked up to see if she'd followed. She hadn't moved.

I waved for her to come. She didn't.

I rode back. She turned to face me with wide eyes. "I can't believe it!" she said. "I never thought there were fish like this in any river in Taiwan." She was from an area about an hour's drive south of here. I was touched by her reaction. It made me feel I'd really found something important. In my youth I'd discovered several new species of orchids in Puerto Rico, which was, botanically, the best explored island in the Caribbean. Could it be possible I'd now discovered some remarkable variety of fish that nobody knew was here?

"There are more up ahead," I said. "Come see."

"It's so amazing!" she kept saying excitedly. She kept saying that over and over, all morning—which only made me feel all the stronger my discovery might be of consequence.

Every time she came swimming now, she wanted to see the fish. When a vehicle came down the road, I said, "Pretend you're looking at the flowers." I'd been treated by Shuyuan's mother to a Taiwanese delicacy made from fish eggs and was afraid if anyone from these parts discovered the fish were swimming up this river to nest, they'd come and clear them out to harvest the roe.

Whenever we went to look at the fish, as soon as a car or motorbike came down the road, we'd start staring up at the clouds, or pointing at the nearby green hills—do anything but seem like we were looking at the fish.

"I told the other faculty members in my department about the fish," Shuyuan confessed one day, "None of them believed me that there were fish like that in a river here in Taiwan, so I said, 'I'll take

you and show you!'"

"Don't take them," I warned. "They'll tell other people and the word will get around." It didn't seem to me the people here respected wild things, just cultivated ones. At the street's edge out in front of just about every residence and place of business in town, even on the busiest street, stood a collection of potted ornamental plants—including valued bonsai trees, sometimes, and flashy hybrid orchids. Yet I'd seen a graceful little tree growing alongside the barren street right out in front of the building where we live summarily sawed down and cut into pieces by the building's doorman. Using Shuyuan to translate, I'd begged to know why he did it. It was a wild variety, he explained, not a planted one.

The wild fish, to me, were the still-beating heart of this place. Day after day, on my way to the swimming pool, I stopped by the river to regard them teeming in the stream. I still had no idea what kind of fish they were. I wanted to get down to the water's edge to have a closer look.

Shuyuan and I biked further downstream along the river in search of a place where we could climb down the embankment. What we wanted to do was grab a fish up in our hands just for a moment, to examine it. We came to a spot where the road along the river continued inside private property. We pedaled cautiously on. A dog snarled at us viciously but he was caged and couldn't get at us. A little further on we found a path down the embankment into the riverbed and across the grass to the water's edge. We followed it and came upon a sandy river bottom honeycombed with circular fish nests. Every single nest was empty. There wasn't a fish in sight. In the wet mud I spotted a fresh human footprint and the fresh tracks of dogs. We went back to our bikes and rode on down the road to investigate further, but came to a dead end at a factory. Before we could turn around and get out, we were attacked by dogs. One of them bit my leg while I was on the bicycle. Shuyuan rushed me to a clinic for a tetanus shot and to have the wound wrapped. For a week I took antibiotics and was grounded.

When I got back to the river, I set out to see if I could find any place upstream where I could get close to the fish. I had no luck. All along the stream in the riverbed, the conditions seemed right for nature to make a comeback. I pictured the scene in my mind with a narrow ribbon of wild forest extending across the cultivated landscape down in the riverbed—a wildlife corridor and refuge for endemic species. That only grasses and weeds grew there presently suggested somebody was doing something to keep it cleared, maybe due to a limitation of vision or because they thought it necessary for flood control.

The ethos here seemed to be that anything that grew up by itself should be gotten rid of. I came upon a remnant grove of what seemed it might be native bamboo in one small spot up on the bank above the concrete wall bordering the riverbed. A man operating a backhoe busily uprooted the entire grove, clump by clump, and dumped each into the riverbed below. I sat on my bike watching, horrified how easily something that took so long to grow could be decimated.

I turned away and headed much further downstream. I found a veritable army of bulldozers and heavy trucks at work down in the riverbed of a larger river that this one fed into. They were excavating rock, moving earth around, and building concrete embankments. As a drainage ditch for flood control, the river system here was attracting ample government funding. As a precious natural ecosystem, valuable in its own right, and in need of protection and restoration, I didn't see that it was getting any attention at all. This sad little river was alive but, as far as I could see, nobody but me wanted it to be, cared if it was, or was doing anything to keep it that way. In places, the water was so thick with mud from all the bulldozing that I wondered how the fish could have made it as far upstream as they had. But there they were. When the water cleared a bit, I saw them again.

Shuyuan mentioned a week or so later that her whole department at the university had come into town for lunch. Afterwards they'd all wanted to see the fish, so she'd taken them. "They were amazed to see fish like that nesting in a river in Taiwan," she said.

"I just hope none of them say anything to anybody," I said.

"I doubt they will," she assured me.

The following week, I found a man standing in the river bent over a line. I stopped to watch. He was picking out fish. At first I thought he was unhooking them from a line he'd placed in the water but then saw that he'd strung a nylon net clear across the stream. One by one, he disentangled the fish caught by their gills in his net. Each he tossed into a plastic sack filled with his catch.

For some time I watched him work. He didn't look up. He was very thorough and very industrious. He was taking all the fish. He wasn't leaving any.

On my way home, I thought of the tracks I'd seen in the mud and the empty fish nests downstream and wondered how many more men like him there were, all up and down the river, doing the same. In the marketplace, who would think to ask whether these fish came from a clean or a polluted river like this one? Little children could get sick or be exposed to carcinogens.

I stopped at an intersection to wait for the traffic to pass. An old man walked by pushing a bicycle piled high with recyclable materials he'd scrounged from the street and was taking somewhere to sell. I'd always been touched to see such sights here. But, against the picture of the greedy fisherman, all I thought was, "They save every tiny scrap for themselves but give nature back nothing." I couldn't imagine a single person in this town would care if no fish eggs hatched this season and no baby fish made it to the sea.

When I got home, I phoned Shuyuan at the college. She phoned the police and then a government agency. They told her there were no protected fish in that river and no law against fishing it.

A few days later I was back to see if any nesting fish remained. Down in the riverbed a man seated atop a backhoe was scooping out a perfectly straight drainage ditch of uniform width and depth that stretched down the exact middle of the grassy river bottom. The artificial waterway he was creating ran with sterile, lifeless, muddy water. The meandering stream itself, its sandbars, whatever surviving fish still guarded their precious nests—he summarily buried under a wide bank of mud and gravel several feet deep that he dumped to the left and right of his gully. I stood there only a few moments watching him proceed methodically upriver with a blindered singleness of purpose. Then, not having the heart to see more, I got on my bike and rode away.

On the internet, I found a Taiwanese icthyologist at the prestigious Academica Sinica in Taipei and shot off an urgent e-mail to him. Then I stumbled by chance upon the Orion website and its amazing networking page. I sent out an alarm to conservation organizations around the world. A short stretch of the river still had the fish and fish nests. I was determined to save it.

The next morning the Wild Salmon Center in Portland, Oregon responded to my e-mail. They sent me some literature and referred me to a biologist who had worked with salmon in Taiwan. I fired off an e-mail to the biologist and looked through the literature. There indeed was an endangered salmon in Taiwan—Oncorhynchus masou formosanus—the Taiwanese landlocked masu salmon. It had become restricted to a five-mile stretch of a single tributary but that was somewhere on the other side of the island. I found a picture of that fish on the internet. It definitely wasn't the one in this river.

At the swimming pool a few days later, there was a gala opening. The pool had come under new management. To be polite I sat and ate some of the cakes and was courteous to the man next to me. He turned out to be the owner. He spoke some English and was a retired water engineer. He had worked for the governmental agency responsible for all the construction on the river. "They're killing the river," I accused.

"It isn't a real river," he explained. I could see he was trying to be friendly and was a nice person.

"It is," I argued. I'd followed the river up to its tributaries. It had real sources in the streams that came down from the foothills. "There has always been a river here," I declared.

"Yes," he agreed, "But it had a completely different course. It flowed somewhere else. That river was destroyed over a hundred years ago, in the Ching Dynasty and this waterway dug in its place."

"Even if the river's artificial, it's alive," I argued. "There are big fish in it."

"Those are just Wu-Kuo Yu," he said; then, as an afterthought added, "You can't eat them because the water's polluted."

"I saw a man netting them," I said.

"Maybe some farmers catch them to feed to their chickens," he suggested.

"If people eat those chickens or their eggs, they'll still be poisoned," I argued.

He shrugged his shoulders.

When I got home, Shuyuan did a search on Google for the Chinese characters, Wu-Kuo Yu. She found pictures of the fish Oreochromis mossambica. I couldn't tell if it was the same fish or not.

The next morning I received a courteous e-mail from the icthyologist at the Academica Sinica. He informed me that most mid- to downstream rivers in Taiwan had suffered the same fate as the river I'd described in Wufeng. As a consequence of this, and the over-fishing, there were not many species or individuals of native fish left compared to what had been here in the past. He went on to say that the fish I'd described to him, that built such circular nests, was Tilapia and its common name in Chinese was Wu-Kuo Yu. It was a very common and invasive species, not even native to Taiwan. It was introduced in 1946 for aquaculture purposes. Since then at least four related species have been introduced and they've now spread throughout the island. The reason they're so successful is because they're "hardy" and can tolerate polluted water.

The picture of a threatened indigenous species migrating up from the sea to lay its eggs that I'd sent out to conservation organizations around the world had been way off the mark. I felt embarrassed.

Biking much further upstream with Shuyuan the following Saturday, we came upon two boys with fishing rods down in the riverbed at the stream's edge. The bulldozers hadn't gotten up that far yet and there was still a stream there. "What kind of fish are you catching?" Shuyuan called down to them in Chinese.

"Wu-Kuo Yu," the younger boy answered.

"Do you eat them?" she asked.

"We just throw them back," the older boy said. "You can't eat them because the water's polluted."

"How do you know?" she pressed.

"Our grandmother told us," the boy replied.

"You see," Shuyuan said as we rode on, "The local people here know." After spotting that fisherman, I'd said disparaging things about her people.

The next day was Sunday. Shuyuan came swimming with me. Afterwards, we went to look in the river, as always. The bulldozers and fishermen had so far spared that stretch and there was still a stream there with fish. I saw three young men and a young woman walking down in the stream with their pant legs rolled up. The woman carried a plastic sack filled with fish. The young men had a big circular fishing net with metal sinkers sewn along the edges. With the net they were bringing up lots of fish, which they carefully picked out and put in the bag the young woman carried.

Shuyuan called down to them in Chinese. They looked up, but didn't answer. Then the young woman pulled one of the fish out of her sack and held it up so Shuyuan could see. It was the first time I'd seen one of the fish in profile and it looked every bit like the picture of the Wu-Kuo Yu on the internet.

Shuyuan tried to engage them in conversation, then turned to me, "Those are not our people. They don't speak our language."

She tried English. It didn't work either. Eventually, she found they were Thai. "Lots of unskilled laborers from Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines come to Taiwan to work in factories or be domestics," Shuyuan explained. She managed to convey to them that the river was polluted and the fish shouldn't be eaten. "Thankyou," one of the young men called up to her in what seemed to be the only word he knew in English. They let one or two fish swim free from the net. It seemed we'd spoiled their Sunday outing, but then I noticed the woman hadn't thrown out the fish in the bag. I wondered if, when we got out of sight, they'd start up netting fish again.

It didn't matter. I didn't feel it was any of my business anymore. Nothing anybody did could threaten the Wu-Kuo Yu. We got back on our bikes and headed home. Every inch of the lush green landscape all around was planted or maintained by man. What looked to be a river was a man-made ditch. What I'd mistaken for a living stream just has in it fish that thrive in dead water. There was no nature left anywhere in this place for me to concern myself with—except that within me. I felt free to draw further inward with the morning writing, the swimming, and the afternoon reading—not so much to cultivate myself, as to find and bring back alive every little place in me that was still even a little bit wild, free and real.

This essay originally appeared in *Snowy Egret*, and is reprinted with author's permission.

William R. Stimson is a former botanist who currently lives and writes in Taiwan. More of his published writing can be found at www.billstimson.com.

Essay

by Carolyn Steinhoff Smith

"Museums began as places to preserve valuable objects," said art journalist Anita Feldman. "Historically, a continuum exists between storing and preserving, and a more recently developing mission to educate." At one end of the spectrum are venerable institutions like the Louvre, which served as King Henri VI's private gallery, almost a century before anyone thought to allow the public in. Today, according to the American Association of Museums Code of Ethics for Museums 2000, "collections . . . are the basis for research, exhibits, and programs that invite public participation." While more and more museums become interactive, the City Museum of St. Louis is at the cutting edge of this educative, participatory trend, and its methods have implications not just for museums, but for all the institutions of our society.

MonstroCity is "the most monumental, monolithic, monstrous montage of monkey bars in the world."

The Caves and MonstroCity

"Come on, Aunt Carolyn, I'm down here," the voice of my seven-year-old niece echoed from a maze of softly lit tunnels under downtown St. Louis. Calli and I live in different states, and we were meeting to enjoy the Caves, one of nineteen innovative exhibits at the City Museum, where everything is recycled, from the stair railings to the floors. Even the old warehouse that contains the museum was originally a shoe factory.

The Original and the Enchanted Caves, and the outdoor exhibit called MonstroCity, are the highlights, and probably the most popular, of the museum's attractions. They are fantasy climbing environments, which visitors—

the museum calls them explorers—can enter through ramps, tunnels or stairs. Of all the good times Calli and I have had, climbing around the Caves was the most fun.

The museum's director, Elizabeth Parker, described the evolution of the Enchanted Caves this way: "Ten years ago Bob Cassilly, City Museum founder and artistic director, looked at the old spiral slide conveyor system that factory workers had used to send the shoes down from the tenth floor. Did you ever stare at the ceiling as a kid, and see faces and pictures in the cracks? Well, in his mind's eye Bob saw caves and slides and tunnels. The seven-year-old in him came out and wouldn't go back inside."

Unlike most of us who have fantastical fantasies, Cassilly brought his vision into reality, and today the Enchanted Caves extend 135 feet into the building's space. "It took six years for Bob to create them," Parker told me. "It's pretty astounding. The Enchanted Cave is a giant concrete dragon-dinosaur labyrinth."

Explorers can climb tunnels whose openings are gaping animal mouths, and slide down the backs of fanciful creatures. MonstroCity, which the museum calls "the most monumental montage of monkey bars in the world," includes two real airplanes, a castle turret, and "several 4-foot-wide wrought iron slinkies" tunnels climbers can look down from onto downtown St. Louis five stories below.

MonstroCity also includes giant "slinkies" that climb five stories high through an elaborate labyrinth of tubes.

Transforming Museums and Relationships

The City Museum redefines visitor participation, but the experience it provides also has profound larger implications. As I observed families having great times together in the Caves and MonstroCity, I saw a set of values emerging, principles we can use as guidelines to enrich many of the institutions of our society.

Principles arising from the climbing environments are:

- The centrality of relationships, as the environments invite explorers to connect with one another
- The value of uniqueness, as they let each person respond in his or her own way
- Inclusiveness, as they encompass all ages and abilities
- The rediscovery of capacities, as they present challenges that are exhilarating to meet
- Integration of the arts and beauty, as they incorporate murals, sculptures and mosaics

- Unification of mind and body, as explorers use their intellects, senses, imaginations, spirits, emotions and bodies
- The combining of work and play, as the challenges of the environments are pleasurable to meet
- Constant learning, as explorers expand their abilities and relationships
- Relaxation of time pressures, as the exhibits are so absorbing that visitors want to stay as long as they can
- Improvement of the environment, through recycling

As my niece and I climbed together, our relationship was altered, as were those of the families around us. “Here children are the carrots. If adults set aside their expectations and come with their children, they have the greatest time,” said Parker. Of course Calli was better than I at navigating the passageways, so even though she was a child, she was the one who took the lead. How different than our previous museum experiences! How often Calli had reluctantly followed her parents and me, or had played in children’s museums while I stood by. In contrast, I didn’t have to cajole her to climb in the Caves, nor did I merely watch her. Instead, we played happily together.

I’m not saying it never happens, but in the three days I was in the museum, I did not witness any scolding parents or crying children—in fact, families seemed relaxed, happy and enthusiastic. As I tried to understand why this was, I realized it was the exhibits’ physical characteristics that led people to relate differently. The museum doesn’t need to set many rules adults have to enforce, since all limits, challenges and opportunities are inherent in the exhibits’ structures. “We try to put up as little signage as possible,” said Parker.

I could see that Cassilly had created the Caves to be safe. This gave me the freedom of knowing I didn’t have to worry about my niece. And each environment is self-contained, with only one access point. While Calli and I met and parted ways within the tunnels many times, I knew we would meet up eventually, because the access points, like plazas in European cities, serve as central places where people reconnect.

The Caves also promote inclusiveness and the rediscovery of capacities, since their pathways vary in degrees of difficulty. I could exit a steep tunnel any time—but I enjoyed finding I had untapped reserves of strength and agility. And I wasn’t aware of it, but the Enchanted Caves and the World Aquarium are wheelchair-accessible. “They have a big built-in wheelchair ramp, but it’s subtle. If you need it, you notice it,” Parker told me. This means people are free to engage at their own level, each in their own way, with the comfort of knowing no one is sizing up their performance.

The City Museum's Museum of Mirth, Mystery and Mayhem "conveys the innocence, tawdry charms and cheesiness of the carnival midway and eccentric roadside attractions."

Our Relationships with Things, Time and Place

As the City Museum reshapes relationships between us as human beings, it also heightens our connectedness with the world around us. “The point of collections and museums . . . revolves around the possession of ‘real things’,” wrote Susan M. Pearce in Museums, Objects and Collections, according to John Simmons in Museum News. “What distinguishes the museum from other educational, scientific, and aesthetic organizations,” wrote Simmons, “is its relationship with its collections.”

These statements emphasize the unique and time-honored affinity between museums and precious objects, but not more a recent development—the relationship between museums and the public. Parker described the traditional museum. “People feel they shouldn’t make fast movements or talk too loudly. In art museums, they feel self-conscious about looking too closely or too long at the works; they’re afraid they’ll seem as if they don’t ‘get’ the art. People feel reverent, but they feel alienated.”

Most museums continue the collecting tradition by offering protected objects for individual visitors to look at in silence, almost as interlopers in the relationship between the objects and the museum. Even when newer, interactive exhibits encourage touching as well as looking, visitor participation is still circumscribed and mediated. While the City Museum, too, exists to house things, its focus is not on the objects, but on the relationships that revolve around them.

“Bob likes to say the City Museum is a home of the Muses,” said Parker. What are The Muses but mythical beings that inspire our creativity and so enhance our love for life? The objects the City Museum holds become the elements of a noisy, colorful, rich and complex milieu that supports a lacework of relationships between people, and between people and the world.

For instance, when I visited the exhibit called The World Aquarium, a foot-long bamboo shark’s rubbery back was available for touching, with a staff member instructing a group of preschoolers. Several varieties of rays winged their ways around a “touching tank” visitors could reach into, and rabbits, ferrets and a guinea pig were in open cages for us to pet and even pick up, with no staff in sight. (Though not water animals, these came to the exhibit when people offered pets they no longer wanted to the museum.)

In 1995, Bob Cassilly began discussions with St. Louis Aquarium director Leonard Sonnenshein, and in the summer of 2004, their collaboration bore fruit as the World Aquarium. The new exhibit was open but still in progress when I visited.

"The City Museum has a reputation for opening exhibits as soon as possible," Parker explained, "because we're so excited about them. It's summer, visitors are coming, and we have sharks to offer. There's no point in making people wait."

It seemed to me that the rays were swimming over to me as I dipped my hand in their tank, but I discounted these thoughts, until Parker, surprisingly, confirmed them. "The rays like to be petted," she said. But couldn't they sting me? I wondered. "They have their stingers removed. We wouldn't let you touch them if there was any danger," she reassured me.

What about danger to the animals? "Kids know the animals are fragile, and their gentleness is greater than we expect. We extend a lot of trust. Staff constantly regulate the pH and temperature of the water, and we put the animals on R & R rotation. They take a week with the public, then a few weeks in the back to rest." Like the Caves, the Aquarium promotes rediscovery of capacities, as the museum trusts visitors to engage in their own ways, in mutual enjoyment with the animals as well as with family members, friends and strangers. The exhibit presents the animals as fellow beings we are close to and responsible for, not as exotic curiosities for us to exploit.

The City Museum's waterfall above the crab ponds (above), and one of the museum's many slides (below).

Principles arising from the World Aquarium also include collaborative participation—as it provides community member Sonnenschein a supportive venue to realize his dream, and as we are welcomed into unpredictable, lively encounters with animals, staff and fellow visitors—and acceptance, as the exhibit is always in progress, thus encouraging us to accept that our lives are "in progress," that we don't have to be perfect to learn from and enjoy one another.

We can also learn important principles from the exhibit called The Architecture Museum. Like the rest of the museum, this exhibit goes beyond simple recycling, displaying cornices, lintels, and other exquisitely crafted relics from demolished buildings, with placards telling where the building stood, and what replaces it. Like the Aquarium, the Architecture Museum arose from Cassilly's openness to the ideas and passions of the St. Louis community—in this case, the exhibit's curator Bruce Gerrie.

Gerrie is a creative entrepreneur who salvages and resells architectural materials. He hopes the Architecture Museum will awaken St. Louisans' appreciation for the city's rich architectural heritage.

"The Architecture Museum lets architecture be reborn, digested, brought back out, seen anew," said Parker. A sign next to a three-foot-high block of wood informs us that "150 years ago this timber was part of the Bronson Hide Company, a building on Lacledes Landing. From its rings, we know it was over 90 years old when it was cut down. At the signing of the Declaration of Independence, this tree was already 20 years old." In fact, the museum building itself has literary and historical resonance, since the playwright Tennessee Williams worked in it when it was a shoe factory, and based the character of Tom in The Glass Menagerie on his experience there.

I had visited St. Louis many times, but the Architecture Museum deepened my admiration for the city. Gerrie hopes it will encourage preservation instead of demolition of his town's historic buildings. In our fast-paced, throwaway culture, this treatment of what was once mere wreckage changes our relationship with time itself. Principles arising from the Architecture Museum are love for our particular locale, as, like all the museum's exhibits, it emerged from local materials and ideas; and location in the continuity of history, as beautiful reminders of our past are given new life in our present.

Museum visitors can create their own work of art or watch professional artists demonstrate their craft (above), or watch Everydaycircus, where every day is Circus Day (below).

Our Relationship with Money

In living out principles such as the centrality of relationships, love for our locale, and the other values arising from the museum's operations, financial practices are still the bottom line. "When the museum started, it was not-for-profit," Parker told me. In this it was typical—AAM's Code of Ethics describes not-for-profit status as a trait all museums share. But Cassilly broke ground, as he did in every aspect of the museum, when he converted to for-profit status. "He wanted to expand beyond the limits grantors set," Parker explained.

The museum embodies the principle of community entrepreneurship, as Cassilly, Parker, the staff and community members find a venue for their creativity, and participate in determining the museum's direction. "Now we're funded purely by admission fees and facility rentals," said Parker. Admissions prices range from a basic $7.50 to $17.50 for a ticket to all the exhibits, and are lower during off hours. "It's such an exciting place to be in that people rent it out for parties and weddings," Parker told me. "And our influence has spilled out. People on both coasts

want to film movies here. They send us questionnaires to pick our brains."

The City Museum's success inspires and informs all who want their organizations to incorporate community talents and ingenuity. It shows us that people will pay to spend time in, contribute to, and be part of institutions that embody its principles:

- Community entrepreneurship
- The centrality of relationships
- The value of uniqueness
- Inclusiveness
- The rediscovery of capacities
- Integration of the arts and beauty
- Unification of mind and body
- The combining of work and play
- Constant learning
- Relaxation of time pressures
- Improvement of the environment
- Collaborative participation
- Love for our particular locale
- Location in the continuity of history

Larger Implications

These principles can inspire and guide museum professionals, but what about members of other institutions? Can families apply them to their day-to-day lives? Can schools?

Certainly. As parents, instead of controlling our children, we can nurture relationships and collaborate in activities with them. Educators can engage with students in explorations that draw on intellectual, emotional, imaginative, and physical aspects of their beings. Schools can seek out ideas and contributions from people who live and work in the neighborhoods they serve. They can integrate the arts into every facet of their lives, making their buildings beautiful and inviting with materials recycled from their communities. They can initiate mutually supportive exchanges with small local businesses, individuals, and organizations.

These are just a few examples of how we can apply the principles we learn from the City Museum of St. Louis to many of our society's institutions, to enhance our well-being and quality of life, and improve our communities. The City Museum does more than provide an example of an innovative, imaginative and creative museum. It embodies a successful way of life that every visitor can learn from, and in which every St. Louis resident can take part.

All photographs courtesy City Museum.

Title photographs of City Museum's Enchanted Caves, which are built within a historic shoe factory's spiral conveyor tunnel system.

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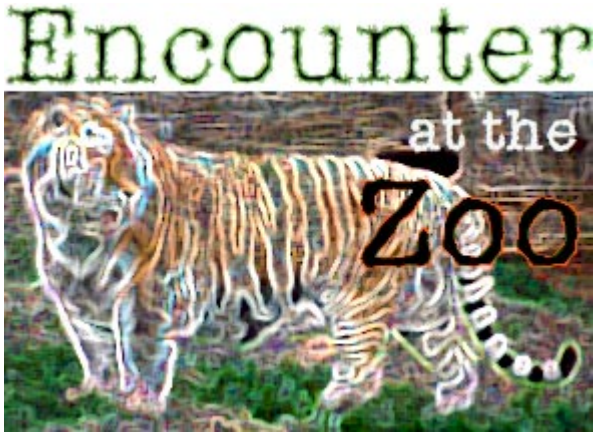
Carolyn Steinhoff Smith is a poet and writer. She edits the magazine From Here, about sex, politics, and power. She lives in Brooklyn, New York.

Fiction



by David Watmough

Nancy Molesworth, ninety-three and arthritic notwithstanding, couldn't resist a smirk as her great nephew drove her 1956 Olds off the Trans-Canada after an hour's drive east from the city and, seconds later, drew up in the parking lot of the prominently posted THE GREATER VANCOUVER ZOO.

They have a little train, Aunty. It goes to various parts of the zoo and we don't have to get off if we don't want to.

"Greater Vancouver," she remarked. "We're fifty kilometers from town! They might just have well called it the The Greater Calgary Zoo!"

Desmond Molesworth returned her grin. "Watch us grow!" he said. "In ten years from now this may well be part of downtown."

"Well thank goodness I shan't hang around to see such a monstrosity," she retorted. "It was bad enough to see so much building going on as we drove out here. I think it an insult to the mountains—all that white suburban splatter littering their slopes."

With that she hauled herself out of the car—and immediately shivered as the cool valley air hit her. She'd been nice and warm with the car's heater on and as it was still only late September she was taken off guard. That wasn't her only discomfort. She noticed that her finger tips were rapidly turning white and that—more frequent this—her feet had started to ache.

"Circulation," she mumbled. But there were more words in her old head that went unsaid. She

remembered—did she ever forget?—her years as a history professor at UBC when she had made her specialty a study in urban conurbations, not least in her later years, of her native city. In the green of girlhood she had made that same journey eastward on a narrow, winding road serving single lines of traffic (and that sparse enough) but continuing all the way to Penticton and the Okanagan for summers with her parents and siblings—now all dead, every single one of them. In fact this young man who'd acted as her chauffeur was the only flesh and blood she was now linked to. But she didn't linger on that; the isolation of old age was too commonplace a thought running below her thinning white hair for her to dally on it. Nor did she spend overlong on the spoliation of the landscape by urbanization. She knew that each generation entertained comparable thoughts about its own time, the past, and what the future might hold. She recalled as comfort the words of her old tutor when she attended Girton College, Cambridge, that everything was relative and one should never, ever forget it!

Watching her as she rubbed her fingers, gently pawing her feet on the cement of the carpark, Desmond did his own bit of thinking. All through his childhood, indeed up to her death, his mother had always emphasized her maiden aunt's great age. Indeed, she had taken every opportunity to see that he treat Aunt Nancy as someone very special and not with the brusque indifference that he and his adolescent coevals tended to treat all older persons as the century wound down. Indeed, he now wondered whether that had been yet another example of his Mom's prescience, not only over her own premature death from breast cancer but to ensure her one surviving aunt would have at least one younger person to serve her needs and generally accord her due familial concern and attention.

He offered her his arm. "Would you like to go inside now, Aunty Nancy?" Although he didn't feel cold himself he interpreted her physical actions. "Bit chilly out here, isn't it? After rolling along in your comfortable auto."

She smiled and took his hand and squeezed it, rather than holding onto his arm.
"If we walk along slowly I think I'll warm up. But I warned you before we started, Desmond, that these stupid legs aren't up to an enormous hike, even with all those exciting animals to spur us along."

He didn't answer. Long ago she'd taught him that lots of her comments didn't need answers. That in fact she was irritated by responses as they weren't part of any conversation but a special kind of speech that sometimes enjoyed an audience but not a reply.

When they had finally covered the few sloping yards down to the ticket office and she was reading a brochure on the zoo that she'd picked up, he had a brainwave. They were alone at the wicket and after reading the tariff of various entrance prices, he turned back to her. "They have a little train, Aunty. It goes to various parts of the zoo and we don't have to get off if we don't want to. It only takes just over twenty minutes but you see most of the zoo. What do you say?"

Nancy said yes very quickly. She turned her attention from the zoo's latest acquisition of a pregnant grizzly to miniature trains. She also skipped back eighty years.

I abominate menageries. But the right kind of zoo is absolutely essential to teach humans how to love and respect the rest of life that shares the planet with them.

When she was thirteen and they were visiting England (she for the first time) her father had taken her to visit his cousins who lived in a spacious house in Rye and a special treat had been a trip over Romney Marsh on a miniature train belonging to what she still recalled distinctly was called The Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway. It had been for her the crowning delight of a three-week sojourn, mainly spent in rural Cornwall, but also in places where her Cornish relatives had subsequently scattered such as Rye, where the hours had been filled with the talk of adults competing with what they remembered of shared experiences and a little girl was either left sitting there uncomprehending or being thrust with distant cousins who regarded her Vancouver clothes with disdain and her Canadian accent with outright hostility.

But the little train had blotted out all that and in its gleaming brass, bright green paint, and chugging movement (punctuated every so often with a loud hoot from its merry whistle) across the flat, sheep-dotted Marsh and visions of scattered and now ruined Martello towers. Later she had decided it was the latter stout stone fortifications, thrown up to meet the possibility of invasion from France by Napoleon, that had sparked her initial interest in history and determined her subsequent career as an academic.

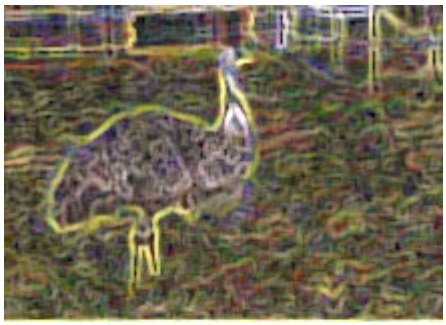
There had been another attraction issuing from the miniature locomotive and its windowless carriages crammed with passengers, mainly children. At several of the smaller, more rural stops (she thought that they had been called “Halts”) she would alight with her father and they would walk along the footpaths above the low banks of reed-filled canals: another heirloom of that perilous past when Bonaparte threatened to invade that vulnerably flat Kentish soil.

As was her invariable custom then, as a child, she had sought to break away from even the smallest group and enjoy the company of her father alone. It was this which ensured that for the greater part of their walks on the Marsh they were alone and silent as Papa was indisposed to respond to her chatter. His aloof silence had tended to upset her back in Vancouver—walking along the deserted beaches of Jericho and Locarno, for instance—but now she suddenly became glad of her father’s stubborn refusal to speak. For it was in the quiet of their procession, observed only by shaggy sheep, that Nancy saw her first grass snakes, their gray-green bodies coiled as they basked on the large leaves of water lilies, their chocolate brown heads made prominent by the bright yellow collars encircling them. It seemed to the excited little girl that around every corner hove yet another beautiful small serpent, some of which—in spite of the human silence—slipped smoothly into the still waters of the canal, causing hardly a ripple as they gracefully curved their coils away from the threat of the land.

“I wonder what snakes they have here?” she suddenly asked her great nephew. “ I hope some rattlers and perhaps some garters. I judge zoos very much by the quantity of native species they exhibit.”

"We'll ask the staff on the train," Desmond said, "but remember Aunty, this isn't a place with a lot of cages. It's more like the San Diego or that place in England."

"Whipsnade," the old lady supplied promptly. "And if it wasn't that kind of open-spaced zoo I certainly wouldn't have asked you to bring me here. I abominate menageries. But the right kind of zoo is absolutely essential to teach humans how to love and respect the rest of life that shares the planet with them. That's why those idiot boneheads who are anti-zoo are so horribly wrong!"



This one, she reckoned, if not exactly a teenager, was probably twelve or so. Although it was hard to tell nowadays, as they grew so inordinately and acted grotesquely beyond their years.

Desmond was silent. He's heard her on the topic before—could almost quote her by heart. They walked for a few more paces, until he was able to touch her arm, jerk his unshaven chin to indicate the scaled down railway platform just ahead of them.

"Good," she said. "The damn legs are just about to give up. I can't see anything like the Romney, Hythe& Dymchurch but there is a nice little bench over there for me to have a sit on."

He hadn't a clue what she was talking about with the place names but he was too old a hand as her traveling companion to enquire. He helped her sit down at the dry end of the wooden bench, placed her stick and handbag at her side (a space for him he decided prudently, if a wait for the train was entailed) and went off to gather some pertinent information.

She hardly had time to arrange her thoughts—they were chiefly about creating a hierarchy of favorite creatures she'd like to see—when she was joined on the bench by a good-looking woman, devoid of makeup and with a rather severe expression. She was wearing what Nancy thought a rather incongruously smart wool suit for a zoo outing. She was accompanied by a boy in the standard teen-age uniform of a slogan-covered T-shirt that was illegible to her from that distance and beige and bulky cargo pants. He sported a mop of blond curly hair from under which he kept flashing her curious glances.

He was not as small as Nancy would have liked for she'd hoped that as Labor Day had passed there would now be only pre-schoolers. This one, she reckoned, if not exactly a teenager, was probably twelve or so. Although it was hard to tell nowadays, as they grew so inordinately and acted grotesquely beyond their years.

Not to seem unduly curious, she affected especial interest in the contents of her large, patent leather black handbag that signified she was traveling on a special expedition. Though when she grew conscious that the kid was now staring at her more sustainedly, she returned his look with a practiced glower.

She was about to deal with him verbally when his mouth opened slightly and his eyebrows went up. A question she determined she'd brusquely parry. But Desmond turned up at that moment and any possibility of communication between the two extreme generations was dissolved.

"The train is coming in now and they told me at the station office that as we're the first we can choose seats wherever we please."

He knew she would be fussy about that. It was the same if he took her to a movie theatre where she'd change seats, embarrassingly three or four times, before finally settling down to watch the film.

"Let's sit at the head of the train," she suggested. "Right behind the engine but facing it. I get sick if I'm looking backwards," she added. She did not add that was where she'd been seated with her father on the train in England all those years ago. But she didn't like to leave an impression of frailty of any kind. "If it's all open I shall enjoy watching the engineer and seeing him at work in his cab."

As it turned out, the little zoo train was as precise a replica of the earlier one as her memory allowed. Perhaps, she mused, they well all built by the same manufacturer.
It also turned out there was exactly the right seat in the first little compartment which actually overlooked the driver's space but for some perverse reason it had several wooden containers filling up the desired space. They were thus forced to occupy the next bench facing front in the bright red passenger car. This didn't please her but she refrained from saying so. As she suppressed comment when the two she'd left on the station bench, sat down right opposite them. The boy occupied the wooden seat across from her.

The four of them took up the whole of the two seats but the glassless window space on either side afforded a balancing sense of freedom. Moreover, the child was currently preoccupied with asking his companion he constantly referred to as Judy, about what animals and birds they would shortly be seeing. The woman, whom Nancy estimated was around thirty or so, naturally had no specific answers but instead of counseling patience until they were under way, offered all sorts of ridiculous suggestions that convinced the nonagenarian that she had never been to that kind of 'open' zoo before. It also persuaded her that the woman was no experienced mother or, come to that, any sort of teacher accustomed to dealing sensibly with the incessant questionings of the young. This caused Nancy to speculate on what role the woman might play in the kid's life. As she wasn't about to ask and find out she settled on the owner being some kind of 'honorary' aunt or even a maiden one—a term familiar when Nancy had been around the same age.

As it happened, she didn't even face the temptation of opening up conversation with the couple; the boy did it for her. "You know much about this zoo?" he asked. "Where all the animals are?"

"You mustn't bother strangers, Miles. You really shouldn't pester people."

Nancy thought how pathetic that sounded. The woman was really as weak as dishwater. Miles obviously thought likewise. He simply ignored "Judy" and returned to addressing the old lady opposite him—only with an even broader barrage of questions.

"Do you know where the Hippos are likely to be? Did you know they drag people underwater until they drown? And on the land they can chase you at forty miles an hour? What would you rather meet—a hippo or a croc? Do they have crocodiles out here as well?"

Nancy had no intention of responding specifically to his questions and addressed instead his obvious impatience to receive information. "I presume you can read," she began firmly, and thrust in his direction one of the brochures that Desmond had handed to her at the entrance. "You'll probably find your answers in there and if not there are bound to be keepers you can ask." She paused fractionally before adding "I think that's what zoos are really about."

He afforded her sarcasm a scowl of remarkable intensity for such young features. It so startled Desmond that he decided that he, too, should intervene. "They told me when I got the train tickets that the driver would be providing us with all the data we'll need. I'm surprised he didn't tell your mother the same. They feature it as a major part of the zoo train's attractions."

The boy transferred his attention to Nancy's great-nephew but though he was still frowning he had obviously relaxed somewhat. "She's not my mother. She's only my Dad's girlfriend and she brought me out here just to get in more with him."

Neither Desmond nor Nancy were disposed to follow that route. And Judy made no effort to exculpate herself. In any case, Miles was patently not yet finished. "Let's hope he knows his stuff, then. Those guys like to tell stupid jokes and act like you were only in the First Grade."

"You sound as if you've had plenty of experience. I'm surprised you need the train conductor or engineer for more." She relented a tiny bit. "I felt from your knowledge of hippopotami that you had done your reading."

"I've read up a lot and I been to lots of zoos, too. Seattle, Portland, The Fleishacker in San Francisco and San Diego. And my Mom took me to one in the Bronx in New York, and another one outside Toronto. That's six. What I was asking is where the animals lived here. That's what I wanted to know. I wanna know which we're going to see first."

"Well, here's the guy who's going to provide you with all the dope you need, I hope," said Desmond referring to the man in dungarees and a peaked cap who now swung aboard the train into the squat cabin where he towered above gleaming instruments and above the length of the little locomotive with its shiny brass fittings.

As if in response the tall figure grabbed a microphone and addressed the now rapidly filling train. It wasn't until then that Nancy became aware of the loudspeakers inserted in the upper reaches of each compartment and concealed in the fairly ornate whorls and curves of the woodwork. The fellow explained he was their driver and sole official on the train. He also told them with great emphasis of the folly of leaning out when they were in motion and the proscription of standing up and moving about when they had left the platform.

Maybe you, me and the rhinos have something in common. Except the horns, of course. And the sight.

It was all very "schoolteacherly" and Nancy feared there might be juvenile rebellion from opposite her as Miles squirmed on the wooden planks of the seat and refused the bag of candies that his companion vainly offered all three of them. But as soon as they picked up the little speed the engineer allowed, his demeanor quite changed and he began to inform his passengers of what lay immediately in store in terms of the zoo's inhabitants, followed by their Latin nomenclature and details of their feral lifestyles. Nancy was both pleased and impressed at the professional level with which this detailed knowledge was vouchsafed. More so than Miles, it appeared, who every now and then informed his immediate companions that the man was wrong and provided alternative data to prove his point.

The train's electric motor was quite noisy, especially in the forward vicinity but as they glided round the curves of the narrow gage track, hooting warning to pedestrians every now and then, the front passengers gradually became accustomed to it, and even began to distinguish the low swell of conversation from the rest of the train.

At first they passed stockyards of asses and wild horses, one of giraffes and zebra, and then a compound of wolves and a second of wild boar. Up to this point there was little specific reaction from the various compartments, save the odd outbreak of laughter when someone attempted a wisecrack—usually comparing some zoo animals with one of their companions on the train.

After some ten minutes chugging steadily along the meandering track a pair of rhinos were seen by some, their armor plated bulwarks brandishing massive horns hostilely confronting the train as they stood as far away as they could get and were almost camouflaged against the remoter gray rocks.

It was at that point a change came over young Miles. It was not that he made specific reference to them, as Nancy was expecting, but that he began to respond in an almost physical manner. He started to breathe heavily and he ran a shaking hand several times through his already unruly hair. Judy gingerly touched his arm and asked him if anything was the matter. But he turned his back to her and muttered something about why she should shut up.

The old lady had held no grief for the boy's companion since first setting eyes upon her but she was not minded to let such rude behavior go un-remarked. "I think it possible for humans to admire other creatures without letting go of their own civility," she announced, staring straight at him. And then, as if "civility" was beyond his compass, added: "We can see what virtues these primitive animals have without denying our species its own special attractions."

Desmond felt he should make a contribution. If for no other reason than to impress his great-aunt. "In other words," he said with a smile. "Just be polite, kiddo!"

Over the PA system came: "Look carefully, folks! You might see our two African rhinos, Peggy and

Sam. Those horns on their snouts are made of matted hair and are sometimes single, sometimes a pair. These animals are almost extinct in the wild, having been hunted for those horns which are sold as aphrodisiacs."

That means their gate must be open. I think we can just go through and climb that little patch of ground if it isn't too much for you.

"Yet another good reason for zoos," commented Nancy, more to gain the boy's attention than to once more state her credo. But Miles was somewhere else.

"My book says they are solitary and unpredictable. I like that. They don't see too well but they can hear and smell an enemy a mile off." He made it sound like a challenge—which was precisely how Nancy chose to take it. She caught his eye.

"Maybe you, me and the rhinos have something in common. Except the horns, of course. And the sight. There's nothing wrong with my eyes and ears. But unlike them I don't smell too well!"

For the very first time she made him smile and she knew immediately that she had found his place—at least a part of it that wasn't readily or often displayed. It encouraged her. "Then it looks as if you've got a lot of rhino, too."

His smiled broadened rather than went away. "Don't forget the 'solitary and unpredictable' bit. Maybe I can't help looking like other kids but I sure don't have to act like 'em."

That, of course, won her heart.

At the next point the little train chugged to a halt, the driver announced the presence of tigers. Two in fact. After a pause he added that that day they couldn't be seen from the train.

Two of the occupants of the front compartment prepared to wait, to listen to the engineer's further spiel about Panthera tigris and the Asian forests in which the striped red-yellow carnivore dwell. But not the eldest and youngest who, even before the train had jerked to a halt, exchanged glances.

It was Miles who spoke first: "If they're Siberian I bet they're from Seattle. They have a great breeding program down there."

"I don't think I've ever seen a Siberian tiger. Are they very different?"

There was a fractional pause before he replied. "Let—let me show you."

As if in alliance the engineer then added, "The zoo train will stop here for a few minutes if anyone wishes to dismount and have a closer look at Pyramus and Thisbe. Thisbe is pregnant and we look forward to her having cubs in November. Incidentally, Siberian tigers are the largest living cats in the world. They are also very rare and The Greater Vancouver Zoo is very fortunate to have them."

Nancy didn't hesitate when Miles said, "Come on." In fact their descent was so quick that neither Desmond nor Judy had time to do more than expostulate and start to follow suit before the oddly assorted couple were moving up the gentle incline to the low wall and deep moat beyond in search of their goal.

At first neither could see any living creature in the enclosure before them, so they started to walk towards the far corner of the area where poplar trees formed the border with the next setting. They were both perhaps aware that they were putting more distance between them and their companions, and that the small knot of people who had emulated their disembarking from the train formed a concealing screen.

It was then that Miles tugged lightly at the old lady's sleeve. "There's one of them right at the top of the hill. See? I wonder if we can get closer."

"I imagine they don't want us to get closer," said Nancy—not specifying whether she was referring to the tigers or the zoo's officials.

Miles was impervious to that. "That's the emus' pen beyond, and you can see those emus wandering outside. That means their gate must be open. I think we can just go through and climb that little patch of ground if it isn't too much for you."

No question as to whether she wanted to—only a courteous concern with her capability. All hesitation vanished for Nancy. "Why not?" she said, suddenly stirred with excitement. "The train man said ten minutes and we can be there and back by then."

They clambered very slowly up the rocky terrain. It was both rougher and steeper than she'd anticipated but she wasn't telling him. At first there was only a mild buzzing in her ears—a familiar sound which she was willing to dismiss. But it grew more insistent as they climbed higher and the ground beneath them grew rougher.

She forgot all that though, when Miles suddenly hissed: "Look over there. And it's a Siberian. Jesus, that's one big cat!"

Padding silently towards them was a huge tiger, its striped head partially haloed by white fur. The creature wasn't only larger but paler in color than any tigers Nancy had previously seen. As it approached within a few paces of a rickety wire fence—that could be easily jumped, thought Nancy—she grew ever more aware of its furious facial expression : a look of predatory enquiry which seemed frozen there. She quelled a pang of disquiet by addressing the boy. "I believe they're from the Armur-Ussuri region of Siberia. That coat would be much paler in winter. At least in their winter."

Miles took an extra hard look. "That's Pyramus," he announced. He'd stopped climbing. "He doesn't look all that pleased to see us, does he? I wonder where Thisbe is?"

Nancy sensed the nervousness there, even though his actual words didn't betray it.

In spite of the returned clamor to her ears she could hear him shouting at her, asking her if she were alright, telling her to grab his arm and he would lift her.

"If he was born in Seattle, as you thought, I bet he's pretty lazy as a hunter. Food always brought to him and probably at regular times."

As if to prove her remark, Pyramus paused only fractionally to glance at the old and young humans over the fence, then with a flick of the black tip of his massive tail, moved purposively past them and on up the hill.

If Miles had known a moment's apprehension it was now rapidly dispersed. "Notice how he looked at us? He knew we were here all right. But he knew we meant no harm. That's why he came so close. We'd never have had such a good look if we'd stayed down there where we were supposed to."

That reminded Nancy of their arduous climb. "Time we were getting back," she said shortly. "They'll be getting hysterical if we don't show up soon." She didn't wait for the boy's response but started to retreat down the stony slope, sending scattered slivers of slate skittering in front of her.

Miles had almost caught up with her when she fell. One moment he was eyeing her bent form, even wondering whether she was a hunchback, the next he was clutching feverishly at the pile of dusty tweed clothes, a thick woolen jumper and yellowish white hair, freed of its pins, flowing in all directions.

In spite of the returned clamor to her ears she could hear him shouting at her, asking her if she were alright, telling her to grab his arm and he would lift her. But it was her old legs that remained obdurate to his entreaties and her will. She tried to nod her head and mumble a response but all he saw was her body twitch and strange, unintelligible noises come from beneath it. He thought the old lady had had a heart attack and was dying. He already saw himself surrounded by hostile passengers from the train accusing him of leading her to her death in a foolhardy pursuit of Siberian tigers.

The crazy thoughts prompted him to further effort—just as his shouts of protest mixed with appeals for her to get up, stimulated Nancy to conquer her wobbly legs. Whether his youthful vim or her ancient willpower was the source of success it was never for either to know, but somehow the crumpled shape on the sloping rock found equilibrium again.

He was all over her; frantic with relief and disordered with his gestures. He stretched several feet to retrieve her black patent handbag from under a sapling fir where it had been flung by her fall, dusted her bony body down before stooping to recover her knitted beige beret. She slammed the latter over her cascading hair but refused his scampering hands. "Just give me your arm, boy," she muttered through clenched dentures that she realized at that moment had mercifully not fallen out. "If I can lean on you, lad, I'll be all right."

Miles threw himself into his mission of physical support. He would have carried her if he'd been older, taller, stronger. But being none of these things he did as he was told and welcomed her taloned grip of his arm which he held firm to his side as he carefully adjusted his pace alongside hers and led her to the smoothest ground and least steep as they processed to the bottom of the paddock and the open gate.

Miles actually smiled. An invitation to conspiracy with this game old girl whose life he'd just saved was a foretaste of heaven!

When they got there both noticed a bench that they hadn't in their excitement to find the Siberian tigers at close quarters. Nancy sat down with a thump and he did likewise, still brushing what was now largely imaginary bits of dirt from her person.

Already her ears had quieted and apart from a distinct ache in her rump, Nancy was feeling better. She was sure there were no brittle bones broken and all her long life she had never placed too much importance on her sartorial component. It was this which led her to tell Miles very gently that her clothes were alright and that her body had happily escaped lasting injury. When something like calm had smoothed his youthfully anxious features she followed up her remarks by what she considered more pressing ones.

"Now about when we get back—which we must very soon. I think when we talk to your Judy and my Desmond we skip the climbing part, all right? They'll blame us both for what we did and it has nothing to do with either of them!"

Miles actually smiled. An invitation to conspiracy with this game old girl whose life he'd just saved was a foretaste of heaven! "Gosh, I think you're right, Ma'am."

She wasn't having any of that. "After what we have been through, I think we deserve to be Nancy and Miles, don't you?"

He certainly did. "We can tell 'em, Nancy, that we went to take a closer look at the emus. They don't know anything about Siberian tigers in any case. We can say we went to see the emus and maybe photo them because my Dad says they're offering emu meat now in his favorite restaurant. That's Le Petit Sourire on Denman. Judy knows that's true because when he offered to take her there she said yes but only if she could refuse to order emu. Which is odd, considering she told me she likes buffalo steak."

This was wasting time, thought Nancy. "So we stick to photographing emu and if they notice my hair is out of place we can say I tripped and nearly fell into a clump of elder. I'll say that you helped me from falling but in doing so dislodged my bobby pins."

Secretly, Miles thought that a miserably tame version of the truth but then what really happened was their secret. It was something they could share whenever they wanted on their own—but it was not meant to be ever known by strangers like that Desmond who had the cheek to tell him off on the

train, or Judy who thought she could squeeze herself in between him and his Dad.

“That’s okay by me, Nancy,” he said warmly. “We’ll just talk about seeing several emus on the side of the road. How big and muddy brown they were and how we noticed that they have three large toes—which we wouldn’t have seen unless we’d gotten close up to them.”

The old lady grinned at her eager young liar, delighting in their conspiracy. “We can also say,” she added, “that we actually heard the male bird hiss and the females make a kind of booming noise. I know that’s true because it’s in my Wild Life Fact File—but they won’t, of course.”

Nancy felt the seat getting very hard under her. “Time to go,” she said. “But when we’re all back in Vancouver would you like to come to tea or something?”

He looked at her, taking in yet again, her disheveled hair, the claw-like hands with their prominent veins and her bent body which made her not that much taller than himself. “I’d like that,” he said slowly. “Yes, that would be very nice. You see I don’t much go in for friends—and I’ve never had a real old one. And we both like zoos, including now this one where we met, so we’d always have something to talk about.”

She didn’t answer but just nodded vaguely, in fact, hiding her suddenly moist eyes from him. For most of the way back to the waiting train which was now replete, she noticed, with the other passengers who’d disembarked, she allowed him to tend his arm as she shuffled slowly along. But once she realized she was in full sight, she quickly removed her hand. When they were closer enough to board, though, she dismissed Desmond’s efforts to help her up and turned to her new friend instead.

David Watmough is the author of a cycle of fiction that features gay "everyman" Davey Bryant, who has now appeared in eight volumes, including No More into the Garden (1978), Unruly Skeletons (1982), The Year of Fears (1978), The Time of Kingfishers (1994) and Hunting with Diana (1996). Watmough is also a playwright, short story writer, critic, broadcaster and the author of nine other books. His novel Thy Mother's Glass (1992) was nominated in 2002 for Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's Canada Reads. He lives in Vancouver.

Fiction

by Edward M. Turner

William poured sugar in his coffee, stirred it thoughtfully. Tom glanced at him. "How was your weekend?"

William gave a bleak smile. "Don't ask." Sipped his coffee. "We had a lousy time. Didn't pull into our driveway until two this morning."

"Tired, huh."

"Tom, that's the least of it." William stared out the coffee shop's picture window at afternoon traffic. "It started Friday night when we got to the campground. At the sign-in shack, they said they didn't have a record of my reservation. Or my advance payment. The man who took it over the phone? On vacation."

"Man, what'd ya do?"

"Paid again by credit card. They had an open campsite, near the entrance, but a half mile from the pond. By then it was too dark to set up our tent."

"You had to sleep in your station-wagon?"

"Yeah. The kids drove me crazy. They couldn't sleep."

Tom sipped his coffee.

"We got plenty of exercise hiking to the damned water. Listened to people arriving and leaving all through the night, every night. Dust covered everything."

They both fell silent when a shapely girl in a short skirt and high heels walked past. The traffic noticeably slowed as the male drivers ogled her.

"Nice working in a college town…."

"Yup," Tom agreed, "sure is. And I'm inspecting the Lyceum Grill after break. Plenty of students employed there."

William sighed. "My last job is over on Harbor Street."

"Upper or lower?"

"Lower."

"Ouch. Garbage?"

"Fire escape."

"Be careful." Tom finished his bagel, rubbed his hands. "Take your big flashlight and a can of mace."

"Don't worry, I won't hang around. Wish I wasn't so tired, though. Almost didn't wake up in time." William smiled. "The landscapers in the neighborhood must've had the day off. Pretty quiet this morning."

"I cut my own lawn."

William crumpled his coffee cup, pulled out his wallet. "My turn, right?"

"Hey, sure you can afford it? Camping in Maine and all?"

"That's why I skipped my jelly donut. I'll have it next time."

"It figures." Tom left a dollar-fifty tip. Winked at the pretty waitress.

William found a parking spot in front of the apartment building, a four-story Federal of faded red brick. The double doors were propped open with milk crates. Trash consisting of discarded newspapers, McDonald's wrappers, beer and wine bottles spilled out of the foyer and down the steps.

A yellow mongrel dog sat outside the doors wagging its tail.

"Hello, fella." He tentatively reached a hand out. The dog licked it much to his relief. "Good dog." He patted it.

The dog whined, hungry maybe, or just needful for the least sign of affection. It wouldn't go inside.

William entered and climbed the stairs. The stairway and every floor reeked of piss, fried cooking odors, vomit, and as he lingered a moment on each landing—the smell of marijuana and the burny whiff of cooked spoons. The top level lay in darkness. He pulled out his flashlight, flicked it on.

The faint howl of a child cut the quiet like a knife. He listened to a rising yip, yip, yip as if punishment had descended on, or caught, a young guilty soul. The cries abruptly ceased as his footsteps echoed down the hallway's linoleum. He passed that door and knocked on another. He wished for a scented handkerchief for his nose.

The apartment door opened the length of its chain. A woman's bloated face peered at him. "What you want?"

William showed his badge. "Ma'am, I'm a building inspector with the city of Salem. I need access to your apartment in order to check the landlord's fire escape for safety reasons. It's a routine evaluation."

He said in a softer tone, "I must see your fire escape, Ma'am. To make sure it's up to code. If not, we'll see that it's fixed. It'll only take a few minutes. Okay?"

Her eyes registered nothing. The badge, however, got the chain off the latch and her to open. "Yah, I don't care." She stepped aside and let him enter, then glanced both ways in the hallway before slamming the door.

William saw a dimly lit hovel. A naked bulb hung from a wire in the ceiling and illuminated the first room which was the kitchen. A fresh stench revealed a darkened bathroom with no door. Someone used it noisily. Silence waited to see his reactions. He sensed this, gripped his flashlight tighter.

The lady wore a polka dot dress that clung to a surprisingly trim figure. Her hair was gray and ratty and her face had the lined and pitted look of one battered by life. She led him to the living room where he could see the fire escape outside a curtained window.

Then his eyes discovered and became transfixed by a picture over the mantelpiece—of Jesus Christ.

William had first seen the print in Methodist Sunday school years ago. It had Jesus with long auburn hair parted in the middle, a tanned face, soft liquid brown eyes, an aquiline nose, thin lips, firm chin. He wore a pleated off-white shepherd's robe.

Jesus gazed upwards, apparently to His Father in Heaven. The unknown artist had given Him an expression of pensive pain in a face of ethereal beauty.

William smiled, and did a double-take when he noticed a little boy standing beneath. "Well, hello, young fella."

The boy remained silent. By his size he must have been six. He wore only ragged grimy underpants like a loincloth. His penis hung out. On his shaved skull was a wound, the edges like swollen purple lips, stitched with coarse thread by a clumsy hand. Yet his face held the unbelievably expression of a spiritual innocent.

"What happened to you?"

The boy merely stared. The woman said, "Ma boyfriend hit him with a vodka bottle. Thought the little rug-rat wanted some of his booze."

William cleared his throat, suppressed the urge to choke. "The fire escape, Ma'am?"

"Yah, right." The woman gave him a derisive look. "Just open the fuckin' window." She broke wind.

He hurried to the window, lifted the sash and climbed out. A cold breeze blew in his face. He gratefully sucked oxygen into his lungs. Altostratus clouds scudded past a setting sun in a copper-tinged sky. The afternoon temperature was dropping.

He knew. The fire escape was more than sufficient, a quick glance told him that. He knew why. It happened to most city workers and not a few times in his line of responsibility. He knew.

Someone had called, worried about the child.

"This god-damn job." He held the flashlight in a death grip, turned to go in. His face was etched with fury.

After years of skilled labor jobs, Ed. Turner now lives and writes in Biddeford, Maine with his wife, Amy and her black cat, Fannie. He has published stories in a variety of genres and is working on his third novel.

Fiction

by Thomas P. Straw

Editor's Note: *The Crestwood Wars*, a novel in progress, is about two teenagers who vandalize their suburban development, focusing on the house of one neighbor in particular. This excerpt introduces Tom and Steve and their main victim, Bill Greenleaf.

Once again, it was well past nightfall, and two young boys were waging war on their quiet subdivision. In an "innocent" lie typical of good vandals, they had told their parents they were going to blow off some time by walking to the Dairy Mart located at the precipice of their development. This 24-hour convenience store was the only place they could conceivably walk to; more desirable destinations like the Farrel town shopping mall or the McDonald's were the domain only of those teenagers privileged enough to possess driver's licenses. Although they were both sixteen years old, driving was an exclusive club to which the boys did not yet belong, and their respective parents were keen chauffeurs only for those activities related to school or sports.

At one time, treks to Dairy Mart had offered them a legitimate pastime, but overpriced candy bars and soft drinks lost their appeal after the first hundred or so visits, especially since their income was limited. Both dreamed of a time, tantalizingly near in the horizon, when driver's licenses would liberate them from captivity and monotony, like laminated keys to the kingdom. In the meantime, they improvised more creative amusements. Most nights, they departed from their "Dairy Mart" trek at a predetermined spot in the neighborhood and dutifully, joyously, raged their battles within the boundaries given them.

As usual, Steve Kirk was decked out in full vandalizing regalia. He was the one who really looked at it all as some kind of war. A mask of deep black charcoal was spread on his face, outlining and intensifying his hazel eyes. A plain black T-shirt was tucked into a baggy pair of camouflage pants, and the pants narrowed down into what Steve called his "little babies": his pride and joy and most beloved weapon of choice, combat boots. Having something that was purchased at the local Army

Surplus Store really seemed to create a spiritual bond between Steve and all his exalted freedom fighters of the past, the “honest-to-goodness” American men who had marched home victoriously from World Wars I and II, fresh from slaying legions of democracy-scorners while wearing exactly the same black foot attire. He swore on his own mother's honor that he could run more swiftly and comfortably in those than in a pair of the most expensive Nikes, and quite simply, he loved those boots more than Dorian Gray loved his own reflection. He cleaned them. He shined them. And above all, they had blown in more front doors and mutilated more aluminum sidings than most tornadoes.

Steve was a short kid, with wavy, sandy-blonde hair cut short. He normally wore thin, square, gold-frame glasses, but never when vandalizing. His black T-shirt, dark green camouflage pants, and heavy combat boots were indicative of a personality that actively fought against any immediate reactions one might have to his unassuming, almost frail physical stature. He may have been small, but he was always the boss—and rightly so in most circumstances. What some people criticized in him as a lack of imagination he made up for with an unflagging even-headedness and ability to analyze the intricacies of nearly every tight situation. He knew exactly what to do when an irate neighbor (who'd just been wakened to the sound of a shattering window) was pursuing you on one side, and an angry driver (who'd just turned the corner and ran into your trash can barricade over on Cherokee) was coming for you from another, but who continually found himself perplexed in places like his English class, where he might be asked a question about the symbolism in a Shakespearean sonnet. Steve had seen every episode of the television show Combat and every movie in the James Bond canon, but still couldn't stomach two pages of a Batman comic book because it was "too unrealistic" (this was always a source of light-hearted contention between him and Tom).

Tom Hewson, his long-time friend and willing accomplice, was a lot different in both appearance and attitude. He was tall and lean, with the stretchy kind of muscular frame seen on many baseball players, and he indeed played high school and American Legion baseball during the summer and fall, along with basketball in the winter. Although he conquered both activities with ease and accolades, they often seemed too bothersome and time-consuming for him. This wasn't because of laziness, but more because painting, writing, or a good Robert Parker or Harlan Ellison book always offered a more meaningful escape and diversion.

Tom’s medium length, lion's mane black hair, solid green eyes, and quiet self-assurance had won him a definite popularity with girls during his inaugural years in puberty. Until recently, he had reacted to this popularity with a mild interest at best. There was a romantic, and also somewhat more serious, side to Tom which made him yearn for more lasting, and in his eyes, more meaningful contact with other people. Earlier that summer, however, he met a beautiful foreign exchange student from Spain named Carmen Elvira Aguilera at one of his American Legion games. Until that baseball game in June, Tom had never met a girl who could capture his imagination along with his physical attraction. But when the anvil fell, he was completely crushed. At the age of sixteen, Thomas Henry Hewson was convinced that Carmen Elvira Aguilera from Granada, Spain, was the love of his life, though he had known her less than three months. He had already begun the meticulous process of trying to convince her that she felt the same, with some awkward results, but some promising moments, too.

As far as vandalism went, fairly dark clothing and a quiet pair of sneakers was all the get-up necessary for Tom, who laughingly described their pranks as a "post-modern, new-age form of artistic expression" rather than some boring and brutish "war." They weren't mere soldiers, tiny pawns in their superiors' game of chess. Not at all—in their neighborhood, they were their own men; they were artists, who left an inimitable and brutally expensive signature on every house or item of Crestwood property they hit. But being less serious than Steve also meant having a little more reserve, and sometimes even some sympathy. At times, Tom could be extremely cautious, which certainly wasn't always bad; he could serve as a much-needed voice of reason when Steve was ridiculously gung-ho. At other times, however, Steve's sheer enthusiasm and love of danger would lure a tentative Tom into embarking on a risky adventure that he might not have the guts or even the desire to do normally. In short, Steve had the ability to bring something aggressive out in the sometimes passive Tom. He could make him cut loose and be a kid every once in a while, instead of, as Steve complained, "sitting around all day and thinking about so many damn things."

Officially, they called themselves the Capitalist Vandals' Club, or CVC, and they made quite a team. And they had never been caught.

"And don't ever intend to!" Steve would always chuckle to his friend after a good hit. "They shouldn't even try."

"Of course not!" Tom would join, in the heat of excitement. "How can two straight-laced, All-American capitalists get caught? For Christ's holy sake, we're supporting the artistic endeavors of the United States of America by doing what we're doing! I'd say it's about time we got that NEA grant, how about you?"

"Not only that, but a nice, long letter of thanks from window companies, aluminum siding businesses, car repair shops, paint companies—all of them! As far as I'm concerned, we're one of the greatest supporters of American business anyone could think of. Do you know what would happen if American business went kaput?" He'd phrase these last words in the form of a statement rather than a question, mostly because he always answered it himself anyway: "We'd have to go commie," he'd whisper morbidly, jokingly stating what probably was a remote but real fear of his.

"So, you see, no matter how you look at it, we're doing them a favor," Tom would proclaim, once and for all.

Virtually no one in the neighborhood, barring their parents, were spared the agony of their "favors." Some got it less, and some got it more, but virtually no one escaped. That was simply the rule of thumb, the law of their Vandal Land. But for whatever reason, there was one particular person who took it on the chin more often than Gerry Cooney. He got it more often than anyone when Steve and Tom waged their war and created their art. They saved the "special" things for him. They always inflicted the most damage, both financially and egotistically, on him. For he, like no other victim in the subdivision, "deserved it."

His name was Bill Greenleaf, a mailman who resided at 4245 Iroquois Lane, the very street on which the two boys lived.

Now, after a long night of "little" hits, or “pcc’s,” they were on their way to Greenleaf's home for the “granddaddy”—the last and biggest hit of the evening, the coup de grace. Their hearts raced with excitement and with preliminary, obligatory pangs of fear. This was a very special hit, almost a ceremonial occasion. On Monday, school would resume, marking the start of Fall and the end of another vandalizing season. They might do a hit here and there before the heavy snows started to fall, as boredom and other circumstances dictated, but for the most part, they were finished with “granddaddy” gestures until the following summer. As was their custom, they wanted to “go out with a bang.”

Therefore, they had been planning this hit for quite some time.

Bill Greenleaf was no stranger to pranks. He had fallen victim to them countless times over the last four years or so, but had no way of catching the vandals or of proving who they were in any conclusive way. The cops were certainly no help; he'd called them many times, but all they ever did was come over, fill out their senseless forms, and promise to beef up car patrols in the area because others, and not just he, had complained about the prevalence of vandalism in Crestwood. In a way, Greenleaf supposed that he understood. What really could they do about it from the inside of a patrol car, which could fall victim to an errant rock or apple just as easily as a house (if not more easily)? And no car could chase anyone through a back yard.

The city of Farrel was growing bigger every day. Ballooning, in fact. What was once an essentially rural, Western Reserve area of Northeast Ohio, just south of Cleveland, with a population of about 10,000 in 1970, had swelled to a suburb of nearly 40,000 by the mid-1980s. When Bill Greenleaf bought his house in 1973, it was part of a Ryan Home development, Crestwood Estates, which boasted in its sales literature of being the essence of “contemporary” and “state of the art.” Not even fifteen years later, co-workers regularly called the Crestwood subdivision the “old section” of town.

On the surface, it seemed absurd, but in reality, it was the truth. Every section of housing surrounding Crestwood in a five-mile circle was newer than the housing immediately bordering it. All were Ryan Homes, or at least similarly planned and templated. The houses in Crestwood came in only eight styles that the sales brochure trumpeted as “modern in their amenities yet traditional in design.”

Much to his pride, Bill Greenleaf’s was model #4, the biggest available two-story in the plan, the “contemporary Western Reserve.” It hardly mattered that the house looked nothing like a true Western Reserve cottage house; the truth was, Greenleaf wasn’t entirely sure what constituted “Western Reserve” architecture, and didn’t much care. The important features were these: a two-car garage, air conditioning, and a big lawn. Those were precisely the “modern amenities” he was looking for at the time.

Iroquois Lane once dead-ended into three and a half acres of woods. Those acres had now been shaved to just under one (new condos on the far end, a small park consisting of four swings and a jungle gym at the Iroquois entrance). Greenleaf had heard some murmuring that the remaining woods were earmarked for further development, probably condos, and figured it was simply a matter of time. The area had two grade schools in 1973; the number was now at six, with two more under construction.

Both infrastructure and public safety were now scurrying to keep up with all the growth. The Farrel police couldn't spare the manpower of having anyone patrol the subdivision on foot. The very idea of a policeman on foot made one officer laugh out loud a year or so ago, when Greenleaf suggested it (that time after a broken garage window). Besides, in the overall picture, the vandalism problem really wasn't that serious from the police's perspective—he, Bill Greenleaf, was the only one getting it with any consistency, for reasons he couldn't even begin to fathom. He knew that the only way the cops could ever do anything about this is if he caught the group of pranksters himself (he was convinced that it was just one group of kids responsible), toted them under his arms by the seat of their pants, and carried them, kicking and screaming, to the police station. It was a delicious thought, but his inability even to catch a glimpse of these kids had left a taste in his mouth that was more than sour.

In many respects, it was like trying to guard against some randomly recurring storm: you knew damn well it was going to come, and hit hard, but it never actually did until the moment you eased up and let your guard down. Sometimes, after particularly cruel or damaging incidents, he'd stay up entire weekend nights and look out for his phantom antagonists, often dozing off in his chair by the living room window at three or four in the morning, empty coffee pot at his feet and odd, caffeine-induced nightmares spinning about in his brain. But sure enough, once all the waiting and watching became too tiresome and seemingly futile, once he was convinced that the pranksters' strange satisfactions had finally been met, they would . . . well . . . come back. Just as swiftly, unexpectedly, and expensively as every time before, they would come back.

Greenleaf worked very long days as a mailman, and on the weekends, he enjoyed the visits he frequently got from Steve Kirk and his "nice friend," Tom Hewson, from down the street. They liked to play basketball with him at the hoop that stood in his driveway, and they sometimes even volunteered to help him out with his lawn work, always flatly refusing payment at first, but then relenting to a "reduced rate." He had scarcely thought of them as anything other than "good kids." Sometimes, on hot summer days, after a long afternoon of shooting baskets under a blaring sun, he would give them each a Coors beer and invite them onto his cool back patio to enjoy some drink, talk, and shade.

Greenleaf never seemed to realize that Tom and Steve thought of him as an utterly silly man. Greenleaf also never seemed to realize that Steve and Tom sarcastically poked fun at him, right under his nose. It only weakly went both ways: Greenleaf subtly patronized them, without even really knowing he was doing it, and apparently never picking up on the fact that his young friends were more viciously and deliberately returning the favor.

Frequently, he would stumble onto his back patio, quite light-headed from the three beers he'd consumed over the course of an entire afternoon, and bellow: "Well, you two boys better not go home and tell mommy and daddy that I've been feeding you beer. I have a reputation of responsibility to uphold around the subdivision, right? Well, don't answer that . . . huh-uh! Just promise me you'll walk to Dairy Mart before going home to pick up a pack of gum. That'll get the smell off your breath, you know. It'll also give you some time to dissipate any fog you might have in your heads. You guys haven't been drinking for as long as I have, so I understand if your noggins might be doing some serious 360s! Speaking of which," he'd spout, his baby-face cheeks aglow with his new train of thought, "either of you two guys ever see The Exorcist?"

Rolls of flab clung to his arms and legs and wobbled humorously as he moved and talked. His thin, dirty-blonde hair, though receding quickly, had tight, baby-like curls. He continually squinted through thin, gold, wire-frame glasses (much like the ones Steve had), and they stubbornly slid down his face no matter what he was doing. Although he certainly was a "silly" person in both appearance and disposition, Steve thought him too utterly witless even to be a good ham. Accordingly, he had concocted the nickname "Chilly Willy" for him, the "Chilly" part being a mixture of his principle two attributes (silly and chubby) and the "Willy" a derisive version of his full first name. Greenleaf had mentioned in passing once that he abhorred being addressed as "William."

Chilly Willy boasted—even what you might say "lectured"—endlessly about being a Korean War veteran. This fact didn't roust much respect out of the two boys. First off, Tom's interests did lean more toward sports, reading, writing, and painting pictures of comic book characters and pro athletes. And lately, of course, there was Carmen. Steve, though totally infatuated with the American military and the wars they wage, and perfectly willing to listen to and interact with Greenleaf when he went off on one of his "forgotten war" tangents, still couldn't find anything favorable to say about a veteran of the first police action that the God-fearing Americans actually hadn't won. The truth was, he commonly held up Greenleaf as an A-1 reason why they hadn't. Both Steve and Tom were fairly certain that he'd never heard a shot fired in anger during his entire stay in the service, and believed that the war had done just two things for him: land him his ho-hum job at the post office, and secure him another belligerent nickname courtesy of the "nice kids" down the street: Corporal Fudgepacker.

That night, the Corporal was undoubtedly half-asleep in front of his television set, an evening of casualties strewn about the floor underneath his green reclining chair—casualties commonly known as empty pop cans and ravaged 5th Avenue candy bar wrappers.

Outside, Steve and Tom crouched down in his side yard, surveying the area and giggling madly.

You always had to watch for joggers. And for dog-walkers. No matter how late it was, it seemed that

the people in the Crestwood subdivision had their own set times for when they wanted to burn off that extra piece of chocolate cake or take a walk with poodle Mimi with the screaming bowels. Tom thought the dog-walkers were more understandable. Even though Shawnee, Cherokee, and Iroquois all dead-ended into the small woods at the north end of the subdivision, providing a would-be perfect bathroom for any pet, it was usually all-too futile to try and ask your dog to wait just one more minute to do what its body had been pleading and hollering to do for several hours. To avoid the embarrassment, and, indeed, the danger of having your dog do a number two on the golf-course lawn of some shotgun-toting suburbanite, most pet owners (at least those without pooper scoopers) chose to walk at rather strange hours. Thus, any “accidents” that might happen would be conveniently untraceable gifts for any hot-tempered neighbors.

Because Tom was generally too nervous and excited even to think of watching out for these people, he was glad to have a partner with an eye, ear, and memory for the smallest details. This was another way in which the boys' talents complemented one another: “Picasso” Tom's expansive imagination would come up with a wild idea, and “Captain Kirk” Steve's patience and coolness paved it into a reality. Even when Tom made a special effort to be as attentive as Steve, it never worked because he found himself jumping and running at the sound of a leaf crackling under his shoe. With Steve, he knew he could relax and concentrate on the task at hand while his friend, through unbending calm and sharp senses, could play the perfect sentinel through his eyes, ears, and nose. No matter how "out there" Tom got mentally, Steve never failed to warn him of incoming danger, and more importantly, he had never been wrong or guilty of "jumping the gun."

He was doing it again now. He was just in front of Tom, down on all fours, and shrouding the left side of his body wih the corner bushes of Greenleaf's house. He stretched his head forward and stared to his right, the upper part of Iroquois, as if he were scanning the open waters of Loch Ness for a glimpse of the monster. Just behind and a little to the right of him, Tom was still trying to stifle his laughter, and his attempts yielded a sound not unlike someone trying to hawker discreetly. Steve slowly raised his right hand in annoyance and then began waving it, as if swatting at mosquitoes. Eventually, he snapped his head around and hissed: "Shut the Hell up, would ya? You wanna be calling our parents from the jail cell at City Hall? Huh? Just shut the Hell UP!"

The charcoal on his face and the mad gleam in his eyes reminded Tom of the way Martin Sheen looked at the end of Apocalypse Now. This image tickled out another bit of laughter, but he managed to stifle himself by the time Steve craned his head back around to stare off down the street again, hand still poised in the air.

About fifteen seconds passed.

There was nothing. They were alone under the stars of a bright August night, and the only eye upon them was the large half-moon hanging high in the navy blue sky.

Steve turned back around. Tom could see every muscle in his body relax, and the glazed intensity in his eyes had been switched off as if by command. Now he looked at Tom as if he were studying him.

"Alright, Tom, do you want me to do it or you?"

As usual, Tom sensed that the question was basically a rhetorical one. "Doesn't really matter, I guess . . . you know. We gotta go up together, so it doesn't really matter."

"Yeah, right. Well, you're carrying it, so you may as well do the dirty work. But I'll go up with you, of course. I'll be the messenger, if you know what I mean." He paused, and looked down with a smile at his combat boots, his beloved Little Babies. That Martin Sheen look in his eyes was slowly returning. He gave the area another brief scan and turned back to his friend.

"Remember, Tom, if we get caught, we get caught together."

"Yeah, together," Tom replied, and they shook hands in the way only they knew how.

In slightly stooped positions, they crept along the front of the house, parallel to the line of bushes hugging Greenleaf's porch. The porch light was on, and any neighbor from across the street, including Steve's own parents, who happened to be looking out a front or side window could easily have seen them. Fortunately for them, late-night window-gazing was not a Crestwood tradition, nor was porch-sitting, at any time of day or night. Ryan homes simply were not designed to accommodate these things very comfortably. All focus, all activity, was geared inward, toward telephones, video games, and television sets. This played perfectly into the two vandals' hands.

Tom was still giggling under his breath. Steve couldn't help but laugh now quietly himself. They stepped side by side onto the porch and stood in front of the new storm door that preceded Greenleaf's blue front one. Two small windows bookended them, revealing a fully lit front hall. They could see the television casting shadows on the far wall of his family room, occasionally revealing a spot of the extraordinarily messy floor. Greenleaf was probably in the kitchen, fetching his six hundred and fourteenth midnight snack now that the Tonight Show had started.

They both looked down at what was on the cardboard slab that Tom was carrying, and their noses curled in disgust.

The moment had come. Tom raised the cardboard like a rifleman hoisting his gun in a firing squad. Through his stifled giggling, he whispered: "Happy hosing, Corporal Fudgepacker." He spread the lump all over the front screen window. Then, he stuck the cardboard to the middle portion of the door, where there was nothing but clear glass.
He stepped backward, waiting out that impossibly long moment before Steve rang the Doorbells of Doom, and they could both run. He had already started laughing when he glanced into the left side window, but quickly stopped when he realized who he saw.

It was Bill Greenleaf.

Thank God, he was not on just the other side of the door. He was a good fifteen feet away from them and was indeed taking a slow trudge into the kitchen, staring straight into the entrance as if sleep walking or hypnotized. If he chose to take a sharp look to his left, he would be peering into the guilty and wide-eyed face of Tom.

There was no warning or stopping Steve. Tom had realized the proximity of the enemy in something well under a panic-inducing second. By the time his eyes were back on Steve, he saw that his friend's right leg was halfway through its motion.

Steve smashed the aluminum siding by the side of the door like a field goal kicker with the Super Bowl hanging in the balance. A resounding BOOM! seared into the quiet night as they scrambled off the porch, darting across the front lawn and into the darkness.

Just as Tom knew he would be, Greenleaf was there in seconds. He opened the main door quickly, not knowing what to expect this time. If he fixed his gaze only slightly beyond the storm door, he would see the two of them scurrying just out of vision; however, what had been left behind was carefully designed to catch his eye and stop him.

Greenleaf’s nose wrinkled in the same way that the two boys' had moments before. His eyes rolled and squinted in repulsion.

He stepped back and screamed.

"OH MY GOD WOULD YOU LOOK AT THIS JESUS FUCKING CHRIST I'LL KILL THOSE BASTARDS I'LL FUCKING KILL THEM!!"

His voice echoed into the night even louder than the sound of a combat boot against aluminum siding.

Now across the street, in the dark side yard of a friendly neighbor, Tom and Steve had to slow momentarily and hold their shaking bellies. They were laughing so hard they could hardly breathe, Greenleaf's tantrum had amused them so much. But in another moment they were off and running again, knowing that their victim could have decided to pursue. Too out of breath to speak, they merely glanced at each other and knew where they were going.

Just the chance of someone coming for them—even someone having to overcome an insurmountable head start—filled them with an impossible rush, an incredible sense of thrill. Every peep of the night was amplified and then unified, like the sounds of some animal orchestra. The crickets were roaring; the thud of the two boys' racing footsteps was the beat of a drum and the crash of a cymbal. Owls and other night birds seemed to come alive and call. Steve and Tom breathed like racehorses but knew that their mixture of fear and exhilaration would carry them practically a marathon's space from danger.

By the time they reached their secret hiding place, one of the many they had throughout Crestwood, they knew no one had come after them. But the thought of it was enough. For those few minutes, they had achieved that combined feeling of power and fright that they hoped for every time they went about their damage business.

Their hiding place was a couple streets over from Iroquois, located well behind a house on Shawnee

Drive, within the vast expanse of backyards between Cherokee and Shawnee. There was a woodpile that stood about three feet from an old storage shed, and the boys often settled down and hid between the two. The area was surrounded on three sides by tall, thick pine trees and was a good forty yards from that house that owned it and even further from any other. Much to their benefit, all backyards in the subdivision were huge.

Steve had invented a strict protocol to follow when hiding there, one that ensured their safety. They always rested between the shed and the woodpile, but Steve would lie down, facing away from the pile, and Tom would sit up, looking toward it. Each one kept a close eye out in either direction. No one was going to get near them when they were hiding there. Even if by some miracle someone got close to them, they still had their cans of mace.

Indeed, Steve thought of everything.

Tom remembered how they had "shopped around" for spots like these one summer Saturday night, just a few years ago. That night, their spirits, for whatever reason, weren't quite high enough to do any serious hitting. Searching like that on an "off-night" must surely constitute an obsession, but Tom tried to avoid thinking about that now. Seeing Greenleaf through that side window had put him into a drastic state of mind, and he didn't want to start getting the shakes.

They had both caught their breath sufficiently now and were satisfied that things had cooled down as much as they were going to. There was no sign of flashing lights, or speeding white cars, so Greenleaf had most likely taken his medicine quietly and not called the police. For about fifteen minutes, they exchanged chuckles but actually said very little. Hiding places served another purpose when the hiding was over: they were a kind of staging area where the boys regrouped and decided if they were going to venture out and strike again, or if they were going to pack it all in and call it an evening. Silence always meant exhaustion, satisfaction, or both. Thus, it wasn't long before they stood up, coasted discreetly out into the open of Cherokee Drive, and started taking the quiet road back toward Huron Drive, then Iroquois, then Steve's house. There, if Steve's parents were in bed (God willing), they'd catch some late night cable TV until it was time for Tom to go home.

Yet unknown even to the ever-attentive Steve, a pair of eyes watched them carefully from about fifty yards behind. These eyes hadn't seen them in their secret hiding place, nor did they witness first-hand the multiple acts of vandalism Tom and Steve had performed that evening. Still, the person using these eyes had fully expected to see the boys cruising the neighborhood on foot that night; it was just a matter of where, and when.

Although it was a relatively bright night, Tom and Steve's dark clothes, coupled with fifty or so yards of distance, might have made it difficult for the watcher to identify them. But their observer knew exactly what he was looking for. He knew Steve Kirk and Tom Hewson, and specifically, he knew the way they moved, especially when together: one shadow, so much taller than the other, walking briskly in a manner that was athletic but "jumpy" at the same time, and the other shadow, less athletic in its movement, but also somehow measured, deliberate, calculating.

Their stalker only needed to observe them for as long as it took to verify it was them, and to make sure they were headed home. He followed them to the corner of Cherokee and Huron, staying at the juncture after the boys had taken their left. He then watched them go right onto Iroquois, towards the woods, using the backyards instead of the sidewalk.
That was all he needed to see; he was now 100 percent sure, rather than just 99, that these were his men. When the boys were out of his view, he turned directly around and coasted one block east, over to where he'd parked his car on the northern part of Shawnee Drive. In order for his plan to proceed any further, he definitely needed his car to be a little closer at hand.

Unaware, the two boys said nothing to each other, but Tom's mind was racing. There were a lot of things he wanted to talk to Steve about. For one, even though Tom had calmed down a lot by now, he was still a bit freaked about how close Greenleaf had come to turning his head on a whim and nabbing the two of them. Tom also wanted to talk about their lives, their friendship, and how things shouldn't have to be so different between them once school started again on Monday.

Another of Tom's friends, Josh Adler, had called the previous week from Oregon to announce his return to Ohio some time Saturday evening; therefore, if previous years were any indication, Tom's recreational activities would soon change radically. He and Josh would now spend hours creating their own comic books, containing elaborate characters such as "Helmet Head" and "The Vomit Monster," with Josh drawing most of the pictures and Tom writing all the texts. They would do athletic activities, like shoot baskets (with someone other than Greenleaf, that is). They would avidly follow the Cleveland Browns. As was his custom, Josh would quote song lyrics incessantly, and hilariously. They would talk about girls, and boy, did Tom have a lot to talk about in that regard.

One thing they wouldn't do—and had never done—was vandalize Crestwood, or any other subdivision. Perhaps partly because of this, they had also never found a way to include Steve Kirk in their recreational activities. They had never so much as discussed the topic.

Very soon, Tom, Josh, and Steve would be returning to this strange world, this stilted dynamic. As he did every year, Tom wanted to talk to Steve about this, but he wanted to wait until they were in the complete safety and confidence of Steve's family room. Tom wasn't sure why, but tonight was the first time that he did not feel completely at ease in their pine-shed lookout.

Even worse, for the whole way home, he had an eerie but very clear feeling that they were being watched.

Thomas P. Straw is a web designer and freelance writer who lives in Aspinwall, PA with his wife, son, and three cats. His reviews and essays have most recently appeared on-line at Pittsburgh Citysearch and Democratic Underground; in the print world, he has written liner notes for three CD re-issues of the folk group Bud and Travis, and his essay "The Mystery Of The Blues" appears in the recent Fireside book, Tanya Tucker's 100 Ways To Beat The Blues. The Crestwood Wars is his first novel, and he has just begun the process of finding a publisher.

Fiction

by Steven Mayoff

Editor's Note: This story is an excerpt from Steven Mayoff's novel in progress, *Mariasse*.

The soft folds of distant hills were melting into Wyoming's purple-blue dusk. Martin Weintraub gazed into the blackening window of the Greyhound motorcoach and was confronted by his own reflection: a chiaroscuro of distorted features. Darkness carved jutting angles into his fleshy cheeks and made his eyes seem sunken and hollow. Shadowy creases at the sides of the mouth reminded him of a ventriloquist's dummy and he moved his chin up and down, conscious of a tiny clicking behind his jaw. For some reason he found the sensation pleasing. He straightened his tie. Although his suit was wrinkled and his ass numb from sitting for so long, a familiar exhilaration bubbled through his veins.

He estimated the bus would get to Las Vegas in about ten hours. The flight bag sat snugly between his feet, right where he knew it was safe, rather than in the overhead compartment. He hadn't opened the bag since boarding the bus at Port Authority in New York almost a day and a half ago. And now, though he knew it was better to wait until he was alone, all he wanted was to peek inside.

He craned his head to look around. Some of the passengers were reading, the tops of their heads haloed by small overhead directional lights, like illuminated fissures along a narrow tunnel. But most seemed to be asleep in their cubicles of darkness. The old woman next to him had her narrow bird-chin pressed sharply into the top of her sunken chest. Her breathing a steady nasal whistle. Martin decided against turning on the light above him.

Angling his shoulder against the reclining seat in front of him, he reached down between his cramped knees and lifted the flight bag onto his lap. He liked the weight of it on his thighs, the reptilian feel of the cracked vinyl exterior against his palms. He had used this bag in the early days when he was a still a junior salesman for Fine Brothers.

All those years on the road—driving or flying, spending his mornings in airports and nights in

hotels—were a grind. But he had loved it. Later on, working in the main showroom on St. Catherine Street in downtown Montreal, he had sold suits to famous athletes, television personalities and politicians and swiftly made his way up in the company. In the late seventies, when the headquarters moved to New York, Martin went right along, relocating himself, Roz and the girls from their upper duplex in Chomedey, to a condominium in Fort Lee, New Jersey. He had been young, energetic, ambitious.

Now he ran the tip of his index finger along the flight bag's cold metal zipper, feeling the hard and perfect mesh of the tiny teeth. Even in the dimness he could still admire the gleam of its merciless grin. He held the zipper's pull tab lightly between his thumb and forefinger and gently tugged—slowly—so as not to make a sound except for the tiny clicks of stuttering anticipation as the teeth parted, inhaling the bag's sour-breath sigh as it opened to reveal the money.

His hand slipped into the bag and caressed the brick-like bundles, rubbing the taut ridges of elastic bands that held the bills together. There was about ten thousand dollars in total. He felt something accelerating inside him, ricocheting madly between his ribs—pinging each xylophone note—and crackling right up into his brain. There was a distinct catch in his breathing, the skip in a record played at the wrong speed, as his thumb riffled the bound bills. Strumming a muted melody on the papery edges. Excited that he was on his way to Las Vegas. Determined to turn his life around and start all over again. Nothing could stop him now.

Martin had no idea how long the old woman beside him had been awake. Her head was up and he could make out the corners of her eyes staring nervously at him.

"I hope I didn't wake you," he said and gave her a friendly smile.

"No," she mouthed with barely a whisper and shook her head insistently.

Martin realized that his hand was still in the flight bag, like a little boy caught with his hand in the cookie jar. For a moment he thought he saw the woman trying to sneak a peek inside. What the hell, he thought. Give the old broad a thrill.

"Just making sure it's all there," he said, tilting the bag so she could have a clearer view of all that money.

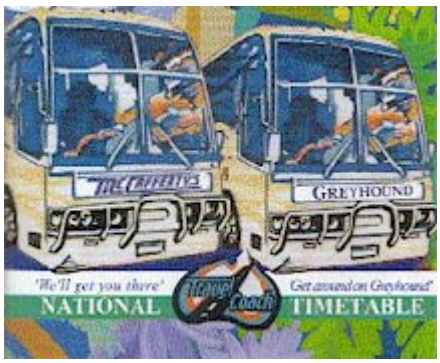
"Oh dear." The woman's eyes widened for a moment, excited and terrified. Then she turned away to study the headrest of the seat in front of her.

"Don't be scared," he said. "It all belongs to me."

"Shouldn't you put it in a bank or somewhere safe?"

"There's no safer place than right here." He patted the bag like a faithful old dog. "Besides, this is peanuts. Once I hit the tables it's going to double in size."

She looked at him sceptically. "Well, I wish you good luck."



"Do you want to touch it?"

"I beg your pardon?"

"For good luck," he said. "Not that I need it. But you never know, a little extra mojo never hurt anyone."

The woman peered into the bag's gaping maw. "I'm not sure about that, but I do know what they say about a fool and his money."

"So, humour me." He opened the bag wider and edged it closer to her. "It won't bite."

"I'd rather not."

"You never know," he said with a sly wink. "It just might turn out lucky for you too."

"Well… I don't know."

"C'mon." Martin looked at her with the same earnestness that had inspired confidence in all his clients throughout the years. "What have you got to lose?"

The woman tentatively reached over, tempted despite herself. Before her hand could touch the money Martin zipped the bag closed with a sharp metallic squeal, making her jump back with a start.

"How dare you."

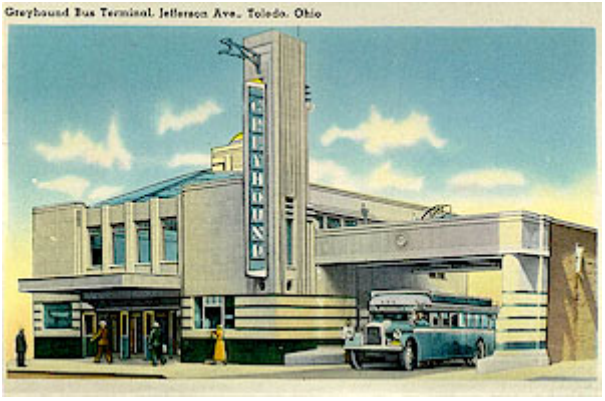
"Here's another little proverb," said Martin. "'Money is honey, my little sonny, a rich man's joke is always funny.'"

She stared at him incredulously, her mouth almost as wide as the bag's had been. Unsure of what to say or do next, she got up and went to the bathroom at the back of the bus. Serves her right, thought Martin. Nobody calls me a fool.

He returned the flight bag to the floor between his feet. Despite the extra legroom afforded by the woman's departure, he squirmed against his seat's unyielding contours.

In the window his reflection was a dissipating mist floating across invisible miles that stretched into oblivion. Something like rigor mortis was forming in the back of his thighs. He furtively reached

into his suit jacket's inside pocket and slipped out a small pewter flask, a gift from Fine Brothers for closing the Macy's deal. He unscrewed the cap and took a quick pull. The warmth of the whiskey spread inside him, bringing his reflection's piercing eyes and crooked grin into sharper focus. He suddenly felt reunited with this disembodied half of himself, imprinted onto the cold glass like some kind of spiritual x-ray. One more pull and he pocketed the flask. He was dying for a smoke.



Out of the darkness the voice of the driver announced that they would be pulling in at a rest stop in twenty minutes.

The Greyhound pulled into the large and mostly empty parking lot of a brightly lit McDonald's. Although he felt uneasy about leaving the flight bag unguarded, Martin figured it was better to keep it stashed under his seat than draw attention by carrying it around. Badly in need of a cigarette, he stood impatiently amidst the other passengers as they scrambled for belongings in the overhead compartments before slowly shuffling out. The woman who'd been sitting beside him (angled pointedly with her back to him after she had returned from the bathroom) was now, little by little, sidling her slight frame past everyone to get closer to the door. Martin focused his stare but was unsuccessful in burning a hole into the back of her head. When he finally did reach the front, his stiff legs unsteadily descended the bus steps.

The night's sultriness felt almost oppressive after sitting for so long in the climate-controlled motorcoach. Martin dug a pack of Winstons from a second inside pocket (beneath the one that held the flask) and quickly lit up. Sucking that first sweet drag deeply into his lungs, the nicotine rush mushroomed pleasantly behind his eyes—he could feel them going glassy—before replenishing something inside him.

Concerned about the flight bag, he decided to stay near the bus, keeping on the lookout to see who would be heading back from the diner first. Just for good measure he wanted to be back in his seat before the old woman was in hers. There was no way he would be beholden to her for making room for him so he could sit down. He wanted it to look as if he hadn't left the bus the whole time, that he was able to hold his ground.

He drew the flask out and took an extra long swig. The fiery gold spread through him, seeping into nooks and crannies, ironing out the creases from so many hours of sitting. It felt good to stretch his legs and look out at the vast night sky, inlaid by a beautifully mysterious pattern of stars. Was it possible that their movements really governed his life? Could they be aligning in his favour at this very moment?

Martin sometimes read his horoscope in the Post as a lark, but didn't put too much stock in it. He was an Aquarius and had heard somewhere that Aquarians were often iconoclasts with a tendency to stand apart from the mainstream. They supposedly also had an unusual sense of fashion.

In neither aspect had he exactly been a shining example of Aquarian virtue. For one thing, he had always taken pains to blend into conventional society with a chameleon's innate sense of self-preservation. He exhibited no inclinations to rock the boat or shake up the status quo.

As for an unusual fashion sense, again he felt he didn't qualify, having sold men's suits for all of his adult life. Basic conservative business outfits—like the charcoal pinstriped jacket and pants he was wearing—had been his stock in trade for the past thirty years.

This particular suit, made from a "high-twist" worsted wool and perfect for summer, nevertheless didn't travel well over long distances and had become rumpled and grubby from sitting thirty-six hours on the bus. These were the same clothes Martin had been wearing when he went to work at Teller's on Wednesday. The same clothes in which he had been last seen by his manager, Mr. Adilman, when he left that evening with the day's bank deposit. As usual he had walked north along Fifth Avenue towards Chase Manhattan. But instead of making the deposit, Martin continued walking to the bus station.

He took off his jacket and slung it over his shoulder. With a couple of tugs he loosened his tie so it hung around him like a freshly cut noose. Undoing his collar and the next button as well, he exposed a bit of white cotton undershirt that barely covered the uppermost tuft of greying chest hair. He scraped a knuckle against the sandpapery beginning of stubble on his chin. It usually bothered him to look unkempt, made him feel dirty, but out here in the middle of nowhere he was happy to let his inner Aquarian emerge.

The diner's neon sign cast a pinkish, otherworldly glow that reached the rim of the parking lot, illuminating a row of payphones near the entrance. He noticed a vacant phone at the end of the row, away from where a couple of people were holding hushed conversations.

Martin studied the vacant payphone, the way the receiver was hooked neatly at the front of the rectangular casing, like some kind of cubist sculpture—a gloomy figure with head held unhappily in one hand, the square grouping of numbered buttons like distracted inward-looking eyes. To Martin the face expressed worry. Doubt. Shame. A face that reminded him of Roz, how she might be looking at this very moment.

Martin took one last drag of his cigarette and flicked it into the darkness. He ambled over to the payphone, jingling the change in his pocket, wondering what he would say. If only he could convince her that this time things would be different. Sure he took the money, he'd never done anything like that before. And that's why things would be different. Because he took a chance, seized the moment. How could things not go his way this time? He was going to make a bundle in Vegas. He'd pay all the money back to Teller's with interest. Why couldn't she believe in him for once?

It was around ten o'clock in New Jersey. Roz would be drinking her glass of warm milk before bed. It was a habit she had acquired when she started working again (after Martin had been axed from Fine Brothers). Dani would be just getting home from her evening job at Borders. Anything to be around books. She was the aspiring writer in the family. Sophie would most likely be watching MTV

or talking to her friends on her cell.

Had the police had been notified yet? Could the line be tapped?

Feeling lucky, he fished a quarter out of his pocket. Heads he would call now, tails he would wait until he was in Las Vegas. He flipped the coin into the air and caught it in his palm, slapping it against the back of his other hand.

The payphone rang.

Martin stared helplessly at the telephone hand, which pressed against the telephone face in a vain attempt to ease an agony that had now found a voice. It rang again, begging Martin to do something. He wanted to walk away, but something told him it was too late to ignore it. If he waited a minute maybe it would stop. It rang two more times before he reluctantly removed the telephone hand from the telephone face and placed it beside his own.

“Hello?”

Immediately he heard a woman’s voice speaking in a foreign language. She sounded upset, but he couldn’t understand anything she was saying. “You’re calling a payphone. Do you speak English? Wrong number. Do you understand?”

The woman continued her desperate blather. Soon he recognised that she was speaking Yiddish. Although he was not fluent, he certainly knew the odd word here and there.

“Who do you want?” he said, trying to think of the yiddish translation. He could only remember the first word. “Ver?”

The woman on the phone started to weep. “Nain! Nain! Farlozen mir nisht! Farlozen mir nisht!”

Something twisted in Martin’s chest. The words were familiar to him. He could remember his grandmother, bubbe Betty, sobbing those words at his mother’s funeral. Dvorah, Dvorah! Farlozen mir nisht, Dvorah!

Don’t abandon me, Dvorah.

Part of him felt genuinely sorry for this woman on the phone. But the hysteria in her voice, such fury and despair, also stirred up confused emotions. Mostly he couldn’t help feeling irritated. His first thought was to simply hang up on her, but he found he couldn’t bring himself to do it.

“Why did you call here? Farshtaist?”

The woman continued without acknowledging that she could or could not understand Martin. She kept crying and pleading as if she hadn’t heard him at all. Maybe there was some kind of crossed wire and he could hear her but she couldn’t hear him. Still she kept on.

"Can you hear me?" he shouted. "Are you listening?" Static crackled in his ear. The line was starting to break up.

"Farlozen mir nisht, mein yinguele!" The voice was brittle, filtered through tinfoil.

Martin pressed the receiver to his ear with both hands, suddenly desperate to hold that voice close to him. He racked his brains for something to say.

"Where are you?" The rumbling static grew into a thundering white noise. "Don't go!"

Then the line went dead. For a moment there was silence, followed by the flat hum of a dial tone. Martin replaced the receiver on the hook. The telephone hand sadly touching the telephone face. Grieving a loss.

He lit another cigarette, wondering if the call was long distance, from another country. It had that far away quality about it. It felt as if he'd been listening in on a one-sided conversation, that he was a third party who'd accidentally been pulled in.

Some of the passengers started boarding the bus. He cursed, remembering the flight bag of money under his seat. How could he let himself get so distracted? He checked the window of the diner and saw the driver stubbing out his cigarette and swallowing the last of his coffee.

Martin strode quickly toward the bus, smoking his cigarette right down to the filter. The voice echoed in his ears and he kept looking back at the payphone. Head in hand. Abandoned again. He stopped. The driver stepped outside of the diner and took his sweet time walking across the parking lot, nodding to Martin as he passed.

Aboard the bus, Martin found the old woman already in her seat. He stood there in the aisle, waiting for her to either stand or shift her legs so he could pass. He was sure he caught a momentary flicker of smugness crossing her face before she lifted her frail legs ever so slightly with undisguised annoyance. He edged his way past and folded himself into his seat. The bag was still safe underneath.

It was only now, and only God knew why, that he wondered if his coin had come up heads or tails. In any case there was no point in calling Roz until after he after rested up in his hotel room. As the bus pulled away he craned his neck for one last glimpse of the payphone and its mournful salute.

Steven Mayoff lives in Prince Edward Island, Canada. His work has appeared in numerous Canadian print journals includnig Grain, The Dalhousie Review, Pottersfield Portfolio, and Filling Station. He has also written radio dramas for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

Article

by Michael Leccese

By the time Denver's Stapleton International Airport, one of the nation's busiest hubs, closed in 1995, a group of citizens, planners, and private foundations had already been working for six years to develop a visionary plan to recycle the 7.5-square-mile site into a new urban neighborhood. The working group laid out ambitious social, economic, and environmental goals and set them forth in a document affectionately known as the Green Book.

Stapleton's development area outlined prior to neighborhood construction.
Photo courtesy Forest City Stapleton, Inc.

Skepticism abounded back in '95, as one editorial observer pooh-poohed the Green Book's visions as "shallow, fashionable nonsense." But in 1998, the City and County of Denver selected Cleveland-based Forest City Enterprises as master developer. Since then, the subsidiary Forest City Stapleton, Inc., has found practical ways to realize the Green Book's vision under a master plan by leading New Urbanist architect-planner Peter Calthorpe. Over the next 15 years, Forest City Stapleton will finance and build more than $5 billion of development. In that period, Stapleton will grow to at least 12,000 homes—8,000 single family houses mingled with 4,000 apartments--offered in many price ranges, styles, and floor plans. The plan also includes 10 million square feet of office space, 3 million square feet of retail space, six public schools, and more than 1,100 acres of public parks and open space, which will expand the acreage of Denver city parks by 25 percent.

With nearly 600 acres of mixed-use neighborhoods nearing completion, Stapleton already claims to

be the nation's largest urban infill redevelopment. Since groundbreaking in 2001, Stapleton has quickly blended urban sophistication with suburban amenities such as parks, retail uses, and new public schools, in the process winning several national and international awards. More than 1,650 homes are now occupied with more than 4,100 residents. The 740,000-square-foot Quebec Square regional retail center opened in 2002. The mixed-use 170,000-square-foot East 29th Avenue Town Center opened in fall 2003, blending national chain stores and local shops, along with 400 apartments, condos, public art, a farmers market, and free summer concerts and movies. Elsewhere within Stapleton's 7.5-square-mile footprint, a 1-million square-foot, open-air shopping center is under construction and a second town center is planned.

About 15 minutes from downtown Denver, Stapleton is making strides toward creating a walkable and transit-friendly neighborhood including street corner schools and shops. A Stapleton light-rail stop is planned under the region's ambitious $4.7 billion FasTracks regional transit plan. Nearly a score of public bus lines already serve the neighborhood, while greenway trails connect to hundreds of miles of regional bikeways.

Shopping in Stapleton's East 29th Avenue Town Center, located next to hundreds of apts and condos and a short walk from more than a thousand other homes in the neighborhood.
Photo courtesy Forest City Stapleton, Inc.

Urban Infill for the Masses?

Stapleton is hardly Denver's only infill neighborhood, but may be the one that most influences development patterns in the metropolitan region. The nearby Lowry neighborhood and higher-density infill projects in downtown helped grow Denver's population by 80,000 in the 1990s. Denver will grow another 130,000 to nearly 700,000 by 2025.

Still, Denver's growth lags behind the entire region, where today's 2.5 million residents could mushroom to 3.5 million by 2025. According to the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG), the Denver region will spread from its present 550 square miles to 900 square miles in the next twenty years.

The region's overall growth management strategy, called MetroVision 2020, has been endorsed by 33 municipalities in metro Denver, although some say it lacks regulatory teeth to control sprawl. Denver's light rail system, which will grow into a 119-mile regional network in the next decade, will also provide opportunities to rein in sprawl by focusing new development around 57 stations. Meanwhile, Denver suffers from the nation's third-worst traffic congestion and continued ozone violations for air quality.

Stapleton's scale—it is the region's second-largest housing development after 22,000-acre Highlands Ranch in nearby Douglas County—and its social intentions may make a difference by offering an urban alternative for a broader regional population.

Most urban infill redevelopments market to young singles, empty nesters, and gays. Stapleton actually vies for the suburban market of families, with children, who want to buy a single-family home. "Stapleton has all the young 'urban sophisticates,' includes singles, younger retirees, and gays that you would find in many urban neighborhoods, but about half of our households are traditional nuclear families," says Hank Baker, senior vice president of Forest City Stapleton, Inc.

Early morning walk among a residential street.
Photo courtesy Forest City Stapleton, Inc.

"By offering such community virtues as home ownership and high-quality public schools, we're intercepting some of these urban sophisticates—couples who would normally move from an urban townhouse to suburbia when they have kids. The traditional architecture reminds them of their old neighborhoods, but they're happy to trade up to new plumbing and big closets. By keeping these families in the city, we're addressing a major factor that leads to sprawl. People don't necessarily want to live in sprawl, but they like having nice new parks and good schools nearby."

Historically regional urban architecture, like Denver Squares, returns with the development of Stapleton's residential neighborhoods.
Photo courtesy Forest City Stapleton, Inc.

The Fine Print

Because of the unusual nature of transferring a publicly owned airport to a private developer, Stapleton resulted from a complex set of negotiations. In 1999, Forest City Stapleton won a competitive process to become master developer and contracted with the City and County of Denver to buy Stapleton's 2,935 developable acres in phases as land is required for development—at least 1,000 acres every five years—for a total of $79.4 million in today's dollars, plus the $44 million Forest City has committed to build parks and open space. The agreement provides for Forest City to allow mixed-uses to evolve over decades—without the usual pressure to sell land to pay off large loans.

To prepare for redevelopment, the City and County of Denver first needed to address some contamination—largely jet fuel—on the less than 10 percent of the site contaminated by pollutants. Before Forest City purchased the land, regulatory agencies issued "no further action" letters declaring these areas ready for residential development.

Environmental clean-up is only part of the "green" story at Stapleton, which strives to incorporate resource conservation and alternative transportation. (One of Stapleton's numerous guiding

documents is a Sustainability Master Plan periodically graded for progress.) The redevelopment will restore prairie and riparian corridors within new city parks and open space. In addition, housing at Stapleton meets or exceeds Colorado's Built Green and federal Energy Star standards.

Children play on a fountain created as public art at Founders' Green in Stapleton's East 29th Avenue Town Center.
Photo courtesy Forest City Stapleton, Inc.

When completed, Stapleton will be Colorado's largest Energy Star community, with energy, water, and other resource savings ranging from 40 to 70 percent over conventional design and construction. Even before an early-millennium drought parched the Rockies and the plains, Stapleton's residential and public landscapes were designed with water conservation in mind.

The former airport's 975 acres of concrete and asphalt are being ground up for new road base and concrete aggregate, recycling 6 million tons of material in the process, while reducing pressure to mine for new sand and gravel. This is the nation's largest recycling project of its kind, and it saves money. "It's cheaper to mine the runways than to go mine the quarries," muses Baker.

Stapleton has also been planned to reduce traffic congestion and pollution. The site's extensive bicycle trails, mixed-use destinations, existing bus service, and planned transit improvements create many transportation alternatives. Even when built out, Stapleton will generate less traffic than the former airport.

Smart Growth, Pros and Cons

These efforts have won recognition for smart growth. Officials from Austin, Texas, to Australia and China have visited to study Stapleton. In 2001, the Colorado Public Interest Research Group named Stapleton to its "Smart Growth Hall of Fame." In 2002, the King of Sweden recognized Stapleton with the Stockholm Partnerships for Sustainable Cities Awards.

More than 4,000 people attended a "smooth jazz" concert at Stapleton's Founders' Green, summer 2004.
Photo courtesy Forest City Stapleton, Inc.

In 2005, Stapleton won two more smart growth honor: a Best in American Living Award (BALA) for Best Smart Growth Community from the National Association of Homebuilders, and DRCOG's Metro Vision award.

"This new community recycles abandoned urban land and features many 'green building' techniques," says Will Toor, a Boulder County commissioner and chair of

DRCOG. “It creates a complete new urban neighborhood with schools, parks, shopping, transit, and homes in all price ranges. It has become a national and international example of urban redevelopment.”

Yet Stapleton has not escaped criticism. New Urbanists observe that some homes are farther than the pedestrian ideal of one-quarter mile ideal from shops, schools, and transit. Some balk at the inclusion of a shopping “power center” with big-box chain stores. The developers say the power center was necessary to generate sales tax revenues that pay for Stapleton’s public streets and amenities.

“The [Quebec Square] power center also responds to shopping needs of surrounding neighborhood,” says Baker. “Before, people in northeast Denver had to drive a long way for budget shopping and basic services.” He notes the center is designed to evolve into a “more urban” place in the next generation of development.

“The big box area does make one concession to pedestrian values,” wrote urban affairs reporter Neal Peirce in an otherwise-glowing syndicated column of August 22, 2004. “The stores are set on a standard street grid, with sidewalks, street trees and the like. But Stapleton has begun to open some more intimate, neighborhood-oriented shopping areas. The critical question is whether there will be enough of them, close enough to homes, to draw the area’s new residents out on foot.”

Formerly buried in a pipe beneath a runway, Westerly Creek has been exhumed and restored as part of Westerly Creek Greenway, connecting Stapleton to hundreds of miles of regional bike trails.
Photo courtesy Forest City Stapleton, Inc.

Urban Schools: From Minus to Plus?

In November 2002, software engineer Erik Darzins and his wife Melissa moved their family to Stapleton. The prospect of neighborhood schools was a positive and even definitive factor in their decision. The next fall the Darzins began walking their oldest daughter to kindergarten at the brand new Westerly Creek Elementary a half-mile away.

The Darzins represent a new trend: middle-income families with kids moving into the city for the schools rather than away from urban public schools. Melissa Darzins, now vice president of the PTA, generally talks in glowing terms of her new school—10 years ago the site of an airport runway. “Everyone’s been working together as a community,” says Darzins of Westerly Creek’s families and staff. “My child has had a great classroom experience for two years in a row.”

Stapleton’s Education Master Plan poses ambitious solutions to related problems—low-quality urban schools that segregate the poor, while fueling middle-class flight and suburban sprawl. In a few years, Stapleton will include six public schools designed to rival the best suburban schools. Efforts are also underway to improve schools in surrounding neighborhoods. School populations will be economically diverse because Stapleton homes sell from $120,000 to over $1 million, with

apartment rents from $600 to $2,000 a month.

Stapleton encourages neighborhood kids and parents to walk to the local schools. Pictured is the annual "Pool to School" walk from Stapleton's Aviator Park to Westerly Creek Elementary, launching the opening of each school year.
Photo courtesy Forest City Stapleton, Inc.

The Education Master Plan supports small neighborhood schools for 500 students or less, rather than large, comprehensive regional schools. Here again, educational and planning goals dovetail. Many experts believe smaller schools provide a better education and social environment for students who would “fall through the cracks” in a comprehensive school. Smaller schools require smaller sites that fit into city neighborhoods, allowing kids to walk to school and boosting sense of community.

Creating schools to lure families who can choose to live elsewhere was another major challenge for Stapleton. Though hardly the most distressed urban school system, the Denver Public Schools (DPS) system has real problems. Many stem from busing to achieve racial integration from 1974 to 1995. This well-intended program spurred classic middle-class flight. In 1970, DPS enrollment peaked at 97,781. Enrollment dropped by 30,000 within 10 years and today stands at 72,000. Urban test scores are lower than in many suburban districts.

As the first Stapleton schools opened in August 2003, DPS watched anxiously to see if they would provide models for improving the entire system. Located on a neighborhood block across the street from homes, the Westerly Creek campus includes an 80,000-square-foot building containing both the 220-student Odyssey Charter School and the 325-student Westerly Creek Elementary, where the Darzins are sending their kids. A shared core with offices, a gym, and library connects separate wings for each school.

More recently, the $14 million Denver School of Science and Technology (DSST) debuted at Stapleton. Boosted by start-up funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, this charter high school welcomed its first freshman class of 130 to a temporary building in August 2004. The school moved to a sleek, new energy-efficient building at Stapleton in January 2005. Tucked in among Stapleton’s homes, DSST is planned to draw half its students from Stapleton and half from low-income, minority, and female kids from throughout the city—the groups usually excluded from science and tech education.

Stapleton's streetscapes feature houses of different sizes with intricate architectural details.
Photo courtesy Forest City Stapleton, Inc.

In exchange, students are expected to flourish in a "tough love" environment with high academic standards equal to the University of Colorado's admission requirements. "The culture is not for everyone," commented the Rocky Mountain News in a January 9, 2005, editorial. "But if several hundred inner-city kids end up flourishing in it, DPS officials would be insane not to make sure that several thousand have a similar opportunity."

Stylistic Olio

Many master-planned communities of this scale can be visually monotonous, ecologically sterile, and socially isolated. That's partially because master-planned communities rely on standard, mass-produced homes to meet a high volume. "You get to pick your home in one of three shades of beige," muses Baker.

The central fountain at Founders' Green in Stapleton's East 29th Avenue Town Center.
Photo courtesy Forest City Stapleton, Inc.

The Green Book calls for Stapleton to look, feel, and function like Denver's historic neighborhoods, with a variety of home styles, colors, and sizes. To make this work, Forest City Stapleton had to devise new ways of working with production homebuilders, who rely on standardization and mass-production techniques to keep prices down. In 2000, Wolff-Lyon Architects and EDAW, Inc., directed by Forest City Stapleton, produced the 130-page Stapleton Design Book. The team studied historic Denver neighborhoods to create many patterns of building forms, colors, and styles, and then tested the guidelines with homebuilders to ensure their practicality.

Forest City Stapleton used the Design Book to attract competitive proposals from 100 interested homebuilders. The developer eventually chose 20 building companies that are now building 15 housing types, generally on small urban lots with density as high as 25 homes to the acre. Significantly for social diversity, homes for drastically different household incomes often exist on the same block or across the street from each other.

Production builders buy finished lots a block at a time, which gives them enough room for efficient staging and production. But to ensure visual variety, no builder is sold contiguous blocks. As a result, different companies build different homes on facing sides of the street.

A stroll around the first neighborhood suggests that this approach is succeeding. One Stapleton block includes a Craftsman bungalow, a Victorian farmhouse, a brick "Denver Square," and a two-story Spanish colonial. All garages are located at the rear of the lot and most have alley access. Zoning permits carriage houses, thus providing flexible space for a home office, an in-law apartment, or affordable rental housing above garages. Just around the corner are brick-trimmed townhouses.

A professional design committee reviews and approves not only each house plan, but also how the plan, house color, and architectural style relate to the streetscape. For example, the committee ensures that builders do not construct the same model or architectural style immediately next to each other. Homeowners can later paint houses any color they like, which will allow the look of the neighborhood to evolve.

Stapleton hosts a successful farmers market every on weekends over the summer.
Photo courtesy Forest City Stapleton, Inc.

"The approach is very production-friendly," says Denver architect Arlo Braun, who designed home models for three Stapleton homebuilders. "What's different at Stapleton is that you're forced to pay close attention to small details, like the way a beam sits on a column or the number of divided windows. It takes more construction supervision, but the builder winds up spending a small premium to get a huge increase in design quality and authenticity."

Financial success is clearly a key to Stapleton's ambitious social and environmental agendas. If the first neighborhoods did not sell, the entire project would be built much more slowly or perhaps revert to more conventional suburbia. Instead, homebuilders find that neighborhood diversity is driving strong demand. Potential buyers outnumber available houses by 3 to 1, with a nine-month wait for new houses. Builders sell homes by lottery. In turn, the rapidly growing neighborhood population is supporting Stapleton's shops, services, and restaurants.

Illustrative concept for Stapleton's central park.
Photo courtesy Forest City Stapleton, Inc.

While Stapleton's single-family homes tend to feature period designs with comforting features like front porches, contemporary, Modernistic design is flourishing in multi-family condos and apartments in the East 29th Avenue Town Center. For example, Moda, a 64-unit loft project featuring floor-to-ceiling windows on an unadorned Modern façade, will open later this year. "Residents enjoy the walkable convenience of shopping, restaurants, a neighborhood pub, free outdoor movies in the park, Sunday Farmers Market, and coffee shops," says Dave Steinke of Infinity Home Collection, developer of Moda. "These contemporary residences will expand Stapleton's popularity by appealing to an even broader range of people."

Good Community = Good Health?

Last but not least among Stapleton's exhaustive list of initiatives—for example, how many other

master-planned communities have a Public Art Master Plan?—are efforts to create a model “healthy community.” In 2003, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation made a $200,000 grant to study links between Stapleton’s sidewalks, parks, bike trails, and programmed activities like foot races and kickball tourneys and the health, weight, and fitness of residents.

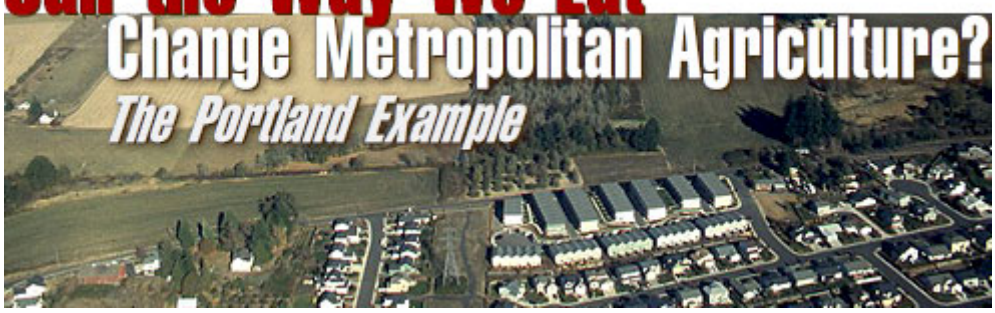
"If I were to put one pin on the planet, it goes on Stapleton," said Dr. Frank V. deGruy III, chairman of the University of Colorado’s Department of Family Medicine at the School of Medicine. "This is a real opportunity to rethink some of the things we do. The place is being designed with a lot of green zones and walking trails—we're going to use the built environment and piggyback on that."

Michael Leccese has worked as a consultant on Stapleton redevelopment and heads the Colorado District Council of the Urban Land Institute.

Article

Can the Way We Eat Change Metropolitan Agriculture?

The Portland Example



by Martha Works and Thomas Harvey

Portland, Oregon, is the kind of city where a "greener-than-thou" restaurateur's dilemma over what to do when Monsanto executives make a dinner reservation is a lead story in the local 'newsmakers' column, where local chefs are celebrities and have their own cooking shows, and where a neighborhood BBQ joint feels the need to advertise its vegetarian fare. It's a city where food and eating and increasingly agriculture are taken seriously and form an important part of the cultural scene and landscape. A growing interest in regional food and agriculture has resulted in efforts to enhance rural-urban linkages through creation of farmers markets, community supported agriculture, farmer-chef collaborations, and promotion of local food products. The interest has also resulted in political efforts at scales from the household to the state to foster a regionally-based community food system.

Metropolitan Portland hillside development adjacent to productive farmland.
Photo by Martha Works.

Agriculture and urbanization have traditionally been linked in discussions of loss of agricultural land to urban growth. However, there are regional variations in patterns of urban growth and in the adaptive transformation of farms. The cultural and economic context of agricultural change around Portland suggests that population increase and cultural change can provide opportunities for farming by creating markets for locally grown products. Changing food preferences and local food politics can affect land use and landscape and help shape a regional dynamic where agriculture connects rather than divides urban and rural residents.

A local farm provides both a roadside stand and u-pick opportunities.
Photo by Martha Works.

Changes in Farmland at National, State, and Regional Scales

At the national level there has been a continual decrease in farmland over many decades, with a loss of over 80 million acres and 185,000 farms since 1974. During this same time period, however, there has been an increase in the number of farms under 50 acres, reflecting an increase in the number of small and/or hobby farms surrounding urban areas. This is supported by the dramatic increase in the number of farms at the low end of the income spectrum (that is, less than $2,500) by almost 400,000 between 1974 and 2002, and by the number of farms at both the larger sizes and higher incomes, reflecting in this case a significant loss of the "ag in the middle" or the traditional family farm.

In Oregon there is a similar pattern of overall losses (6% decline in number of farms between 1974 and 2002 compared to 8% national decline), but a significantly greater increase in the number of small farms (131% vs. 37%) and a gain—albeit small—rather than a loss in middle income farms.

	1974	2002	Change '74 - '02	% Change '74 - '02
Farms	26,753	40,033	13,280	50%
Land in Farms (Acres)	18,241,445	17,080,422	-1,161,023	-6%
Average Size of Farm (Acres)	633	427		-33%
Farms by Size:				
1 - 49 acres	10,813	25,005	14,192	131%
50 - 999 acres	13,179	12,474	-705	-5%
1,000 acres or more	2,761	2,554	-207	-7%
Farms by Value of Sales:				
Less than $2,500	10,196	18,873	8,677	85%
$2,500 - $99,999	(1978) 16,603	16,973	370	2%
$100,000 or more	(1978) 2,863	4,187	1,324	46%

Changes in Oregon Agriculture, 1974-2002.
Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Changes in Oregon's agricultural picture need to be considered in the context of state land use planning regulations that date from 1973. These regulations have contained urban sprawl through the establishment of urban growth boundaries around all towns and cities in the state and provided

specific protections for 'prime agricultural land' and areas zoned for 'exclusive farm use.' Despite rapid population growth in Oregon's 'Eden'— the Willamette Valley—particularly over the last 15 years, farmland has not been converted as rapidly as it might have been without the land use planning regulations.

In the Portland metropolitan area—five Oregon counties and Clark County, Washington— patterns of farmland change challenge the conventional wisdom about farmland loss, especially considering that the area's population increased from 1.3 to 2 million people between 1980 and 2003. Not only did the number of farms increase, so did land in farms, due in part to the fact that Christmas tree farms were counted as agricultural land in the 2002 agricultural census, but not in previous censuses. The number of small farms increased, but so did the number of farms larger than 1,000 acres and farms in all value categories increased.

This suggests that generalities about farmland loss mask profound regional variation. To understand agricultural change we need to look more closely at forces affecting land use and landscape change at various scales of analysis.

Urban Growth Management in Oregon

Oregon's urban growth management policies date from 1973, when Senate Bill 100 passed with support from both political parties and Republican governor Tom McCall. The law set a number of statewide planning goals that addressed, among others, urbanization and the preservation of resource lands. The legislature paid particular attention to farmland protection with Goal 3: The preservation of a maximum amount of the limited supply of agricultural land is necessary to the conservation of the state's economic resources and the preservation of land in large blocks is necessary in maintaining the agricultural economy of the state and for the assurance of adequate, healthful and nutritious food for the people of this state and the nation.

Oregon and Portland Metropolitan Area Agriculture

Oregon agriculture is remarkably diverse and reflects the dramatic regional variation found in the state. Eastern Oregon is high desert country with an economic landscape of wheat, cattle, hay, mining and timber extraction—the classic extractive economy of the intermountain West. The lush Willamette Valley forms the core of western Oregon. It is the paradise that Oregon Trail pioneers sought as they headed out on wagon trains for the six-month journey from Missouri and toward which modern pioneers—Richard Florida's 'creative class'—still come in search of the good life.

Metropolitan counties in Oregon. Graphic by David Banis.

The state of Oregon grows over 225 commercial crops, more than any other state except California and Florida, and the greatest diversity of production occurs in the Willamette Valley. Most of the production is exported and 40% leaves the country.

Despite economic changes over the last 50 years, agriculture remains an important part of the state's economy, first in terms of volume and second only to high tech in terms of export value.

While it might not be surprising that agriculture is important to the state of Oregon, the concentration and importance of agriculture in Portland's metropolitan counties is contrary to popular notions about the coexistence of agriculture and urbanization. Three of the metropolitan area counties—Clackamas, Yamhill, Washington—are among the top five agricultural counties in the state. Multnomah County, where Portland is located, is Oregon's most urban county, yet still ranks 14th in value of agricultural production. Four of the five counties—Clackamas, Washington, Yamhill, Multnomah—are in the top five counties for greenhouse and nursery products; four—Washington, Clackamas, Multnomah, Yamhill—are among the top five producers of cane berries; and two—Yamhill and Washington—are leading producers of wine grapes. Nine of the most productive agricultural counties in Oregon are in the heavily populated Willamette Valley.

West Union Gardens garlic is offered throughout the region.
Photo by Thomas Harvey.

Factors Affecting Portland Metropolitan Agriculture

This agricultural bounty began attracting chefs, cooks, gardeners, and sophisticated eaters in the early 1990s, when a number of new restaurants began touting 'regional Northwest cuisine' that drew on locally produced and regionally distinctive food stuff such as salmon, wild mushrooms, game, pears, and berries. This attention to local and regional foods captivated the general public, which in turn began demanding more readily available fresh and local food, driving an increase in direct marketing of agricultural products through many different channels.

In recent years there has been a politicization of the local food system idea with a variety of organizations such as Portland-Multnomah Food Policy Council and Ecotrust working to both promote local agriculture and provide alternatives to the corporate food structure through their support of 'buy local' food procurement strategies.

The combination of demand for a more diverse array of food, fed by globalization and immigration, and the political emphasis on sustainability and living in your region (ironically, a kind of response to the globalization of food) has had an impact across the United States, mirroring trends that are well established in parts of Europe. Portland provides a model for investigation of these trends because of the diversity of agricultural production, the physical setting, the concentration of a foodie culture, a tradition of political activism, and the existence of an urban growth boundary that provides some controls over sprawl.

Willamette Valley's fertile soil makes it highly productive.
Photo by Martha Works.

What factors shape this distinctive food culture and what is the impact on agriculture in the region?

West Union Gardens:
We Grow Everything We Sell

Urban-oriented agriculture has found its place in the protected rural landscape of metropolitan Portland. West Union Gardens, located in the urban-rural fringe just three-quarters of a mile from the urban growth boundary (UGB), epitomizes the trend. Jeff and Cheryl Boden started farming on a 50-acre former dairy in 1987. They chose an easily accessed location on NW Cornelius Pass Road, a major rural route close to suburban populations. At that time, the UGB was in place but development had barely pressed against it. Today the boundary is highly visible, the result of housing subdivisions built since 1990.

The Role of Chefs

In the Portland area, and more generally in the Pacific Northwest, chefs were instrumental in drawing attention to the amazing array of local foodstuffs; they have played an important role in creating a local food culture and in promoting local agriculture. As visible public citizens they actively promoted support for local farmers and seasonal produce. A Portland Chapter of Chefs Collaborative was formed in 1998 and has developed, in partnership with Ecotrust (a local non-profit dedicated to fostering a sustainable regional economy), the Farmer-Chef Connection, a direct marketing model that promotes long-term business relationships between chefs and farmers. This is accomplished by an online directory that helps farmers find chefs and chefs find farmers, a set of guidelines for both, and what one participant has called a kind of "speed-dating" conference where farmers and restaurateurs briefly interview each other to establish compatibility.

Farmers Markets

Chefs were early supporters of a Portland farmers market which began in 1992. The official Portland Farmers Market has grown from a handful of vendors in a parking lot in an industrial area to three sprawling markets a week in downtown Portland with over 200 vendors. At its inception, market organizers had a hard time finding enough vendors. Now there is a waiting list for the downtown markets and 24 additional farmers markets in the Portland area plus one in Vancouver, Clark County. Two of the Portland area markets have year-round operations, extending income opportunities for farmers, and several markets are extending their seasons of operation.

The Portland Farmers Market remains the regions largest, and is a successful outlet for local produce. Photo by Martha Works.

Farm Stands

Another venue for direct marketing and sales that has grown dramatically in the last several years, both in number and in publicity about them, is the farm stand operation. Five-thousand copies of a flyer with the charming title Sunset Trails to Country Fresh Foods were distributed in 1977, listing 25 farm stands near Portland. Now, 100,000 copies of the more prosaic *Tri-county Farm Fresh Produce Guide* are distributed through the local paper and other outlets, listing 80 farm stands in the greater Portland area. While some might consider this merely agri-entertainment for urban

dwellers, it also provides a form of direct income for urban area farmers.

Community Supported Agriculture

Increase in community supported agriculture (CSA), whereby subscribers buy shares or invest in a farm at the beginning of the season and in exchange receive weekly supplies of fresh produce, is also a national and local trend. In 1985 there was one CSA in the United States; now there are over 2,000. Over the last ten years, the number of CSAs in the Portland area has increased from zero to 18. About a third of them offer year-round options for produce.

Oregon's wine industry has seen dramatic growth, even with its proximity to a major metropolitan area. Photo by Martha Works.

Growth in the Wine Industry

Another culturally driven change in agriculture is the dramatic growth of Oregon's wine industry, which is due to the character of the physical environment and is part of a broader context of cultural change. It is not driven exclusively by local food preferences, but has a significant effect on metropolitan agriculture since two of the counties—Yamhill and Washington—are leading producers of wine grapes in the state. The industry's success has led to the conversion of what might have otherwise been considered marginal land to grape production, resulting in a significant agri-tourism focus for the region and a visible and vocal lobby for the preservation of agricultural infrastructure and landscapes.

Demand for Organic Food

West Union Gardens at the Portland Farmers Market. Photo by Thomas Harvey.

Demand for organic produce, also part of a national trend, has helped shape the character of urban area agriculture. Oregon Tilth has certified organic farmers in Oregon and elsewhere since 1974. Because of variation in certification criteria it is difficult to gauge absolute change in organic production in the state of Oregon, although it clearly is increasing. Oregon Tilth records an increase from 180 to 220 organic farms in Oregon between 1998 and 2001 and an increase of over 5,000 acres, from 12,000 to over 17,000 over the same time period. The 2002 Census of Agriculture, which lists organic farms for the first time under the new USDA criteria, tabulates 515 organic farms in Oregon, 144 of which are in the Portland area. If we look more broadly at the other urban areas of the Willamette Valley, over 50%—or 266—organic farms are in metropolitan counties.

Smaller farms can also find a niche selling organic produce.
Photo by Martha Works.

Political Efforts to Transform Agriculture

More explicit political efforts are also having an impact on agriculture and land use. Efforts to establish food policy councils at state, county, and city levels are present in over 20 states. Oregon is one of several states with efforts underway to establish a statewide Food Policy Council and is second only to California in the number of local or county-wide councils (there are five in Oregon, eight in California). According to organizers, food policy councils are "joint citizen and government advisory bodies that review and recommend policies that strengthen the local food economy and improve access to healthy and nutritious food' and to combat hunger. "Council members represent the diversity of stakeholders involved in the food system, from farmers and processors to retailers, anti-hunger advocates, nutritionists, planners and community members."

Among the impacts that the Portland-Multnomah Food Policy Council has had on local food production is a commitment from the county corrections facility to increase purchases from local suppliers. In the 2004 growing season, the county bought $57,000 in fresh food from Portland area farmers, including those in southwest Washington. Another effort involved a direct marketing workshop for immigrant farmers to help with developing marketing opportunities, community gardens, and access to land.

Ecotrust's Food and Farms Program, for example, has the following goals:

- Promote the seasonal products of local farmers
- Reduce the environmental impact of agriculture on healthy watersheds
- Improve public understanding of local agriculture
- Increase the market share of locally grown food

Agricultural zones at the edge of metropolitan areas are marked.
Photo by Martha Works.

Food Purveyors and the Role of Entrepreneurs

Burgerville, a locally owned fast-food outlet with locations in southwest Washington and northwest Oregon, has a corporate policy to feature local food and to source as much of its menu as possible from local purveyors. From hazelnut, raspberry, strawberry, huckleberry, or pumpkin milkshakes, to Walla Walla onion rings, sweet potato fries, Oregon Country Natural Beef, buns made from local wheat, and Tillamook cheese, Burgerville has built a loyal customer base on its support of local agriculture.

New Seasons Market, a chain of locally owned grocery stores, markets itself as "a company [with] a true commitment to its community, to promoting sustainable agriculture and to maintaining a progressive workplace.…When you shop at [this] locally owned business your money stays in your neighborhood, creates local jobs, and nourishes the unique character of your community." With a motto of "Think Local, Buy Local, Be Local," New Seasons' success has prompted other area grocers to feature local and organic produce.

Burgerville has a corporate policy to feature local food and purchase from local farmers. Photo by Martha Works.

The Food Innovation Center, a branch of Oregon State University's agricultural extension service, is based in Portland. Its mission is to help local producers and entrepreneurs develop food products that support Oregon agriculture. The center provides assistance with packaging, preparation and processing of food items, and marketing, and has worked to develop or improve a range of signature Oregon food items that find their way to regional, national, and international markets.

Impacts on Rural Land Use

How do efforts such as farmer-chef cooperatives, farmers markets, community supported agriculture, increases in organic production, a vibrant wine producing region, local companies with emphasis on sourcing local products, and political structures promoting local agriculture affect land use and support for farmland near cities? What are the impacts of these efforts on agricultural production and the agricultural landscape?

Agricultural census data provides a basis for addressing impacts of changes in urban food preferences and food policies on rural land use. With respect to land in farms, acreage decreased in three area counties—Washington, Columbia, and Clark—but increased in Clackamas, where Christmas tree and nursery and greenhouse production are particularly strong, and in Yamhill County with its booming winery and vineyard industry, and even increased marginally in Multnomah County. Harvested cropland, which some researchers suggest is the best measure of agricultural production, shows increases in Yamhill, Clackamas, and Columbia, decreases in Washington and Clark, and little change in Multnomah County between 1987 and 2002.

To better understand how food preferences and cultural and political factors affect agriculture, we can look at agricultural census figures for direct marketing, which includes value and acreage of farmers market vendors, farm stands, community supported agriculture, and U-pick or farm stand operations. There are overall increases in value of production in all area counties between 1992 and 2002, with the exception of Clark County, Washington, which has less restrictive land use regulations, rapid population growth, and serves, in part, as a bedroom community for Portland. Local observers of the agricultural scene are unsure why Multnomah County's value of direct marketing products spiked in 1997. There is general agreement, however, that figures for direct marketing in Oregon and elsewhere are undercounted. Direct marketing in the Portland area by number of farms shows an increase in all counties except Clark County. These figures suggest that cultural preferences—which would be reflected most clearly in the figures for direct marketing—

along with land use planning regulations, have combined to provide an avenue of opportunity and a measure of protection for urban-oriented agriculture.

The Sherwood Saturday Market is one of two dozen now operating in the Portland metropolitan region. Photo by Martha Works.

Regional and National Implications

Does the growth of demand for local food and the increasing number of farms devoted to direct marketing have an impact on metropolitan agriculture in Portland? Can changing attitudes about food consumption have an impact on agriculture overall, particularly agriculture around cities? A preliminary look at two other cities—Kansas City, Kansas and Charlotte, North Carolina—which have very different physical and cultural geographies, and different patterns of urban growth, indicates that those metropolitan areas have also experienced increases in land in farms over the last 15 years.

West Union Gardens advertises that blackberries and raspberries are now ready. Photo by Thomas Harvey.

The cities further suggest that these changes are occurring on a national scale in metropolitan areas. The number of farmers markets at the national level, for example, more than doubled between 1994 and 2004, from 1,755 to 3,706. The number of farms or farmers involved in selling products or produce to farmers markets increased from 86,432 in 1987 to 116,733 in 2002.

The 'buy local' trend, increasing attention to regional identity, and the role of food and agriculture in shaping places are apparent in the cultural, economic, and political landscapes of metropolitan regions. These changes in the way people think about and purchase food make a political statement and are a way of supporting the regional agricultural economy; they also are a way of buying landscapes, of supporting viable rural land uses and livelihoods, and in voting through your food choices to create a regional dynamic that links the rural and the urban.

Urban Growth Management in Oregon

by Martha Works and Thomas Harvey

Suburban development against Portland's UGB.
Photo courtesy Martha Works.

Oregon's urban growth management policies date from 1973, when Senate Bill 100 passed with support from both political parties and Republican governor Tom McCall. The law set a number of statewide planning goals that addressed, among others, urbanization and the preservation of resource lands. The legislature paid particular attention to farmland protection with Goal 3:

The preservation of a maximum amount of the limited supply of agricultural land is necessary to the conservation of the state's economic resources and the preservation of land in large blocks is necessary in maintaining the agricultural economy of the state and for the assurance of adequate, healthful and nutritious food for the people of this state and the nation.

Agricultural land use protection in Oregon hinges on two essential components of the statewide land planning program. First, the law mandates urban growth boundaries (UGB) around every incorporated city. In the Portland metropolitan region, this consists of a regional growth boundary for Portland and its adjacent suburbs. This boundary covers 24 cities and parts of three counties: Multnomah, Washington, and Clackamas. Towns and cities outside of the metro UGB have their own growth boundaries.

Second, statewide zoning for farm and forest lands outside of UGBs provides protection against rural, non-farm development. Exclusive farm-use (EFU) zones protect some 16.4 million acres of land in the state. State law mandates a minimum lot size of 80 acres in EFU zones, unless a county justifies a smaller lot size—which three metropolitan counties have done. In addition, approval for building a new residence on farm land requires that the land be used for farming.

The Portland suburb of Sherwood pushes against the region's UGB.
Photo courtesy Martha Works.

Following a directive from the state legislature in 1983, Oregon's Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC) found that a significant number of approved new "farm" dwellings were producing little or no income. In the words of the Oregon Tax Court, it was difficult to distinguish a farm residence from "the professional man's fine residence in a filbert orchard." In 1993, LCDC established an $80,000 minimum gross income test (approximately $16,000 net income) to 'high-value' farmland—five million of the 16 million acres in farm zones. Much of the most potentially urbanizable land in the Portland metropolitan area meets the high-value definition.

All UGBs are subject to periodic review and potential expansion in order to provide a twenty-year land supply to accommodate future growth without unduly restricting land supply. Metro, the metropolitan region's planning agency, has severely restricted expansion of the UGB despite population growth. The UGB was established in 1979 and remained little changed until urban growth began to press against the boundary in the 1990s. Until the late 1990s, the existing UGB accommodated growth. Since 1998, Metro has approved UGB expansions of about 8% (around 25,000 acres) while the population within the boundary increased 30% between 1990 and 2003. The population of the entire metropolitan area grew by 34% over that time period—thus a modest amount of disproportionate growth has occurred in outlying towns or in Clark County, Washington.

Good land for farming is good land for suburban development. The two major components of Oregon's land use policies—urban growth boundaries and exclusive farm use zoning (supplemented by a farm income test)—have protected farmland from conversion and leapfrog development. They have created clear boundaries between urban and rural land. It is a short drive from towns and cities in the metropolitan area—even from the center of Portland—to the countryside. This has helped contribute to a metropolitan agricultural landscape that provides easy access by farmers to urban markets and easy access by urban residents to farms.

Oregon's Top 20 Agricultural Commodities

1. Greenhouse and nursery
2. Cattle and calves
3. Hay
4. Grass seed
5. Milk
6. Wheat
7. Christmas trees
8. Onions
9. Potatoes
10. Pears
11. Eggs
12. Cherries
13. Hazelnuts
14. Grapes
15. Sweet corn
16. Mint for oil
17. Blackberries
18. Grass and grain straw
19. Blueberries
20. Hops

Source: Oregon Department of Agriculture

Oregon ranks No. 1 in production of:

- Blackberries*
- Hazelnuts*
- Loganberries*
- Black raspberries*
- Crimson clover, seed
- Grass seed (fescue, ryegrass)
- Boysenberries
- Potted florist azaleas
- Christmas trees
- Dried herbs
- Sugarbeets (for seed)

** 100% of U.S. production.*

Oregon ranks No. 2 in production of:

- Peppermint
- Dungeness crab
- Onions
- Hops
- Snap beans for processing
- Red raspberries
- Spearmint
- Prunes and plums

Oregon ranks No. 3 in production of:

- Pears
- Kentucky bluegrass seed
- Sweet cherries
- Blueberries
- Nursery crops
- Winter peas
- Strawberries

Source: Oregon Department of Agriculture

West Union Gardens:
We Grow Everything We Sell

by Martha Works and Thomas Harvey

Urban-oriented agriculture has found its place in the protected rural landscape of metropolitan Portland. West Union Gardens, located in the urban-rural fringe just three-quarters of a mile from the urban growth boundary (UGB), epitomizes the trend. Jeff and Cheryl Boden started farming on a 50-acre former dairy in 1987. They chose an easily accessed location on NW Cornelius Pass Road, a major rural route close to suburban populations. At that time, the UGB was in place but development had barely pressed against it. Today the boundary is highly visible, the result of housing subdivisions built since 1990.

West Union Gardens barn and field.
Photo by Thomas Harvey.

The Bodens grow more than twenty types of berries, vegetables, and herbs. In their early years, they sold virtually all of their produce to consumers—about half at their farm stand and u-pick fields, and the other half at farmers markets in Portland and Beaverton. Today their on-farm sales remain at around 50%, while sales at farmers markets have declined to around 10-15%. The rise in the number of farmers markets in the metropolitan area has not been matched by an proportional increase in customers, and West Union Gardens now goes only to the Beaverton Farmers Market on Saturday and Wednesday's Portland Farmers Market. Direct sales to local grocery stores, including locally-owned New Seasons Markets and several Thriftway grocery stores, now make up the balance of their operation. As large national grocery chains have purchased regional and local groceries, they have found it difficult to sell to other stores.

Farmer Jeff Boden in a raspberry field.
Photo by Thomas Harvey.

West Union Gardens was featured in the first episode of *Chefs A'Field*, a nationwide public television program produced by KCTS-TV in Seattle. The program pairs producers with chefs to promote locally grown and sustainable food production and consumption. Chef Cory Schreiber, whose Portland's Wildwood restaurant emphasizes local cuisine, went to the Boden's farm "in search of the perfect summer berry."

Urban proximity brings customers to West Union Gardens and provides access to local markets. West Union Gardens maintains another urban connection with a leaf composting program. The City of Hillsboro delivers 500-600 truckloads of leaves to the farm. These are then composted and used to increase soil tilth.

With the benefits of their metropolitan location come some conflicts, however. Suburban commuter traffic on Cornelius Pass Road can be heavy. There is strong pressure for additional housing development in Washington County, with the potential expansion of the urban growth boundary. Land prices in their immediate location reflect a level of speculation and make it difficult, if not impossible, for farms like West Union Gardens to expand their farm through land purchases or for new urban-oriented farms to become established. For the time being, however, Oregon's strict rural land use protections seem to be working.

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Martha Works' teaching and research interests are in cultural geography and Latin America. More information is available at http://web.pdx.edu/~mworks.

Thomas Harvey has research and teaching interests in American regions and landscapes, urban geography, and landscape photography. More information is available at http://web.pdx.edu/~harveyt.

Information about previous research by Martha Works and Thomas Harvey on the urban-rural interface can be found at www.rlua.pdx.edu.

Article

by Harrison B. Rue

Editor's Note: This article was originally commissioned as a paper by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the National Charrette Institute for a policy forum on Public Involvement Best Practices.

This article outlines effective practices for incorporating grassroots community-based planning techniques into the statutory transportation planning process, while developing new strategies for linking land use and transportation planning, re-engineering roadways to enhance safety and multi-modal mobility, and encouraging more compact development patterns. The basic components—inter-agency teams, facilitator training, community education, hands-on charrette-style workshops, engaging presentations, group workbooks, inspiring and buildable plans—have been developed over time by the Citizen Planner Institute, and tested in communities across the country.

Effective process does not replace governance and good business with anarchy:

- The people 'own' the process.
- Designers do their work.
- Developers or agencies 'own' the projects.
- Elected decision-makers still make the tough decisions.
- Most importantly, the plans get built.

Practice Development and Core Principles

These practices have been developed over the last fifteen years (working with firms like Dover Kohl, Duany Plater-Zyberk, Ramon Trias, Correa Valle Valle, Dan Burden, Daniel Williams), and tested in a wide variety of community and agency applications. The author founded the Citizen Planner Program at Miami-Dade Community College in 1995, to translate complex New Urbanist principles to average citizens and planning staff. The MacArthur Foundation's Sustainable Everglades Initiative funded expansion of the program's training workshops and community charrettes into South Florida, and required collaboration with a wide range of community and government groups.

Florida Department of Community Affairs funded additional training workshops for communities and agencies across Florida. In 1996, the Citizen Planner Institute (CPI) was founded to carry this work on outside the community college system. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency provided funding to complete and publish the training handbook, Real Towns: Making Your Neighborhood Work, along with several training workshops in California.

During the early years of program development, Citizen Planner training typically lasted a month or more—four half-day sessions for agency staff, and four evening sessions for community groups. As the materials improved, and presentations were refined, this was compressed to a single training session (mornings for staff, evenings for citizens, and a walking audit in the afternoon) to prepare for a Saturday planning workshop.

Core Principles

- Grassroots planning techniques are applied to statutory agency policies and process.
- The process is used across country, neighborhoods to regions, workshops for a dozen to 1,200 people.
- The process works for transportation, land use, housing, workforce, environment, economy—any topic, project, or agency.
- The process is most effective when multiple topics, partners, and funding streams are combined with new design solutions and built examples.

After helping Walkable Communities kick off Honolulu's Islandwide Traffic Calming Project in 1998, CPI was invited to stay and oversee public participation for Oahu Trans 2K, a Major Investment Study for a proposed light rail project. Because of an aggressive timetable—and ideas that were new to both the community and a very large project team—we tightened up the process significantly. This included more efficient agency and leadership training, formalized facilitator rules (a 2-page handout and 2-hour training), turning public input into 'data' (2,400 separate sortable comments entered into a database from Round 1 alone), requiring agency and consultant participation (over 100 staff and consultants trained from almost 20 firms and agencies), all-out publicity and communications strategy, blueprint-sized group workbooks, and regular reports on the Action Agenda (what ideas each agency had implemented since the last workshop). The Oahu Trans 2K workshops—always an efficient two-hour, hands-on session—went through four rounds of nearly fifty workshops and over fifty focus groups in six months. Most significantly, the active public input led to actual changes in the project, which started as a light rail study and morphed into a bus rapid transit project to meet community concerns over cost and maintaining clear views. In essence —if you're going to seek public input, you have to follow through on what you've heard.

Although each project takes a slightly different approach, the most critical elements are common to all. Facilitator training for both agency staff and community leaders is a key predictor of success, since it essentially gives the process over to the community—although a strong moderator is always needed to stay on track. The RoadWork exercises (from Real Towns) and Walking Audits help participants to understand their own neighborhoods, while looking for areas where change is appropriate. Even where trained facilitators are plentiful, we practice an 'open architecture' process—by describing in the opening slide presentation just what we'll do that night, and then

clearly laying out the ground rules before each group exercise.

Bricks and mud tend to be thrown by angry people when they have a big audience. While discussions with the entire group are good for initially laying issues on the table, and for taking questions and explaining details of a plan being presented at a later workshop, most creative work happens in small groups (six to eight people per table), typically using markers on large area maps.

An effective process works as well in a minority neighborhood, above, as it does at a U.S. Department of Transportation Leadership Conference, below.
Photos courtesy Harrison B. Rue.

One classic and powerful tool is also the simplest way to start a group's engines—one-on-ones. The audience is asked to divide into twos and share a key issue with each other, with one caveat—they each have to listen and report the other's comment back to the group. Another simple trick, 'post-it visions,' starts with individual input and leads to a summary of what the group has in common, all in about ten minutes. Each person is given five post-it notes and a few minutes to write down five phrases that describe their long-term vision for the community. These are then self-sorted on the wall into topics that invariably demonstrate how much the group already holds in common. Another way for the groups to prioritize issues before heading to the tables is listing all the problem areas and potential solutions (big paper, big print), then posting those lists on the wall for a 'dot vote'—which again demonstrates clear group preferences.

Good process makes effective use of technology, especially clear and well-organized PowerPoint presentations to lay the groundwork and define options. When funding allows, scenario-planning models can help evaluate and compare alternatives. A variety of image-rich toolbox solutions are presented, along with instructions for working together. These images are often available for viewing or comment on the website.

Finally, the hallmark of an effective process is efficiency While many of our community design workshops are an all-day Saturday event, most of the work on transportation projects discussed herein is accomplished in a series of well-organized, two-hour sessions.

Comprehensive approach relies on:

1. Getting people to the table—all-out PR and partnerships:
    a. Inter-agency teams, cross-program coordination
    b. Work through community contacts, project steering committee
2. Preparation and training:

   a. Facilitator and staff training, community education
   b. RoadWork and Walking Audits
   c. Science/data/designs translated and presented clearly
3. Well-designed process—issues-oriented focus groups, individual exercises, and hands-on public workshops:
   a. Small groups, marking on maps, place based
   b. "Open architecture" process—clear directions and rules explained to all
4. Comprehensive, exciting, visual plans with innovative designs and local examples; cost-effective and buildable:
5. Action Agenda to get buy-in and determine priorities
6. Funding and implementation of model projects

Case Studies

The United Jefferson Area Mobility Plan, or UnJAM 2025, is a regional long-range transportation plan linking transportation, land use, economy, and environment. It focuses on improving mobility, increasing real choices in travel modes, making the best use of our existing roadway investments, and targeting transportation investments to support smart land-use decisions. Initiated in April 2002, UnJAM 2025 couples the metropolitan planning organization's Charlottesville-Albemarle Regional Transportation Plan for the urban/suburban area with the Rural Area Transportation Plan for the surrounding four counties. The inter-jurisdictional planning effort is led by the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (TJPDC), with active participation from local, state, and federal agencies.

Groups marking up blueprint-sized UnJAM Round 2 workbooks, determining policy and project priorities. Photo courtesy Harrison B. Rue.

UnJAM executed an extensive public involvement campaign, focused on interactive, hands-on workshops and taking a fresh look at transportation and land use options. Eight Round 1 workshops were conducted throughout the region. Staff described the transportation planning process, outlined potential improvements using tailored PowerPoint presentations, and invited participants to mark their ideas on large area maps. Facilitator training was conducted for local and state staff and community members in each locality—from Chamber of Commerce and Planning Commission members to bike and rail activists. These local groups facilitated the workshops and helped publicize the events. Extensive PR materials were developed, utilizing all available methods of free and paid publicity. Letters, email, newspaper ads, public service announcements, flyers, partner newsletters,

websites, banners, and Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) blinking trailer message signs were utilized. Flyers and ads were distributed in Spanish, as well as in low-income and minority communities and publications. Workshops were held throughout the region at convenient, transit-accessible locations, in the evening when most people are available. Partnerships with regional transit providers offered free rides. A KidJAM activity was advertised for the workshops (rather than childcare) to encourage attendance by parents and incorporate young people's point of view.

Targeted focus groups obtained input from senior citizens, low-income persons, minorities, business people, disabilities groups, and transportation activists. A separate workshop for elected officials was also held. Follow-up activities utilized the same hands-on public process to focus on related issues such as mixed-use development (with Realtors and developers), age-friendly streets (with senior organizations), and traffic calming (with disabilities activists and emergency responders).

UnJAM Round 2 workbooks were blueprint-sized to get people working around the tables together, and developing a consensus on preferred solutions and implementation priorities. View the workbooks:

- Linking Land Use & Transportation
- Re-Engineering Roadways
- View Entire Workbook

UnJAM Round 2 workbooks were then created to outline the draft plan, based on Round 1 input, and customized for each county. During Round 2, citizens worked together around the blueprint-sized group workbooks and provided collaborative feedback on transportation issues and priorities. Each page included questions to encourage discussion and prioritization of policies and projects.

A joint Regional Round 3 Open House was held in November 2003 to present the final UnJAM Plan. The metropolitan planning organization (MPO) adopted the plan in May 2004; three rural county plans have been adopted, with the remaining two scheduled for adoption in fall 2005.

UnJAM 2025 builds on and enhances ongoing efforts by the partners to create and implement community visions for mixed-use, transit-oriented development that preserves and protects the environment. Most importantly, it incorporates these principles into the official VDOT/MPO long-range transportation planning process. UnJAM coordinates multi-modal transportation planning with locally desired compact village development patterns. The public workshops, presentations, training, and workbooks focus on ways to decrease dependence on the automobile and link transportation systems with growth to enhance quality of life. UnJAM advances transportation demand management, community walkability, and transit-oriented, mixed-use development. UnJAM and its related principles have become a household word with community members, local elected officials, agency staff, and area businesses.

UnJAM has wrapped around several related planning efforts. The Eastern Planning Initiative used scenario planning to model changes in how and where growth occurs, by building around historic town centers in walkable, village-scaled development, preserving forests and farmland, and saving up to $500 million in transportation investment. (TJPDC, VDOT, and Fluvanna County are conducting a follow-up study comparing land use options and identifying near-term and long-term transportation investments to deliver on the village-scaled development vision.)

The Hillsdale Drive Traffic Safety Study developed age-friendly roadway improvements (which were funded and are nearing construction). MPO Walkability Workshops increased awareness of pedestrian issues, and broadened the base of allies to include fire chiefs and disabilities activists.

As an outgrowth of UnJAM, VDOT and local staff requested training from the MPO in roundabout modeling and design (airport entry roundabout now under construction, and several more in planning), and attended TJPDC's Mixed-Use Housing Conference (which led one Realtor to change plans and add three residential floors above the office being renovated).

UnJAM also led to the inter-agency 29H250 study focused on creating intersection improvements and completing the multimodal network to foster transit-oriented, mixed-use development along a typical suburban arterial strip. The study has grown into Places29, which integrates the MPO and VDOT 29N Corridor Plan with Albemarle County's Master Plan update for the surrounding residential and business area, along with greyfield redevelopment in the City of Charlottesville.

UnJAM 2025 won an Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations award, and both City and County plans won Congress for New Urbanism Charter Awards. Rural county efforts have focused on a new Small Towns strategy, bringing TJPDC, state, and local efforts to bear on revitalization and compact development around existing communities.

View Small Town plans:

- Lovingston Safety Study
- Design Manual for Small Towns
- Lake Monticello Community Plan

Challenges

The challenges include:

- Getting people to the table—especially at the regional scale
- Coordinating public infrastructure and developers' investments with a long-range transportation plan
- Inter-jurisdictional cooperation and coordination
- Long-term action on implementation tools and funding

While there are significant challenges to wedding grassroots-style public participation to complex,

traditionally regulation-laden transportation planning, the rewards are worth the effort. The biggest challenge is getting people to the table—from competing jurisdictions, agencies, funding sources, public and private developers—to the public at large. It is much easier to get 300 people to turn out after a fatal crash, or to oppose a specific highway, than it is to work together developing regional long-range plans.

Getting community decision makers involved in hands-on excercies and fieldwork—like this *street capacity* exercise— can multiply the effectiveness of workshops and training, while getting great PR for upcoming events Photos by S. Evans, courtesy Harrison B. Rue.

Similar challenges exist in getting on-going cooperation to coordinate development proposals with transportation improvements that (might) occur far in the future. While we have had strong participation from developers and builders in neighborhood-scaled community design workshops (often eager to incorporate their projects into the plans) it is much more difficult to coordinate major developers' investments with a long-range transportation plan. Creating a successful marriage between transportation and land-use planning requires extensive community education, consensus, and long-term action on some of the potential implementation tools, such as:

- Creating urban design guidelines
- Updating parking regulations and requirements
- Developing healthy streetscape standards
- Encouraging compact transit-oriented development
- Adopting mixed-use zoning
- Amending building and rehab codes
- Developing an integrated, multi-modal transportation network

Strengths

Effective public involvement is rooted in hands-on community process and partnerships between local jurisdictions, state and federal agencies, transit providers, business groups, developers, regional organizations, and community activists. The comprehensive approach relies on 1) getting people to the table; 2) a well-designed process—including facilitator and staff training, issues-oriented focus

groups, and hands-on public workshops; 3) comprehensive, exciting, visual plans with innovative designs and local examples; 4) an action plan to get buy-in and determine priorities, and 5) funding and implementation of model projects.

Key Considerations

- Effectiveness is multiplied by coordinating parallel efforts—across agencies, in the region and in localities, over time—wrapping related efforts in the 'brand name,' like Sustainable Everglades Initiative, Oahu Trans 2K, or UnJAM.
- Uses training, education and workshops (both public and staff) to introduce new design or policy solutions that can unblock agency resistance to change.
- Facilitator and staff training is the key sparkplug—for smooth process, for PR and participation, and to lead to long-term implementation.
- Facilitator ground rules and community volunteers make workshops smooth, efficient, and productive, while not forcing consensus.

More people involved—public, business people, staff and agency leaders—helps a plan withstand the vagaries of short election cycles, staff turnover, and lengthy funding timelines. A comprehensive cross-program approach can solve more problems, attract varied funding sources and allies, and build a wider support base. By coordinating related efforts in one region over time, the effect of each plan or program is multiplied. Using an 'open architecture' process (explaining exactly how meetings will be run, with simple ground rules), coupled with extensive training, allows participants to apply the principles in other community exercises—while strengthening community support for the overall concepts and specific projects.

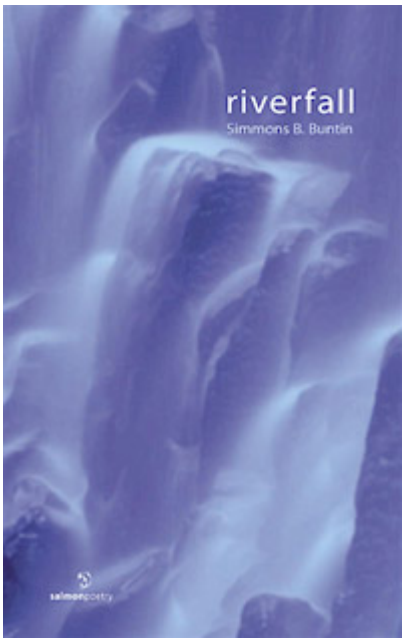
An effective process must be simple enough to be replicable in other communities. The techniques, tools, and process used to develop UnJAM can be repeated anywhere, regardless of size, location, or sophistication. The Level of Quality Guidelines, Facilitator Toolbox, QuickPick Forms, PowerPoint presentations, and workbooks used in UnJAM 2025 are available at www.tjpdc.org and could be tailored to fit any region. A beta version of the CorPlan scenario modeling tool (a Federal Highway Administration Transportation and Community and System Preservation project) is also available, as well as a Small Towns design handbook.

Effective process does not replace governance and good business with anarchy. In a well-designed process the people 'own' the process, the designers do their work, the developers or agencies 'own' the projects, the elected decision makers still make the tough decisions, and, most importantly, the plans get built.

Harrison B. Rue is executive director of the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission and the Charlottesville-Albemarle MPO in Charlottesville, Virginia, and Founding Director of the Citizen Planner Institute. Rue serves on the Association of MPO's Board and U.S. EPA's National Advisory Council on Environmental Policy and Technology, and conducts facilitator training and visioning workshop across the country.

Review: Mythmaking

Peter Huggins reviews *Riverfall*, poems by Simmons B. Buntin



There are no coyotes where I live, or, at least, I have not heard any. The only apparent exception to this situation is my neighbor's Coyote, his camper, which he so thoughtfully parks on the street in the summer and a good bit of the rest of the year, presumably so that he can make a quick getaway, like the coyote (vaguely reminiscent of Wile E. Coyote) pictured on his Coyote. In other parts of my state reports have come of wandering coyotes; since Alabama has a lot of trees and lots of places for animals to forage, this comes as no surprise. But the report of coyotes that I want to address is found in Simmons Buntin's first book of poems, *Riverfall*, with its shimmering blue cover and salmon (from the Irish publisher, Salmon Publishing) leaping up the waterfall.

Riverfall is divided into three sections—A Body of Water, On the Orchard's Edge, and The Last Harvest. Each of these sections begins with the title poem of the section; that is, A Body of Water begins with "A Body of Water." The first poem sets the tone of this section and indeed of the book as a whole, concerning itself with water and the prospect of water. Poems such as "Groundwater" and "Running the Rio Negro" carry this tonal and thematic unity forward as do the three wonderfully imagined letter poems from Charles Darwin to his sister Catherine which conclude the section and which quite literally describe a passage to another world that is and isn't "A simple combination of muted / sky and sea."

Even in the next section, On the Orchard's Edge, we are not far from water as we follow the heron which "spreads her elegant wings / across the bay" in "Great White Heron." Looks may deceive and this Cleopatra of a bird is "queen only of marsh." Appropriately enough, there are not only birds but snakes "tasting the rosy scent / of death...." There are also stony fields, gaps in stone walls (a la Robert Frost), ants, spiders, egrets, and others, most notably and startlingly the indigo bunting, most iridescent of birds, in the poem of the same name:

> *not so much*
> *the silver chorded calls*
> *or the silent intervals*
>
> *of indigo flash*
> *between yellowgreen limbs,*
> *but the complete cessation:*
>
> *the wind, the river, the earth's*
> *core groaning*

among its fiery teeth

to hear this simple song.

The last section of the book is a perfectly realized if spare harvest of poems. Here as in the two previous sections water predominates. To this, however, mythmaking is added as in “Piñon Jays Drinking at Great Salt Lake” or “Thieving” or “Coming into the Premeditated Light” or even “Colorado” with its pointed but not painful cry:

Oh what is the geography
of this place that

we cannot define it?

Without a doubt, though, the most appealing poem of this section if not the entire collection is “Coyote.” This poem, like the book itself, strikes me as creating a balance between myth and direct observation that is hard to beat. “I cannot follow the river of her myth. / Perhaps Papago, or Hopi.” Couple that with this:

She ate the horned toad spitting blood

into her eyes, the gila monster leaking
venom through her veins, and the prickly pear shooting spears

through her tongue.
And she became strong.

The consequence is this:

I said, I cannot follow the river
of her myth; but I can

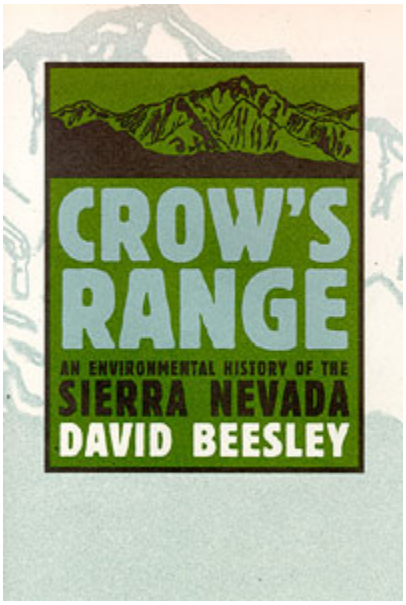
follow her sweet desert song
like a stream through the fiery hills.

And since coyote has come east, I might add through the green hills, too, a hair-raising, but nevertheless welcome sound in Simmons Buntin’s welcoming book, Riverfall.

Peter Huggins teaches in the English Department at Auburn University. His books of poems are Necessary Acts (River City Publishing, 2004), Blue Angels (River City Publishing, 2001), and Hard Facts (Livingston Press/University of West Alabama, 1998). A middle grade novel, In the Company of Owls, is due out from NewSouth Books; a picture book, Trosclair and the Alligator was recently published by Star Bright Books/New York.

Review: Connecting with 'Crow's Range'

Ken Pirie reviews *Crow's Range: An Environmental History of the Sierra Nevada* by David Beesley



I feel a personal connection to the Sierra Nevada, something that remains with me up here in Oregon, attesting to its allure and ability to burn a lasting impression into all who visit the "Range of Light," as John Muir called it. I was married in a meadow high in the Sierras, a deeply memorable place framed with views of the Matterhorn on Yosemite's northern fringe, old growth Jeffrey Pine and thick stands of aspen scarred with the lonely graffiti of long-ago Basque shepherds. We spent a long honeymoon making our way south along the eastern range, poking into the high country and returning to incredible campsites in the lee of incomparable granite walls. We return whenever possible.

With such a lasting bond, I am an advocate for the lasting protection of the Sierra Nevada, so I was drawn to the concise history that is *Crow's Range: An Environmental History of the Sierra Nevada* by David Beesley describing "…the interaction of human beings with the natural environment over time." American fiction writers (my favorites are John Steinbeck or Wallace Stegner) have explored this relationship eloquently—but 'environmental history' as a closely defined field of study is a fairly emergent academic subject.

This book is intended as a simple chronological overview of the various human impacts on the Sierras, perhaps as a teaser to lure readers into further exploration of specific episodes, made easier by an exhaustive bibliography and endnotes. The massive scale of California's dominant geomorphic feature, covering several climatic zones, would seem to defy attempts at anything more than such a cursory examination.

The constant theme of Beesley's summary is change in the landscape and in human attitudes towards it. As Gary Snyder—the Sierra Nevada's "poet laureate"—once wrote, "Streams and mountains never stay the same." As Beesley suggests in an evocative description of the typical lives of the original Miwok native inhabitants, a place like Yosemite was a paradise, but one that was shaped by human hands long before European contact, modified to suit their very real subsistence needs. The natives believed in a shared existence, close to nature—something that may be culturally impossible for us to truly understand.

To the natives, the Sierra Nevadas were not a wilderness—this is a Western conceit borne from guilt at our acquisitive European ancestors' abuse of wild lands and natives. Peoples such as the Yurok, whose creation story inspired this book's title, practiced excellent 'planning,' choosing village sites for best access to water, food, firewood and minimizing fire and flood danger. They found that

carefully managed fire was good for the health of the landscape. But as one native remarked about Europeans imposing their fire suppression tactics: “The white man sure ruined this country. It’s turned back to wilderness…the timber and brush now take all the water.”

And after gold miners ruined virtually every Sierra river, timber cutters moved into giant Sequoia groves and hordes of what John Muir termed “hoofed locusts” cropped lush meadows into dust, Californian natives effectively fell to the same genocidal fate as other American Indians.

Beesley focuses a large portion of the book on the impacts of gold mining. The famed Gold Rush of the ‘49ers perhaps had the most impact on the Sierran landscape, and that frenzy precipitated many subsequent impacts—timber logged for sluices and flumes, rapid rivers dammed and instant boomtowns established overnight. Beesley explains that the frantic mining had huge impacts on rivers and valley bottoms. He writes, “…in a geologic blink of an eye, a billion years of California river processes were transformed.”

But the fertile paradise that other settlers found in the central lowlands proved to be a more consistent and politically powerful source of ‘gold.’ In fact, it was the valley farmers fighting the miners over excessive manipulation of their water sources that led to the first examples of environmental regulation in California. The state has since proven to be a national leader in such regulation, right up to current rules on auto emissions which far exceed federal standards.

But as Beesley proves, the state was far from committed to conservation in the late 1800s and needed federal prodding and designation of ‘national reserves’ to overcome the influence of money on the management of the Sierras.

Protecting the big Sequoia groves was the focus of early land conservation efforts. Even though John Muir’s first job in the Sierras was operating a sawmill in Yosemite, early conservationists quickly grew appalled at the pace of logging, with a third of the original timber felled in the first 20 years after the Gold Rush. By the 1880s, 60 percent of the Tahoe/Truckee area had been cut. As the Truckee Tribune editorialized in 1878:

“If in some old cathedral, there was a picture painted and framed by an angel…the world would be shocked were some man to take off and sell the marvelous frame. But Tahoe is a picture rarer than ever glittered on cathedral walls..and yet they are cutting away her frame and bearing it away. Have we no pride to stop the work?”

These concerns, the first examples of a public backlash to the abuse of California’s scenic wildlands, led to the creation of the three Sierran national parks (Yosemite, Sequoia and Kings Canyon) and eventually to the establishment of the larger national forest system.

There was an early recognition of the value of tourism—there were Yosemite tourists as early as 1856—but there were concerns about the impacts from the rush to build carnival-like “attractions” such as golf courses, railroads, hotels in the national park—which was set aside in 1865 and further defined in 1890—without specific provisions for protection of nature. Early advisors such as the famed landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted advocated limits to tourism, saying it should be

secondary to natural preservation.

The Sierra Club was formed explicitly to help guide the management of Yosemite and Sequoia National Parks, but it soon found it needed to adopt a more adversarial role when the U.S. Forest Service shifted from its pre-WWII custodial role into policies of intensive "resource" management. As part of the Department of Agriculture, the Forest Service aimed to clear the Sierras of what it termed 'decadent' old growth in favor of monocultural plantations.

John Muir's early battles over the damming of Hetch Hetchy valley to provide water for San Francisco also laid the groundwork for later activism. As the venerable conservationist stated: "The battle we have fought, and are still fighting, for the forests is a part of the eternal conflict between right and wrong, and we cannot expect to see the end of it." David Brower took up the fight in the 1960s, leading the Sierra Club in battles against logging and ski resort development and pushing for wilderness designations of the areas buttressing the national parks.

These conflicts were critical episodes in the development of a national environmental movement. The Sierra Club, and the many similar groups it inspired, now find themselves embroiled in conservation battles across the continent. Beesley's book ends with discussion of recent environmental controversies, such as the debate over whether to dismantle Hetch Hetchy. He makes it clear that the changes in this magnificent mountain range will continue and the depth of our passion for the Sierras ensures that there will be conflicts over the appropriate use of public land for a long time.

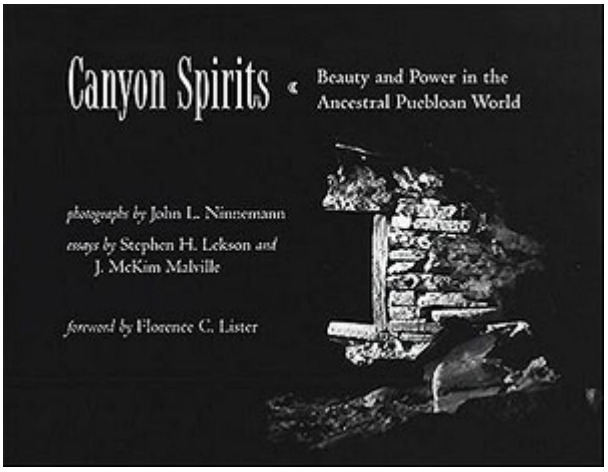
This book is not as provocative or intellectually profound as the writings of landscape historians such as William Cronon. Its academic leanings lead to some assumptions of the reader's knowledge, with fairly technical terms such as "lithic" or "Nisenan" going unexplained. A closer edit would have eliminated repeated quotes and character introductions and I found myself skipping acronym-heavy sections on forest management in favor of well-written passages telling the stories of major environmental struggles in the Sierras.

But Beesley has succeeded admirably in presenting a solid summary of humanity's use of the Sierra Nevada, providing in effect a 'hiking guide' for those of us who wish to delve deeper into the sagas and controversies of our long relationship with 'Crow's Range,' He has certainly re-awakened my personal commitment to the Sierras. It's time I headed back up into the mountains….

Ken Pirie is an urban designer living on the edge of Forest Park, Portland.

Review: A Language of Beauty and Power

***Terrain.org* staff reviews *Canyon Spirits: Beauty and Power in the Ancestral Puebloan World*, photographs by John L. Ninnemann and essays by Stephen H. Lekson and J. McKim Malville**



In the forward to the inviting new book *Canyon Spirits: Beauty and Power in the Ancestral Puebloan World* (University of New Mexico Press), archaeologist Florence C. Lister writes that "Neither the newly designated historic Pueblo Indians nor the prehistoric Ancestral Pueblos had written languages through which they defined themselves and their worldviews."

They relied instead on oral traditions passed down through the generations, as well—it is speculated—as the petroglyphs and pictographs left among the canyon and desert boulder walls of the Four Corners region. Canyon Spirits is a modern-day attempt, for the non-academic among us, not to create a new language per se, but rather to provide a visual and textual history of the Pueblo people, roughly 1500 B.C. to A.D. 1540. It strives to give these cultures a language, to pair photograph with essay, shadow-laced image with informal reflection.

Though many parts of Canyon Spirits are truly fascinating, as a whole it ultimately falls short of its potential, both in form and function.

In the editorial world of books, there is undoubtedly an "excitement scale" to forthcoming books—not necessarily due to author or subject, but rather based on the variety and subsequent promise of content. Canyon Spirits must have been at the top of this scale: a real opportunity to bring together photographs of some of the most beautiful and historically significant landscapes in the North America, couple those with text from leading researchers (who also happen to be published authors), and then adding an array of interesting facts and figures.

Not quite a coffee table book, not quite a reference book, the genre bridges mediums and allows for a creativity that can be almost literally unbound.

Overshadow

Unfortunately, the book's strengths do not overshadow its weaknesses and do not take full advantage of the creativity allowed. We'll journey through the weaknesses first:

While there is new and good information in Lister's Forward—especially the discussion of Puebloan language and geography—it is not as strong as we expected. After reading the Introduction and other

essays, it is also redundant.

John L. Ninnemann's photographs are beautiful, and it is clear that this book is designed around his work. But the images would be outstanding if they were in color. The use of black and white could be based both on design—the shadows of the landscape and the Pueblo "ruins," the allusion to the transparency and colorlessness of Indian spirits—and cost—printing in black and white is considerably less expensive than printing in full color. The black-and-white photographs may hold for readers who have not had the pleasure of visiting Mesa Verde or Wupatki. But for those of us who are fortunate enough to have the stark contrast of the cliffs and rocks and dwellings against the azure sky emblazoned upon our brains—indeed, upon our souls—black and white is disappointing.

Ninnemann's galleries, of which there are three in Canyon Spirits, make particularly good use of the photographs, and here black and white seems appropriate, at least in Gallery One: Cedar Mesa, where the photo's shadowy edges bleed to black page borders. Ninnemann's "reflections," however, do nothing to enhance the galleries. Indeed, while both intention and layout are true, the resulting text uses broken, uneven line lengths so as to appear a poem. These reflections are not poetry, and while Ninnemann's photographs are certainly poetic, his lines do not command such stature:

> But with each passing mile, the recent memory of civilization fades,
> leaving a canyon-walled world of quiet and beauty.
> The empty rooms and rock panels, abandoned by stonemason and artist,
> accent the stillness.
> I stop, make a photograph, smile, and walk on.
> Solitary, but not alone.

The galleries would be better if Ninnermann's prose was set into text blocks rather than stanzas. The galleries would be stronger still if a respected poet had indeed penned them—Arizona's Alison Hawthorne Deming or Colorado's Linda Hogan, perhaps.

Finally, Canyon Spirits doesn't take advantage of opportunities to further educate and excite the reader. For example, there is no map—literal or stylistic—showing the "two hundred thousand square kilometers of sagebrush grasslands, redrock canyons and mesas, and pine-forested mountain ranges" in which Anasazi sites can be found. For the unknowing reader, where is Chaco in comparison to Aztec in comparison to Paquimé? After reading Leckson's essay, it's a route that at a minimum we want to trace with our proverbial finger on paper. The lack of a map is a significant oversight for a book of this nature.

The similar lack of sidebars or callouts, until the few spare data tables of J. McKim Malville's essay, is also disappointing. Rather than overwhelming the reader, sidebars help support the essay's points, help bridge the text and the photos. The book is not "bad" without them, mind you; it is just one lost opportunity among many.

The Light, the Strength

Just as Ninnemann's photographs show the dark and the light, it's only fair for this review to present Canyon Spirits' strengths, as well.

As mentioned previously, the book's overall presentation is excellent. Despite the lack of color, the photographs on the page, typesetting, and liberal use of white space work very well.

Long House, Mesa Verde National Park.
Photo by John L. Ninnemann, *Canyon Spirits*, pg. 41.

Though we aren't enamored with Lister's Foreward, Ninnemann's Introduction is just that—a solid, well-written overview with welcoming information:

> People of distinctly different cultures occupied the southwestern portion of North America during prehistoric times. The literature describing the cultures of the Four Corners region has most often used the term 'Anasazi' to label these people.
>
> The term comes from the Navajo language, and can be variously translated as 'ancient ancestors,' or 'ancient enemies,' giving an unfortunate connotation to the people who, it turns out, were not ancestors or even enemies contemporary with the Navajo people. Today's descendants of the Anasazi are the people of the modern Pubelos, so the term 'Ancestral Puebloans' to describe their ancestors, is much preferred.

Besides the 85 photographs, the highlight of Canyon Spirits is undoubtedly Lekson's essay, "Anasazi Pueblos of the Ancient Southwest." Beginning with an exploration of the origin of the Pueblo people, the essay is an utterly fascinating account of the evolution of the culture and architecture of the pueblos, the creation of the three great regional centers—Chaco Canyon, Aztec, and Paquimé—and the people's "new directions."

"Pueblo traditions recount long and complicated migrations," Lekson begins. "[A]fter emerging from an earlier existence beneath this present world, Pueblo people followed signs and instructions from spiritual guardians, wandering over much of the Southwest until they found their 'middle place'—the locations of their present villages. Each Pueblo has its own middle place, and its own history; indeed, each of the many clans that make up a Pueblo village has its own unique migration story."

Lekson's review of corn and pottery as the formation of a "base" culture provides a strong foundation not only for the rest of the essay, but for the dichotomy of the unknown that is Southwestern archaeology: "Archaeology hints at common origins; language diversity and traditional tribal histories argue otherwise."

The essay continues with a section on migration: "The 'village' itself was a place visited and revisited only when local plant foods were ripe and available," reminding us that "[t]here were no wagons or pack animals to move food to the village, so families moved to the food." He continues:

That was the annual cycle; but a longer, larger cycle of movement also occurred. After a couple of decades in one area, firewood was cut, game was hunted out, and farm fields were depleted. An entire community might move into a new area with richer resources. Generation after generation, villages shifted from valley to valley, perhaps eventually reoccuping and rebuilding on the sites of their great-grandparents' homes, after nature had restored trees, game, and soil.

By A.D. 850, however, pit house villages were more common, and fifty years later, Pueblo people came together at "White House" in Chaco Canyon:

> Chaco, which flourished from A.D. 900 to about 1125, was a ceremonial city on a scale unprecedented in the Southwest. Huge sandstone masonry buildings, which archaeologists call 'great houses,' rose five stories tall, encompassing hundreds of rooms in ground plans of semi-circles, ovals, and rectangles covering areas larger than football fields.

Lekson details the downfall of Chaco Canyon and the rise of Aztec, as well as "a phenomenon unique in Pueblo history"—the eruption of Sunset Crater (near Flagstaff, Arizona). Lekson's brief history is stunning:

> The Hopi call this small volcano 'Red Hill,' and remember it in their oral histories. There had been no volcanic eruptions in the Southwest for three hundred generations. Some Pueblo travelers had probably seen smoking mountains in Mexico, but for the vast majority of Southwestern people, Red Hill was an unprecedented wonder. A towering, violent plume shot up from the crater. It was visible from Chaco Canyon and most of the Southwest. Lightning flashed day and night through the ash-laden clouds; the thunder was drowned out by the rumble of volcanic explosions. Red Hill became a huge, permanent thunderhead. Lava flows and smaller eruptions continued for decades.

After Aztec, a smaller version south of Chaco that likely continued its role as White House, the essay explores Paquimé, a Pueblo city inhabited from A.D. 1250 to 1400 located 150 kilometers south of the international boarder, in Chihuahua, Mexico:

> Within the buildings of Paquimé, archaeologists found impressive evidence for wealth, trade, and craft specialization. One warehouse contained over one thousand kilograms of Pacific Ocean shell. Astonishing quantities of copper bells and other items were imported from western Mexico. Chaco, Wupatki, and Aztec had imported the brightly plumed macaws. Paquimé actually bred the birds…. Other products were commercially produced such as large-scale turkey farming and agave production…. Paquimé was not simply 'another Pueblo;' it was a commercial, political, and ceremonial center of the first order.

It is ceremony that greets us in J. McKim Malville's unique essay, "Ancient Space and Time in the Canyons." While Lekson's essay is certain, Malville's is tentative, full of the same speculation as "Anasazi Pueblos of the Ancient Southwest," and yet not so boldly written.

Here, though, boldness should be the modus operandi, as Malville's essay is an interesting—if less readable—coupling to the previous essay. Together, the essays form a symbiosis represented graphically by Ninnemann's black-and-white photographs. Still, both the photos and this essay could use more color.

Malville's focus is the sacred time and space, the Puebloan spiritual context of cyclical events:

> Every winter solstice the sun rises at exactly the same place on the horizon and casts the same shadows across ancient petroglyphs on the canyon walls. Solstice suns cycle into the past and into the future, seemingly without limit. Past and future time merge with the present.

Ceremonies—whether at Chaco Canyon, Mesa Verde, or elsewhere—were the means of "entering the world of the ancestors." Festivals and other religious events were set in the context of "heirophanies," which are "manifestations of the sacred" defined by the repetitions of cyclic events at a certain location.

A heirophany can be an unusual stone or geological formation, such as Chimney Rock, Fajada Butte, and Towaoac. It becomes doubly powerful if associated with a significant 'fragment of time.' Hierophanies may also be established by well-designed architecture.

In the Pueblo world, there were both. The majority of Malville's essay is dedicated to identifying the possible hierophanies in the Four Corners Pueblo sites, especially in the context of summer and winter solstice and lunar events.

His thesis may explain why there are Pueblo grinding sites with locations that don't at first seem logical:

> In sites in Grand Gulch such as Green Mask, Junction, Split Level, Turkey Pen, and Perfect Kiva there are hundreds of bedrock grinding areas and associated pecked basins. Some of the grinding areas may have been used for grinding of domestic corn or sharpening of axes, but many are far from habitation sites and are located on exposed boulders that would not be appropriate for grinding corn for domestic purposes. Some may have involved ritual grinding of corn, sherds, or semi-precious stone for offerings to the rising sun to be placed in adjacent basins. The Perfect Kiva enclosure contains forty-six pecked basins and approximately forty grinding areas of which many are oriented to the rising sun at winter solstice. The natural acoustics of this enclosure are such that a chorus of grinding would have created a dramatic ceremony for bringing up the sun.

The short essay ends with a brief examination of the "unexpected displays of the sacred," including the total solar eclipse of A.D. 1097, the Taurus supernova of A.D. 1054 that "was so brilliant that it

was visible during the day for two weeks," the eruption and continuous thunderhead of Red Hill, and the appearance of Halley's Comet in A.D. 1066, which "may be represented as a pictograph on the wall below Peñasco Blanco" at Chaco.

Ending Details

Canyon Spirits ends with a section that could easily be missed—Photo Details—though fortunately we didn't. Ninnemann provides a description of each photograph in the book, identified by page number. The details are not to be missed. While the photographs stand alone, these additional passages provide the photographer's keen insight into each particular image.

In the end, though, it is attention to detail that keeps this good book from being great, that keeps it down among the brambly shadows of the scrub and canyons. With a remarkable series of photographs by Ninnemann and memorable essays by Lekson and Malville, Canyon Spirits: Beauty and Power in the Ancestral Puebloan World is a fine collection not to be missed by even those with only a passing interest in Southwestern archaeology. With a bit more attention to detail and the inclusion of maps and color photographs, however, Canyon Spirits could have soared among the spirits. It would have been a language of beauty and power indeed.