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The Keep

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POST AMERIKAN



BLOOMINGTON/NORMAL VOLUME 29

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FEBRUARY/MARCH 2000



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POST AMERIKAN



BLOOMINGTON/NORMAL VOLUME 29 NUMBER ONE FEBRUARY/MARCH 2000

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About us

The *Post Amerikan* is an independent community newspaper providing information and analysis that is screened out of or down played by establishment news sources. We are a non-profit, worker-run collective that exists as an alternative to the corporate media.

We put out six issues a year. Staff members take turns as "coordinator." All writing, typing, editing, graphics, photography, pasteup, and distribution are done on a volunteer basis. You are invited to volunteer your talents.

Most of our material and inspiration for material comes from the community. The *Post Amerikan* welcomes stories, graphics, photos, letters, and new tips from our readers. If you'd like to join us, call 828-4473 and leave a message on our answering machine. We will get back to you as soon as we can. Don't worry if it takes a while—we don't meet every week.

An alternative newspaper depends directly on a community of concerned people for existence. We believe it is very important to keep a newspaper like this around. If you think so too, then please support us by telling your friends about the paper, donating money to the printing of the paper, and telling our advertisers you saw their ad in *Post Amerikan*.

Subscriptions

Subscriptions to the *Post Amerikan* are available for the low price of \$6.00 per year for six complete issues.

Please send a check (made payable to the *Post Amerikan*) to: *Post Amerikan*, P.O. Box 3452 Bloomington, IL 61702.

This issue of *Post Amerikan* is brought to you by...

David, Linda, Ralph and Sherrin

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Copies of the *Post Amerikan* are now available for free at the following locations:

Bloomington

AIDS Task Force, 313 N. Main
About Books, 221 E. Front
Barnes & Noble, Veterans & Rt. 9
Bloomington Public Library, 205 E. Olive
Common Ground, 516 N. Main
CoffeeWorks, 608 N. Main
Gaston's Upper Cut, 409 N. Main
Heartland Community College Academic Support Center, 1226 Towanda Ave.
Last Chance Newstand, 404 N. Main
Lizard's Lounge, 612 N. Main St.
Medusa's, 420 N. Madison
the Movie Fan, 401 N. Veterans (Cub Food Plaza)
Mystic Link, 1206 Towanda Ave. Su.4
Shockwaves, 415 N. Main
Twin City Exchange, 411 N. Main

Normal

Acme Comics, 115 W. North
Babbitt's Books, 104 W. North
Co-op Records, 503 S. Main
the Coffeehouse, 114 E. Beaufort
Deadpan Alley Records, 107 W. North
Koffee Kup, 205 W. North
Mother Murphy's, 111 W. North
Normal Public Library, 206 W. College Ave.

What's your new address?

When you move, be sure to send us your new address so your subscription gets to you. Your *Post Amerikan* will not be forwarded (it's like junk mail—no kidding!). Fill out this handy form with your new address and return it to us, P.O. Box 3452, Bloomington, IL 61702.

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The due date for submitting articles to the *Post Amerikan* is: (please laser print your articles in columns of 3" using Palatino 10pt. type if possible.)

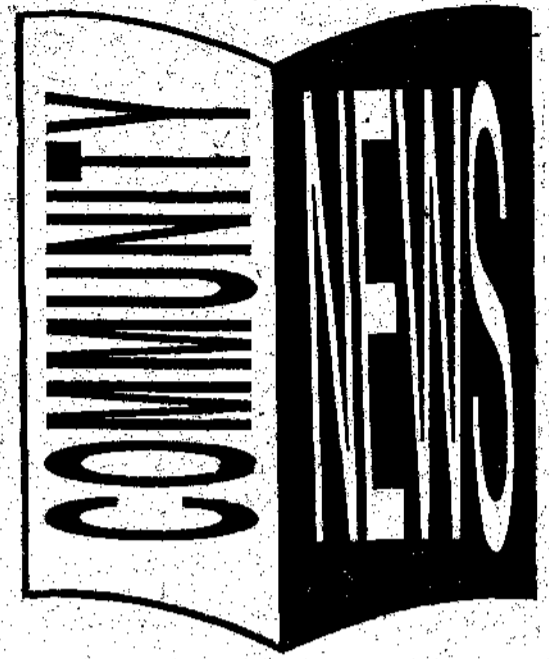
March 15

Good numbers

Advocacy Council for Human Rights.830-2521
AIDS Hotlines
National.....1-800-AID-AIDS
Illinois.....1-800-243-2437
Local.....827-AIDS
Alcoholics Anonymous.....828-7092
Amnesty International-ISU ...Miami@ilstu.edu
Animal Protection League.....828-5371
Better Business Bureau.....1-800-500-3780
Big Brothers/ Big Sisters828-1870
Boys & Girls Clubs of B/N.....829-3034
Clare House (Catholic workers).....828-4035
Countering Domestic Violence.....827-7070
Dept. of Children/Family Services...828-0022
Gay, Lesbian & Bi teen drop in center.828-3998
Gay & Lesbian Resource Phoneline...438-2429
Habitat for Humanity827-3931
Headstart.....662-4880
Home Sweet Home Mission.....828-7356
IL Dept. of Public Aid.....827-4621
IL Lawyer Referral.....1-217-525-5297
Incest Survivors Support Group.....827-0790
LIFE-CIL.....663-5433
Lighthouse (substance abuse treatment).....827-6026
McLean Co. Center for Human Services...827-5351
McLean Co. Health Dept.....888-5450
McLean Co. Housing Authority.....829-3360
McLean Co. Humane Society.....664-7387
McLean Co. Peace Coalition.....828-7070
Mid Central Community Action.....829-0691
Mobile Meals.....828-8301
Narcotics Anonymous.....827-4005
National Health Care Services/
abortion assistance.....1-800-322-1622
Occupational Development Center...452-7324
Parents Anonymous.....827-4005
PATH (Personal Assistance Telephone Help).827-4005
Phone Friends.....827-4005
PFLAG(Parents, Families and Friends
of Lesbians and Gays).....663-0831
Planned Parenthood (medical).....827-4014
(bus/couns/edu).....827-4368
Post Amerikan.....828-4473
Prairie State Legal Services.....827-5021
Project Oz.....827-0377
Rape Crisis Center.....827-4005
Runaway Switchboard.....1-800-621-4000
Salvation Army.....829-9476
Safe Harbor Mission.....829-7399
TeleCare (senior citizens).....828-8301
Unemployment comp/job service...827-6237
Western Ave. Community Center.....829-4807
Youth Build.....827-7507



Community News



Free Internet workshops offered

Bloomington Public Library will present two free Internet workshops. "The Internet for Beginners" will be presented at 7 p.m. Thursday, February 10 in BPL's community room. Jane Chamberlain will show participants what the Internet offers, how it works, and how to get the most out of using the Internet.

"Searching and Evaluating Information on the Internet" will be presented at 7 p.m. Thursday, February 17 in BPL's community room. Chamberlain will describe Internet search engines, reveal strategies to make searching more productive and give sound criteria for evaluating information found on the Internet.

For more information, call the Bloomington Public Library at 828-6091.

Advocacy Council adopts College Ave.

To give back to the community and remind its citizens that they are part of that community, the Advocacy Council for Human Rights has enlisted in the Town of Normal's Adopt-A-Street-Program.

Volunteers have met on one Sunday afternoon for each of the past three months to clean up College Avenue from Veterans Parkway to Grandview Drive. This spring, the town will honor ACHR by posting a sign along the stretch of road.

The ACHR could use more volunteers with the cleanup. Past cleanups have taken approximately one and a half hours with five volunteers.

For more information, contact ACHR at 309-830-2521.

Seeking gay and lesbian union members

Gay and lesbian union members are in the process of forming a local chapter of a new national group in Central Illinois.

Pride at Work (PAW) is an AFL-CIO affiliate and currently has chapters in numerous other states. One purpose of the local organization is to give gays and lesbians a voice in the labor movement. Also, with increased involvement with the AFL-CIO, they will gain more support for issues that are of concern.

For more information, contact ACHR at 309-830-2521.

Sterile Feral Foundation needs your help

I (Sherrin) received this letter in the mail and wanted to share it with Post readers in the hope some of you will help these women with the very important work that they do.

Dear Friends,

This letter is certainly not the kind of news we had in mind for our first mailing. We thought we'd do a newsletter, stuffed full with fun facts about our feral felines. We were going to tell you all about the feral, or formerly domesticated, cats in this community. We were going to happily explain how the Sterile Feral Foundation helps these abandoned animals by humanely trapping them and getting them neutered or spayed and vaccinated. We were going to proudly tell how we then return them to their original location and provide food, water, and shelter on a daily basis. We were going to write witty columns and express our optimism for the upcoming year.

Instead we're just going to ask for help.

Today we learned that nine feral cats and kittens were trapped and killed. We had been planning for a while on helping this colony by setting up a feeding and trapping schedule. We had started to get to know these little souls, as we occasionally stopped by to see how they were doing. We knew the neighborhood wasn't particularly receptive to these abandoned animals and we were excited as we thought about how we knew the trap-neuter-return method could change people's minds. We knew that neutering and spaying all the cats would eliminate annoying mating behaviors such as yowling, fighting and spraying. Mainly, though, we were excited about using the trap-neuter-return to help the cats.

Penelope, the black and white matriarch of the bunch, would no longer be weary from taking care of litters four times a year. Her latest batch of offspring, who were young adults, could grow up outside in the world they love, a world that because of us would be a little bit kinder. They could scale trees and roll in the sunshine and wait for their caregivers' cars to pull up with that day's supply of food and water. Their life was not going to be a picnic in the park, but we were determined to give this group of cats their best shot for happiness. We have done it with other colonies and we wanted it for these cats.

They will never get it. They're dead. They're dead because other humane organizations are not equipped to deal with cats who are no longer domesticated and therefore not adoptable. They're dead because we, the group who does know how to help them, know about more cats than we as a handful of individuals can realistically help. We dream of being able

to trap, neuter and return every feral cat in Bloomington-Normal. When we first learned of this colony and drove over to see them, we dreamed about what it would be like to drive around this community and see plump and neutered feral cats instead of hungry and pregnant ones. We want to help them. Please help us.

We need money to pay for vet costs. We plan to send this letter out to about one hundred people. If each of you could send us ten dollars, our current vet bill would be eliminated. We need people to help us feed and trap the colonies. If we could just get these colonies in friendly hands then maybe we could prevent another trap-and-kill tragedy from occurring. We need expertise. We are incorporated but we are still in the process of becoming a not-for-profit organization. If you are familiar with the paperwork we could use your guidance.

We are determined to turn the deaths of these animals into something from which good can come. You can help us. If you send us a check please make it out to Heidi Guth. All of the money will go to our bill At Town And Country Animal Hospital.

Thank you so much for listening and caring. Remember to tell everyone you know to spay and neuter their companion animals.

In loving honor of nine feral cats we wished we had enough time to help,

Heidi Guth, Valerie Parker and Katha Koenes
Sterile Feral Foundation
106 W. Locust
Bloomington, IL 61701

309.829.8506 For more info about feral cats visit the Alley Cat Allies' web site at www.alleycat.org



The Cosmic Bee

When I was a child, I used to speak as a child, think as a child, reason as a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I shall know fully just as I also have been fully known."
-1 Corinthians 13:11&12

"If you could understand now why you are suffering you wouldn't be suffering. That's a fact. Since you can't understand now, have patience.

"As I've said elsewhere, 'In patience possess ye your soul.' What does that mean? It means having perfect faith. It means keeping on, though you see nothing and the darkness seems absolute. Patience will lead you to understanding."
-Anonymous

"You don't notice your own shit until you sit on the toilet."
-Valmiki

"Sometimes a bee sting is just a bee sting."
-Yours truly

Are we creatures of fate or of destiny? Is there cosmic meaning in all, a lesson to be learned in each turn of the daily events? Is it possible to live with joy in every moment knowing that each event is a cosmic reflection of the infinite perfection of each person's existence?

There are moments in time when "everything goes wrong." You burn your toast, spill your coffee on the newspaper, have to clean up the cat vomit on your carpet and are ten minutes late to work...and your boss is in a bad mood and makes a snide comment about your tardiness. You don't know why these things have all gone wrong, but you do know that you are only an hour and a half into your day and everything in it so far sucks. You want to go back to bed. Too bad we all take these experiences to heart and judge the entire day as bad, giving us a bad attitude, and making things worse. We don't need anyone else to shit on us. We shit on ourselves. What would happen if we allowed each experience to exist in and of itself, and didn't try and see them as interconnected into one large, nasty day, or week, or year? What if we accepted that things happen...maybe with meaning, maybe without, but knowing that we don't have to know WHY they happened? Would our lives be better? And how often do we judge the actions of others based upon what we see outwardly without insight into their inner experiences or realities? Maybe the boss just had his/her partner leave their relationship that morning. Or maybe s/he just woke up on the wrong side of the bed too, but instead spilled the coffee on his/her lap, getting a mild burn. What does their words and reactions have to do with you, except for how you respond to them?

Out of control

Recently, I was to assist another midwife at a birth of twins in Iowa. She wanted me to assist her because we work well together and I am a midwife, but since she has attended 500 births she didn't need me there. She could do it with the apprentice she had, and do it well. Still, it would have been a great learning experience for me, and we were both excited to be working together again. Since I didn't have a cell phone yet, I left a list of places, numbers and times that I could be reached on my voice mail daily.

Wednesday, two days before the birth, the woman started showing signs of going into labour. I needed to be vigilant about checking my messages because she was sure to have the baby by Sunday. Thursday, the day before the birth, I was making seitan for EarthFire and Laura asked me about an herbal treatment she was recommending to someone. I said I would research this and get back with her. To remind myself I called my voice mail to leave a message. It wouldn't pick up. I called four times in 20 minutes and it just would not work. I was a bit panicked because Molly wouldn't be able to find me if she couldn't get my voice mail. I went home shortly and tried to retrieve my voice mail from my phone...and it wouldn't let me get my messages. Three times I tried, and three times it wouldn't give them to me. So, I called the phone company. The man tested my line, left messages, etc., and insisted all was working right and there was no problem. I told him there HAD to be a problem, because there had been 7 errors with my voice mail in an hour and a half. No, he insisted, no problem.

I made a decision, called LaCrosse/Onalaska and arranged to get a cell phone the next day, Friday. Knowing I would be out of contact for an hour and a half I called Molly and told her what I was doing. I also told her that I would call her immediately upon getting my cell phone and leave her my number. She asked me take extra precautions and check my messages on my voice mail when I dropped the kids off at school and before I left for LaCrosse. I reminded her to check her messages as well around noon to get my cell phone number. At 8:40am when I checked messages my voice mail once again wasn't working and it wouldn't let me check messages. Damn. STILL not working. Guess there wasn't much sense in counting on my voice mail to help me...I needed that cell phone. I took off to LaCrosse, glad that I would shortly have a back up source of contact. By 11:40am I had a cell phone number and called Molly's home in Iowa, leaving my cell phone number on her machine since she wasn't home. I carried that cell phone with me all day and never heard from her.

Is it live or is it Memorex?

I got home at 5:20pm that night and there was a message on my voice mail from Molly left at 12:25pm, telling me to start on that three and a half hour drive because the woman was in labour. Later she called again since she hadn't

heard from me to make sure I had gotten the message. How could this be? Why hadn't she called me on my cell phone? Didn't she remember to check her messages? How did she not get my cell phone number? I had moved mountains to get that phone because I was so worried about my voice mail not working, and then I STILL missed the birth. This was too much! Talking to her later I discovered that she HAD called her home to get my phone number off of her machine...and HER machine, strangely enough, wouldn't let her retrieve her messages.

What the hell had happened? Why had everything gone wrong? SHIT! I was angry, upset, and felt like a failure. I had done everything I could to make sure I was there and had still missed this birth. Why, why, why? What had I done to deserve this?

Later that evening I told a psychic friend about this. She has premonitions, and they are always right. She has known about earthquakes, plane crashes, etc. before they happen but doesn't talk about this with most people. Her response was simply, "Oh my God." Apparently on Thursday she had had her first strong premonition in over a year. Someone she knew and cared about was taking a trip in a car and was going to get into a horrible car accident. She couldn't think of anyone she knew making a trip in a car, and had been worried ever since about who was going to get into this wreck. She hadn't realized the birth I was on call for was 3 1/2 hours away in Iowa. When she heard my story she said she had been instantly relieved, and her sense of worry had passed. She believes I was that person in the premonition, and had I left my home for Iowa that day I would have been in a bad crash. The crash hadn't happened, and for once her premonition didn't come true. Ironically EVERYTHING had "gone wrong" with me going on my car trip and prevented me from going.

Was this just a coincidence between two separate unrelated events, or was this a small miracle...did some outer force have a hand in manipulating events to change the course of my

history? Still, I had spent a few hours berating myself for screwing up, making the wrong choice in going for the phone and all of that before I talked to her and felt better. I chose to judge the situation and my actions instead of just accepting them for what they were.

There has been in recent years renewed interest in discovering your intuition, and the belief that everyone has this to some degree. I believe in this. Whenever I have paid attention to that little voice in my head, it hasn't failed me. When I have ignored it, disaster has always resulted. But when it moves beyond this to forces apparently manipulating reality to make events change, this becomes harder for me to comprehend. Are the events which led to me missing the birth any less mysterious or miraculous than any of the other events which govern our daily lives? We have all heard stories of the miraculous and some of us think these events unbelievable, but is such the case?

There is an idea that our thoughts become reality. What we believe will happen will



sting

happen. What we think we deserve, we receive. We create our own realities. Yes, this is true as well. But, how can outside forces mold and shape our destinies if we create them ourselves? When I first missed this birth, I thought that somehow I had created this, blamed myself, felt guilty. I had been quite preoccupied with the idea of NOT missing the birth and felt that maybe had I not worried so much, then I would have been at home and received the call instead of driving to LaCrosse to get a cell phone. I thought I had created the reality of missing the birth somehow. After talking to my friend I felt relief. Wow! Maybe it wasn't my fault! Maybe other forces had intervened to make me so unsettled so I would leave! Who is to say?

Sometimes a bee sting is just a bee sting

Let's back track to a year and a half ago. I was doing a homebirth for a dreamy woman with a dreamy picture. No risk, no problem, first birth went well. I had been advised by an attorney for my client that if I transported to the hospital for any reason I would end up in jail. Well, what could go wrong? This was a second birth; she had an absolutely perfect medical picture, and this was my last birth I intended to do before I left Illinois and found some place more midwifery friendly to practice. What an ideal candidate for the last homebirth I was to do for a while!

In the past in my homebirth practice I had been plagued with all the complications. No matter how well I screened, I got them all...things you couldn't anticipate, etc. Fortunately, I had been told by a Voice in my head prior to each birth what the complication was while the woman was in labour. I would be at the birth, everything would be fine, and then a Voice would speak in my head and say, "Get her out of the birth pool now and break her bag of waters...her baby has passed meconium [the baby's first poop; which is usually a sign of distress needing transport to a hospital and thorough suctioning] and there is a problem with the cord around the body." So, I'd listen to the Voice, and sure enough, there was the mec...and later a problem with the cord. The Voice was always right.

After a while, I started to doubt this voice and knowledge. What if that voice was just me and my inner doubts, my inner fears? What if I was creating the complication by thinking it into being?

So, for this dreamy client with the perfect history I decided something. If all the outward signs were okay, I WOULD NOT listen to that voice. If it said to break the bag of waters with no actual physical reason I could come up with, I just wouldn't do it. I would not listen to anything the voice said, because she was the perfect client. I would not create a bad reality. I approached the birth happy and confident and had no fear.

She went into labour late in October on one of those lovely spring-like days that just shouldn't be. She wanted to be completely alone in labour for a while, and I agreed to just go indoors every fifteen minutes to check heart tones, since everything was fine. I was sitting in the backyard alone knitting. I paused in my work for a moment and asked, "Let me know right now if this birth is going to go fine or if there is going to be a problem." No voice spoke, but I was instantly stung on the wrist by a bee.

Now please understand how unusual this was. I hadn't been stung in years. I wasn't flapping my arms about, walking through flowers or anything. I hadn't seen a bee in weeks. I was actually sitting motionless asking for a sign about the birth, and was stung immediately.

Since I had previously made up my mind to ignore all voices or signs, I ignored this as well. After all, sometimes a bee sting is just a bee sting. Weird as it was, how could there be a "cosmic bee sting" as a message from the universe that things weren't going to go well?

I have rarely ever been more wrong in my life.

Out of the clear blue sky as she was pushing the baby out...and the baby was stuck...mild shoulder dystocia. The cord was tight around the baby's neck. The baby was finally out, but just didn't want to start breathing. As I am working on the baby to get the baby breathing, the mother started pouring blood. Blood everywhere. I have never seen so much blood at any birth I had attended at homes or in the hospital in Russia. The baby was now fine, but I couldn't get the bleeding stopped....and we had to call 911 for an emergency hospital transport in an ambulance.

Why had this happened? This is the worst scenario in the world that I could come up with, short of a death, and most midwives never go through this...or it is a once in a lifetime midwifery event. Why, why, why did this have to happen?!? How horrible! I felt so badly for her needing to be transported. I felt so helpless. I felt so stupid for ignoring that bee sting. And yet...the end result? She got the absolutely perfect birth experience for her. She needed to go through that. She felt sure it would have happened in the hospital, and was so thankful it had happened at home instead where her baby wasn't taken away and tested or kept for observation. The birth gave her an inner strength, a sense of pride and accomplishment, and made her a vocal advocate of homebirth and well-educated, experienced midwives (yes, she was talking about me). She grew in such beautiful, amazing ways, and had received the perfect birth she needed. And I had judged it as "bad" because it hadn't gone the way I wanted it to go...the way I thought it should.

The irony of this is that now, whenever I hear someone trying to find the cosmic explanation for an event that has occurred I always say to them, "And sometimes a bee sting is just a bee sting." They don't know my story, and think this saying is just a bit of wisdom...a reminder that some things are just life. Sometimes you just burn the soup, but sometimes the burning of the soup saves the village from burning. You just never know.

There is a story told about an old man who finds a horse, and all the villagers judge his luck based upon the horse. At first they judge him lucky because he now has an animal to help with the harvest, and then unlucky when his son falls off the horse breaking a leg, making the son unable to help with the harvest. Later, they judge the old man lucky when the army comes through and takes all the able bodied young men to fight in a battle, except for the old man's son because he has a broken leg. The horse runs away, and now there is no chance of getting the harvest in....ah, what bad luck the old man has, declares the villagers. Later, the horse returns with an entire herd of the best horses in the land...and the emperor comes through and buys them all up...except the horse the old man originally found....making the old man the richest in all the land. Ah, what good luck the old man has!

And at each turn the old man responds, "Good luck, bad luck...who's to say?"

The lesson, I suppose, is to try and find a way to live in each moment, and experience what is going on. We cannot predict the outcome of our future, and though we have some control over our destiny, a lot of our future is out of our hands. We need to find a balanced way to take each moment and not judge it as bad or good, but accept the fact that it just IS, and in that moment know that it is perfect. For whatever reason, that is the moment that is supposed to be. Listen to that voice, acknowledge when you hear it, but let life flow in its own way. We have a lot of freedom of choice in our lives, but the lovely paradox is that much of our lives is out of our control. Knowing when you are in control and when you aren't, and accepting this, is wisdom. Sometimes a bee sting is just a bee sting.

Please note: Though the story about this particular birth with hemorrhage seems like a reason for advocating for all births to be in hospitals, especially because she had no outstanding risk factors, please keep in mind that this was a highly unusual birth. The other side of the story is that I can tell you incident after incident that I personally witnessed or intervened with in American hospitals that risked the babies' or mothers' lives and were events often caused by sheer human negligence or ignorance, and not by a fluke of nature. With educated, experienced midwives delivering low-risk women at home, statistics always show that homebirths are safer and have better outcomes than hospital births. But, a bell curve is just that...and sometimes things fall outside the realm of "normal" or "average."

--Marcee Murray



Powaqqatsi, Yes!

Unless all of us are suffering from some sort of mass hallucination, we're all fine; the world did not collapse at the stroke of midnight on 1/1/2000. Instead the Earth and its inhabitants functioned as well as they ever have, much to the chagrin of the popular media who were poised at every conceivable point of the world; waiting for something tragic to occur so they could grab "the money shot." What they were forced to cover was the world in total harmony, rejoicing as one people "Earthlings." Say what you will about globalization, but on new year's eve, in every time zone, globalization was a beautiful thing. Not a homogeneous clone, but more like a field of wild flowers with every color, smell, and uniqueness each has to offer.

We humans celebrated the last of the sunsets of the 20th century, the stroke of midnight, and the first of the sunrises of the third millennium in grand style from Peru to China. The celebration started on the beaches of Kiri Bati and finished throughout the Pacific Ocean. The submarine U. S. S. Topeka, in an almost schizophrenic maneuver, positioned half the sub in the 20th century and half in the 21st

century. So the first people to really welcome the 21st century were standing on top of nuclear missiles. There is something rather ironic about that . . .

The only Y2K destruction was "the art of destruction" a colossal sculpture in Berit, Switzerland that was intentionally burned. The only things that blew up were the planned pyrotechnics, like the stunning display at the Eiffel Tower, and the amazing display of lasers and video in Hong Kong. Many of the celebrations were more ethereal than explosive. Like a person playing music alone on a mountain top in China, or the fun celebrations like the dancers who horizontally performed on the side of the Sydney Opera House. Ireland marked the moment by having 2000 lads and lassies sing "Danny Boy." A thousand Maori warriors, faces tattooed, in full regalia welcomed their first sunrise; their only Y2K crisis was having to pull one of their longboats upon shore after a sudden wave filled it with water. In Greenwich, England, the Queen opened the largest dome in the world, the 1/2 mile diameter, 50 meter high "Millennium

Dome," which shared its debut with a brobdingnagian ferris wheel on the Thames River.

In one of the most poignant things I've ever seen, Nelson Mandela returned to his prison cell of 20 years to light a freedom candle, which he presented to the current president of South Africa. Country after country displayed their cultural heritage, their finest musicians and performance artists, traditional celebrations, and living art, not to mention a zillion happy faces that were lit up by enough fireworks to send us all to Alpha Centauri. Instead of a total collapse of "the machine," "the machine" worked in a way that would shame any luddite. The television networks brought us around the world in a stunning technological marvel that may have been, at times, a little too travel loggy and propagandistic, but it was T. V.'s finest achievement to date.

Who lost out, who won?

The world won, and quite frankly, not too many people lost out. Of course, the Y2K doomsday prophets can now join their Y1K historical



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 HAIR DYES- SHOES



counterparts in eternally wiping egg off their faces. Which means if you were in the towlette biz, you won; and you made a fortune with all that egg wiping going on. A major credit card company got foiled when all of their card holders got embarrassed when their cards expired over a hundred years ago. In Auckland, New Zealand, the power grid shut down briefly. A New Jersey (U. S. A.) gas station's computer crashed, and the customers were forced to deal with that long forgotten archaic stuff, "cash." A handful of airports reported some hassles with their in-flight systems such as wind shear warning systems, etc. One airport's arrival announcement board flashed up 1900 as that day's date. The Big Apple, and Washington D. C. reported a bunch of bomb threats, and in Sydney there was a big fist fight. Combine all of this negative stuff together and you could give it the normative name of "Saturday on planet Earth."

The A.T. M.s spit out bucks, all of the bank and corporate employees who were shanghaied to party at the office "just in case..." received nice big phat bonuses. The portable toilet rental companies also reported booming cash earnings. Poor Sam Donaldson stood, lost in space, at the national F. E. M. A. Y2K crisis headquarters with nothing to report. The computer software folks raked in 340 billion dollars, likewise, the computer hardware folks probably did that much biz.

The final cash total is not in yet. But it's safe to say my projection of 1.6 trillion world wide is probably conservative. The airlines said they lost 20% of their projected business. The space shuttle cut their Hubble Telescope upgrade mission short; to get home before the collapse of civilization. Personally, I would have stayed up there until the flight controllers' campaign headaches wore off... If you were selling all of that rude tasting survival food you'd laughed all the way to the bank... And in a move that surprised me, the Wall Streeters did not panic and dump their stocks; quite the contrary, the last day of the 20th century and the first business day of the 21st century witnessed a bullish market. America's oldest teenager, Dick Clark, welcomed the disneyfication of Times Square with the dropping of a new crystal ball. All in all, the world was in a great mood, and had a great day.

What's next?

Well, there is already a lot of Y2K backlash; people are upset about how they were led by the nose through the hype. Naturally, I'm

being a brat saying "I told ya so!" and as you might remember the *Post Amerikan* published "Teotwawki, not!" which appeared way back in Vol. 27, #6, Dec. 98/Jan. 99 before the deluge of the hype really hit. The bottom line of the article was relax, nothing is really going to happen that will alter the universe. As it turned out, "Teo Twawki, not!" was right on the money. I feel sorry for all the people who tried to freak out and stress up all the people about Y2K to bolster their own agenda. The religious right who caused people to flee to the mountains now have quite a credibility gap to deal with. Likewise we should all look at the way the popular media used scare tactics on us. Magazines like the *Post Amerikan* gave you "the real deal scoop," presenting a sane, clear headed, historical view, and gave you advice on how to be ready for any crisis through making your life sustainable. Remember that when you're deciding which zine to pick up, or you're looking to place an advertisement...

If you still require a doomsday scenario to latch on to some guy named Richard W. Noone has published a book outlining his hypothesis, that due to the sun Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, little ol' Earth, and our little moon being all lined up on 5/5/2000 the south pole will have a nervous breakdown, and the Earth's axis will shift, causing zillions of tons of ice and water to rush over us like Noah's flood. Now let me go out on a limb here and say this: "NOT!" On the fifth of May the spring flowers, nut and fruit trees, and spring fever will all be blossoming. The birds will be returning from their southern vacations, and it will be time to plant your garden. What we won't be doing is renaming the Sahara Desert the Sahara Sea...

The positive aspects of the Y2K hype

Not all of the Y2K hype was negative. Great doors of knowledge have been opened to new states of social consciousness. Neighbors who have never spoken to each other rapped about collectively dealing with crisis. People relearned how to plant gardens and how to raise livestock. We all took a look at how much computers are controlling our lives. Perhaps the best thing that came out of the whole Y2K thing is that we Earthlings, on a

massive scale, have had our eyes opened to the amaranthine qualities of energy independence. Soft energy (wind, solar, and small scale hydro, etc.) equipment sales boomed, which means more soft energy research was conducted, and people are starting to understand what those funny looking panels are on their neighbors roof. Let's make sure those doors of social consciousness stay open. Let's continue to share what we know so we can all live better without burdening our planet. Let's continue to focus on long-term sustainable solutions. Teach by positive action that veggies taste better from the garden than from the store; that solar panels and wind turbines empower us, as they power up our outlets; that we can live "off the grid" and live well. Besides, all of those soft energy toys are just way cool.

In this new age, with a new salubrious social consciousness we can call this new age the "Ecozoic Millennium" where a garden in your front yard, solar panels on your roof, and wind turbines spinning away in your back yard will be seen as badges of the "we care" generation. Native Americans have a saying, "powaqqatsi" which simply means "a society in the midst of a positive change" (amongst other good things). On the day and night of new year's eve 1999/2000, P. B. S. and some of the other T.V. networks showed us what potential our planet has. With many diverse cultures unified in a powaqqatsi ecozoic millennium, it is possible to live as separate entities, yet, as a global society. We can become masters of our own destiny as we achieve sustainability via metatecture (alternative architecture), metaculture (alternative agriculture and landscaping) and soft energy leading the way into a time where hope and idealism are enflashed. We did not witness teotwawki (the end of the world as we know it) on new year's eve. We saw a magnificent example of global oneness, cooperation, tolerance, and harmony. Congratulations Earthlings. You've finally grown up.

-Nikolai Alexanderovich Zarick (162110)
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The Poetry Page

trapped under something heavy

i think that i will scream if i lose another tear
'cause it seams my brain is leaking quite slowly out my ear
and i'm certain nothing's wrong though i wouldn't say it's right
see it's dark inside my mind and i cannot reach the light

i'm tripping on the laces of someone else's shoes
and i know that i should fall but i feel i must refuse
i don't want to be the girl staring vaguely at the ground,
hair covering her face and she never make s a sound
see i've been that girl before and she got on my last nerve
she was racing towards a cliff and refused to slow or swerve
i could swear that i am stronger now
(hell i can swear till sailors blush)
so you see you've got the wrong girl, i'm too brave to turn to dust

i have lived in the reflection of a thousand sleepless days
and i cannot change direction to a spiraled down decay
i have tried to get a jump start, slammed my head against the floor
and to free myself of typecast i'll break every fucking door
and i'm not sure who i'm fighting, though i'm afraid it's only me
but i've got to go on writing or i never will be free

i'd stay trapped inside my mind with my tangents and my rants,
and i'd never leave my side so i'd never have a chance
i will kick my little ass if that's what i have to do
to find out if i'm tough enough to really follow through
i'll take myself out back and i'll really set me straight
'cause i know i have to do this i can't just leave it up to fate

i will write a good next line if it takes me several days
and i'll throw the biggest tantrum if i don't think i'll get my way

i will say that i can't do it and then i'll prove me wrong
i won't fold my hands politely 'till the last blank page is gone
and i will not be the nice one, not kind, demure and sweet
if i stutter i will fight it, i will bite and kick and scream

i'll write high class graffiti if that's all i can achieve
i'll write anything i have to to be the person i can be.

- Barbie Dockstader

tko'd by y2k

we've been y2k'd against our will
so we jump from the ledge but we cling to the sill
and nobody's sure, should we cry, fuck or pray?
we're prepared for the mayhem and still we're not safe.
we'll drink in the new year's like good boys and girls,
then brace for the chaos we expect 'round the world.
we've been grabbed by the balls by two little o's
and we talk like we're tough still nobody knows.
we've thumped holes in our bibles for the stopwatch of Christ
in case now is the time for who's naughty or nice
while society stocks up on Cheetos and beer,
as if that's gonna help if the end's finally here
and others are stockpiling weapons at home
'cause if they're gonna go out they won't go out alone.
why can't we all focus on what we have done?
all we have created for our knowledge and fun
instead we are chanting our own little curse
shut we're killing ourselves and we're driving the hearse
we're doing it all, we've designed our own hell
and we've packaged it up so it's easy to sell.
when the ball drops in times square will it mean we've matured?
or will we scream all the answers and not hear a word?
will the world smoke a cigarette in times afterglow?
will we finally quit faking and admit we don't know?
'cause when midnite ticks in i will not hold my breath
i'll just hold onto my love and know we've done our best

-Barbie Dockstader

SECRET SHADOW INK

If I were
with her, I would
write her a poem
evree day, on the
paper of my heart,
I would write
it with secret
shadow ink, and
as night did come,
I would read her
evree poem, an
she would think
the stars did sing
for her ears alone,
as I did dream
of her seashell cullard
lips brushing me evree-
where, like the ocean,
and I would ride
her gentle like the moonlight
on her waves, crashing
into the shore, an
she would sing
my name, la-
amour.

--John Firefly

Humphrey

is happy to brew
and happy to sit in his bottle
he craves to kiss
whoever comes to swallow him
he casts up
four grains of flavored dust
on any tongue
that licks his round mouth

"My neighbor Geoffrey,"
he says, "will rush
for any throat at all,
he's all packed up already,
he wants his old home empty
he swears that
he won't leave a drop behind

"And then my buddy Albert,"
here on the other side,
he keeps a sharp tooth handy
he says he'll bite any lips he sees,
he keeps a pump and a tube as well,
he means to take blood
and keep it

"Well, that's their way,"
says Humphrey
"I know my own mind."

--John Virtue & Joy

Being Careful For What I Wish For

How I wish I could be swimming to Cambodia with Spalding Grey. To be able to look up and see dancing clouds. How lovely it would be to gaze upon a treeline unobstructed by barbed wire.

How I wish not to see the smallest of life's gifts as "the other." To be imbued in yin. Instead of being, up to here, in the yang, or to not be crushed by an imposed overindulgence of male bonding that binds my soul.

How I wish to walk until I exhaust my last breath in the deepwood. To have a waterfall, after a flood, massage my flesh. To be engulfed in a symphony of crickets and night birds on a summer's dusk.

How I wish to drink mu tea with friends
and laugh
just laugh
or to smile
just honestly smile

I wish I could honestly smile.

--Nikolai Alexanderovich Zarick

For Mark Paradise



Un

Un
 Unfree, in the Land of the Free
 Today my lack of freedom leaves me feeling Un

Unwhole
 As if my soul was bathed in liquid nitrogen, and dropped
 upon a stainless steel dissecting table

Unremembered
 The days have grown long between the times when I
 touched a friend's hand.

Uncherished
 My words fall to the way side, my wishes unheeded

Unnourished
 Unforgiven

Un
 Today I am Un

--Nikolai Alexanderovich Zarick

For Pat Burke, and Chappell

BEYOND AMERICAN APPLE PIE EXISTENCE

Me an my friend
 Joe walked into
 Susie's Cafe,
 we didn't have
 no money but
 Joe had ta use
 the bathroom,
 he said to the
 lady there,
 where's your
 bathroom?
 she said I can't
 let you use it
 unless you buy
 some apple pie,
 then I could go
 an let you be,
 an then he got on
 top a chair an
 give this great
 speech, to be or
 not to be, that
 is not the question,
 (an then he pulled
 pot his dick, an
 pist an pist an pist),
 cause whether or not
 I buy a piece
 of your American
 pie, I will be
 just like I pee,
 involuntary,
 involuntary.

--John Firefly

Sarah (Version 2)

Sarah is so lucky
 her arms are so long
 she can sit on her hip
 on the lip of a gully
 and dip her hand in the creek
 though its five feet away

"I drip out my innards
 through my fingers,"
 she explains, "they flavor
 and thicken the water,
 they stick, they make an island,
 they don't wash away

"So I'm making a body
 for the nymph of the river,
 by the time I'm
 all fallen in,

"She will be as solid
 as a gelatin desert,
 hardy enough
 to break her mold,
 and dense enough
 to climb out on land

"Then she will dry
 herself on the sand
 until her skin is moister
 inside than out, like mine

"And she'll find me
 in her womb,
 and in nine months
 I will be born as her daughter.

"Too bad,"
 she reflects, "I can't
 return her the favor
 I can't make a baby
 without a man."

--John Virtue & Joy

Flapping Still

My dream
 is that one day younger
 poets will navigate
 by my words like
 stars in the night,
 for if you wanna
 be kawn in this
 world, you bettah
 go where you go
 boldly, or stay
 at home out of the
 cold, sipping cocoa,
 an dream of
 all the places you
 will never go, as
 for myself, I love
 the moth with
 burnt wings
 flapping still,
 I will leave a rythmic blazing trail,
 like that
 tattoo upon
 the air, the
 S.O.S. morse
 code of my so well.

--John Firefly

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Seeing Red

by Steve Eckardt

Kidnapping: Blame Washington, not Miami

The heartless kidnapping of six year-old Elian Gonzales is the worst attack on Cuba since the 1962 Bay of Pigs military invasion. At least that's the thinking in Cuba, according to a source close to the highest levels of revolutionary government.

But it doesn't take a well-placed source to see that it's true. After all, the mass mobilization in Cuba—huge and nearly-daily outpourings of humanity for some two months—are the greatest since the early days of the revolution itself.

Or to see that the Cubans—once again—are right.

Elian's near-torturous detention is precisely a profound attack on Cuba. It's a Mob-style leg-breaking demonstration that nothing will constrain Washington's efforts to destroy the revolutionary island—not international law, not domestic law, not treaties, not common human decency, not public opinion. . . not the life of a child.

Elian's kidnapping is Washington's raised-ante re-declaration of war against Cuba. After all, if law, decency and public opinion are meaningless (the message goes), what's left to stop the U.S. from sinking every ship bound for Cuba? Or just from dropping nukes?

It's Washington's response to the growing international—and domestic—isolation of its forty-year effort to blockade Cuba and overthrow the Cuban people's revolution and all that it represents.

Washington's bellicose, inhuman treatment of Elian also gives a calculated charge to its aging and increasingly-marginalized counter-revolutionary puppets in Miami. Washington is using their zealous protests—and their violent intimidation of most U.S. Cuban immigrants—to tar Cuba as so vile that even small children can't live there. . . even if they must be torn from their family.

Washington is also using its Miami contras to take the heat for its own demonstrative public abuse of Elian. Already it's trying to lay blame on THEM for not returning the child. And when the price for that kidnapping gets high enough—and its point well-made enough—the U.S. will drop its detention and leave its Miami allies holding the bag entirely (a la the Bay of Pigs).

Meanwhile, Washington is using both its counter-revolutionaries and its own kept media (especially television) to broadcast a 'save-the-child' hue-and-cry that gives everyone the

impression that—wherever they think Elian belongs—there must be something terrible about Cuba. Nobody can miss (or is allowed to dispute) the propaganda: 'the damned place is a Communist dictatorship.'

No wonder Washington seized Elian. He's useful for serving notice on Cuba that no weapon is off-limits if the Revolution doesn't capitulate.

He's useful for serving notice on the rest of the world—and domestic opponents of current policy—that Washington would brook no disagreements with its forty-year hard-line course.

He's useful for smearing Cuba as a totalitarian nightmare.

And it's all for free. . . politically, its Miami stooges pay for everything.

But seizing Elian has another up-side, too—it's emotionally offensive to a people which has made respect for both children and law its top priorities, priorities stuck to despite decades of punishment for embracing humanity instead of capitalism.

Especially for Cubans, Elian's endless detention is like a gang-rape of a child in front of her parents' house.

It's a provocation

Its purpose is draw Cuba into actions that will destroy the burgeoning support in the U.S.—from the governor of Illinois to the head of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce—for normalizing U.S./Cuba relations.

But the Cubans' leadership is not about to be tricked like that. Instead they're fighting back by unleashing the organized force of the Cuban people to defend Elian—and themselves—from the U.S. attack.

And it's doing so without political pre-conditions (no "Viva la Revolucion" posters required), organizing people on the simplest and broadest basis of demanding Elian's return to his family.

Everyone outside Cuba should organize on the same basis. . . and emulate that out-pouring of protesting humanity as well.

At the same time, Cuba—which is literally under the gun—is diplomatically giving the most generous interpretation to Washington's very best statements. Cuba's trying to drive wedges in to any cracks it can find in the hostile

Yankee monolith—welcoming the INS ruling for Elian's return while excoriating the contra extremists in Miami, inviting dialogue with certain Democrats while blasting certain Republicans, and engaging one branch of government while scorning another.

It's a political strategy—offering open arms to one facet of Washington and a closed fist to another—designed to force each component to either break with the other. . . or reveal themselves as a single, vile entity.

But this is one maneuver that people outside Cuba should NOT emulate. Since we don't face a crushing blockade or super-power military forces, we can—and must—reject targeting all of Washington's decoys.

It's not Miami counter-revolutionaries, Congressional Republicans, presidential candidates, south Florida courts, electoral votes, well-connected lobbyists, fat campaign contributions, or anything else that's to blame for Elian's kidnapping.

It's the government of the United States. . . period.

After all, the notion that the world's only super-power can deploy 500,000 troops to the Middle East in a few months, can flatten Yugoslavia without losing a soldier, and can send 439 Haitian refugees back to a gruesome future in less than 24 hours. . . but CAN'T obey U.S. and international law and return a six year-old to his family is beyond absurd.

No, the most powerful government in the world's history is not cowering before a band of aging, no-hope counter-revolutionaries in Miami.

That's why it's critical that all protests demanding Elian's return—and the normalization of relations with Cuba—aim squarely at Washington D.C.

We have to make the U.S. government pay the price for what it—and it alone—is doing.

Otherwise neither Elian nor Cuba will ever enjoy peace

--Steve Eckardt



Notes from the land of anti-fat

Fat 'n' Fit?

For years, size acceptance advocates have asserted that fat does not automatically equate with unfit. Now, it appears that the medical research community may be finally agreeing.

This admission came couched in a recent report presented at the annual meeting of the North American Association for the Study of Obesity, held last Fall in Charleston, South Carolina. The emphasis of the report wasn't on fatness per se but on the benefits of exercise.

"Exercise is doing a lot of good whether you lose weight or not," Dr. Steven Blair of the Cooper Institute in Dallas, Texas, told Reuters Health in an interview. At the meeting, Blair presented a review of several scientific studies that show a health benefit in people who exercise but remain fat.

According to Blair: "Overweight or even obese individuals who are fit have a much lower death rate than normal-weight individuals who are unfit." He added that "being active and fit has health benefits over and above benefits of weight loss or weight maintenance."

"There are 40 to 50 million people in this country who have sedentary jobs and do not engage in physical activity during their leisure time," he said. "These people are at high risk. You can be thin and be at very high risk of early mortality."

Blair suggested that people should adopt a lifestyle of physical activity. "People can get this benefit from other ways than dressing up in funny clothes and going someplace like the gym and sweating," he commented. Blair recommended looking for ways to accumulate short stints of activity throughout the day. "This gives people the same health benefits, more flexibility and more control," he said. "People say they don't have the time to exercise, but hardly anybody is so busy that they don't have time to take three 10-minute walks per day."

At the meeting, Dr. John Jakicic of Brown University School of Medicine in Providence, Rhode Island, described a study that looked at strategies of persuading people to exercise. One successful strategy was to encourage intermittent or short sessions of exercise.

"This works better than the traditional approach" of exercising all at one time, Jakicic said. "Instead of 40 minutes at a pop, break it up into sessions of no less than 10 minutes at a time. People do significantly more exercise in the beginning [following this strategy] than if we tell them to do it for 40 minutes."

All of this runs counter to the fitness industry's incessant promotion of exercise in the pursuit of a slimmer, trimmer you, of course, but it's a more sensible approach. Few commercial fitness centers are all that hospitable to fat adults (no matter how much they claim to be), and any moderately intelligent adult is capable of finding their own ways of being physically active - particularly if it's for short bursts of time.

Shifting the emphasis from weight loss to general health also helps to take away the discouragement many fat adults feel when an exercise regimen doesn't result in the Cher-like body that they've been promised by the health club ads.

Linking exercise to weight loss has resulted in a large segment of the population that's given up on basic exercise.

Even more interesting is the admission that "even obese" people can be in good health if they're getting regular exercise. Most of the medical and fitness community has treated obesity as an automatic death sentence. This faulty presumption has been used in the marketplace to support higher insurance rates as well as job discrimination.

It'd be great if the fitness community turned away from its futile promotion of weight loss. But I write these words in the middle of January - prime time of the year for loss ads - and the change clearly hasn't happened yet. Same scare and shame tactics, same false promises.

As for me, I'm going out walking the dog...

Milk for Health

A short blurb from the December, 1999 issue of Health magazine is worth noting here. According to a recent survey by radiologist David Sartoris of the University of California at San Diego, only 30 percent of 250 randomly chosen women age 21 to 35 had normal bone mass. Sartoris theorizes women are so afraid that dairy foods will make them gain weight that they are starving themselves into osteoporosis.

Now, I vaguely remember my twenties, and I don't think I drank a single glass of milk the entire decade (ate a lotta cheese, though). But Sartoris' study brings up several questions. How many women really feel this fear of dairy? How long does it go back? Would the survey results be different if the women chosen had lived in Wisconsin rather than California? Do fatter women surveyed have better bone mass? If a "yes" to that last, why don't we see fat women in the "Got Milk" commercials?

Oh yeah, there's still that fear thing...

-Bill Sherman



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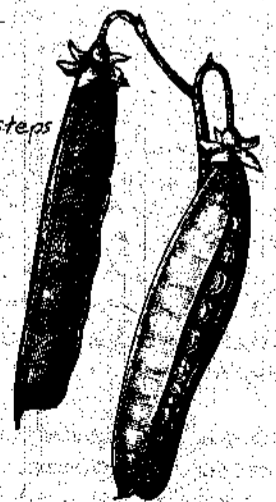
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WWJS: What would

And they come to Jerusalem, and Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast them out that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money changers, and the seats of them that sold doves;

And would not suffer that any man should carry any vessel through the temple.

And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves.

And the scribes and chief priests heard it, and sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, because all the people was astonished at his doctrine.

Mark 11: 15-17

Now that we have entered the last year of the twentieth century, and started up the road of the Third Millennium, not to mention coming off the holiday season, a little meditation on goodwill towards our fellow humans, enduring spiritual values, and the spirit of true Christianity seems in order.

That's right, *Posters*, here in the pages of the *Post Amerikan*, the newspaper whose legendary "Bethlehem Women's Clinic" (where an exasperated Mary, visibly pregnant says to Joseph, who apparently has just dissuaded her from an elective abortion, "Well, you kept insisting it wasn't yours!") and the Crucified Easter Bunny ("He died for your teeth!") covers, which gave Bloomington-Normal's fundamentalist Christian community such conniptions, I, the original lapsed (if still recovering) Catholic, need to reflect on the spirit of true Christian values.

About mid-November of last year, the *Pantagraph* did a spread in its "Beliefs & Values" section on Eastview Christian Church's new complex, just officially opened. Evidently, the congregation (and, I suspect, the Pastor's ambitions) had grown beyond its old site on Vernon Avenue, and after some intense fund-raising, their spanking-new facility threw open its doors. The amount raised? Why a modest 17.5 million. That's 17.5 million dollars, boys and girls. American dollars.

Move over Crystal Cathedral, Eastview has arrived

The new church can now seat 1600, and for those latecomers in the cheap seats, there's two giant screens flanking the pulpit, so minister, choir, and other celebrants can all be just as big and exciting as the next Hollywood action flick, and in surround-sound, too. Now if that won't make you feel close to God, what will?

Now rar be it from me to question the sincerity of all those earnest congregant families who tithed a rumored average of 400 bucks a month for the last few years. I'm sure little Susie doesn't *really* have to have braces; she can accept that chipmunk overbite as a lesson in Christian humility. Her brother Bobby won't mind being the only kid in Little League who has to bike to the game on his Big Wheel. Object lessons in rejecting the vanities of the material world. No sacrifice is too great.

That facility is quite something, as I saw when I trundled out Towanda way. In besides the church itself, there are offices, classrooms, meeting rooms. Sensible—you have to have appropriate meeting places for youth groups, Sunday School, the annual Rummage Sale. Ministers and church staff have to eat, too, and the building won't clean itself. Electric bills and heating costs have to be paid. Okay, fair enough. Asking congregants to chip in for the coffee and donuts in the social hall after services seems reasonable. But the thing that rots my socks, the thing that absolutely appalls my apostate soul, is the Chesapeake Bagel Bakery Franchise in the church lobby.

I admit my knowledge of the Bible is shaky. (Ahh, the ironies of a Catholic education—I can recite the Baltimore Catechism in my sleep, but Catholics have not, historically anyway, been big on Bible study.) Nevertheless, I seem to recall an instructive little anecdote about Jesus going ballistic when he encountered some money-changers and dove-sellers defiling the Temple of The Lord with filthy lucre and trade.

All that money, people, \$17.5 million. Think of what even half of that could do by way of the local community centers, job-training, literacy programs, soup kitchens, educational and cultural enrichment. We have them here, of course, for the underclass, the poor, the kids caught between hopelessness and gang life, the mentally afflicted and many churches of a variety of denominations contribute to Clare House, the Mission and Neville House. Eastview does too, I'm sure, but somehow I doubt the amount raised would be more than the tiniest fraction of the that staggering sum. Community demand stretches those services thin, thin, thin as a bureaucrat's imagination.

And a little child shall lead them

Charity, from the Latin *caritas*—love of others. Charity is not just a check to the United Way or a quarter in the Salvation Army kettle. Charity is compassion, friendship, connection with others—all that corny Girl Scout/Boy Scout stuff about visiting shut-ins, a kind word to a stranger in distress, community service, checking on the crabby old guy on the first floor, maybe inviting him up for dinner when you'd rather just kick it with your pals over a pizza and a few beers.

Over Christmas, while visiting my family in Cleveland, I got a real lesson in Christian charity, from my nephew, David. My students can tell you many a David story, for, when germane to class discussion (and to remind them that even though I am the teacher, I am still as human as they are), I tell them about David—the good, the kind, the generous, the righteous little boy in the body of a twenty-seven year old man.

David is retarded, though highly functional—he has a job, friends, and he shares a house with several other young men like himself (through the tutelage of a wonderful organization, On My Own, which helps handicapped adults lead productive lives, providing them with meaningful work, helping them gain social skills, and guidance in day-to-day living in the "real world." It's based in Columbus, Ohio, where David lives), but what he lacks in intellectual resources he makes up for in spiritual enlightenment.

A few David anecdotes—just to give context and set the proper tone.



Jesus say?

God looks after fools and little children --Hebrew proverb

David attended high school until he was twenty-one, a common practice these days with highly functional retarded kids. One day, about eight years ago, David walked into the boys' room, to come across a kid dealing coke. Gangs had made it into David's high school, and he knew even then that gangs are dangerous, and gang-bangers not to be crossed. Nonetheless, even knowing that his coke-dealing classmate was plugged, David did not hesitate to snatch the coke out of his hand, flush it down the toilet, and admonish him: "You could get into a lot of trouble for this, you know!"

I imagine the other boy regarded David's gesture as well-meaning if misguided, and did nothing untoward because he knew David wouldn't rat him out. Still, it takes your breath away, or at least it did mine, not to mention my incarcerated students, when I told them that one.

A few years later, David, who was then working second shift on an office cleaning crew, was at the stop waiting for his bus, about 2:00 p.m. Several other people were there, but when some guy ran by, snatching a woman's purse, David was the only one to act. Shouting --and I quote-- "Stop, thief!"--David pursued the purse-snatcher, caught him (all those years of running track in Special Olympics paid off), and held him. His action apparently shamed several other men into helping Dave hang on to the guy and flag down a patrol car. Maybe they realized how lame it would look if the police showed up to find only this poor retarded guy doing the right thing.

An Imitation of Christ even an apostate must praise

When David encounters homeless panhandlers, he gives them what he has in his pockets: "If I have fifty cents, I give them fifty cents; if I have five dollars, I give them five dollars. I'll get more [meaning his weekly paycheck] next week."

Last August, he was taking a walk in his neighborhood when he met a young woman--seventeen, eighteen, nineteen years old--bedraggled, dazed, and begging for food. She was also pregnant, though only just beginning to show. David went over to talk to her--he related this story to us later, gesturing with his hands as he talks in his halting way (he has significant speech communication problems) to clarify he asked her if she'd seen a doctor for the baby. He found out that her boyfriend had thrown her out of their apartment after discovering her pregnancy, that she had no money, no family or friends who could or would help her, no skills, had been sleeping in doorways, and had had nothing to eat for four days.

He led her to a nearby bench, told her to sit down, went across the street to Burger King, bought her a meal, and sat with her while she ate it. Then, telling her his name and that he would pray for her, he gave her all the money he had remaining, hugged her, and left.

The details--where God dwells

At Thanksgiving, he gave us an update. On My Own sponsors regular social activities for its members, and they had gone as a mixed group to a restaurant for a meal, and then a spin on the dance floor. This young woman happened to be at the same restaurant with another party when On My Own trouped in for its mixer. She recognized David, came over to him, gave him his money back (including the price of the Burger King meal), chatting with him for a few minutes.

After David had left her that August afternoon, a man approached her. Seems he'd been watching this little drama as it unfolded. Turns out he's an attorney, and after hearing her story, he got her a job in his firm--filing and copying, I suppose--helped her get whatever state benefits she's entitled to for herself and the baby, made sure she got adequate maternity leave and decent infant care after she came back to work so she could keep the job.

Her baby was a boy, so she named him David. I haven't told my students this last David story, because when I get to that final detail about David's namesake, my voice always breaks. After all, I have a reputation to maintain.

House of prayer or den of thieves? You make the call

Though I am no Christian, and my own religious beliefs vague, to say the least, I do believe in good and evil, charity and compassion, justice and decency. Frail human though I am, I can say without presumption and complete confidence that if Jesus were to walk in Eastview's church lobby, he would begin by hurling the cappuccino machine through a window, overturning the tables, chasing the staff out into the parking lot, and delaying services.

Yet if Jesus were to encounter David, and hear this last story, he would bring him before his apostles; he would take him before the throngs who witnessed the Sermon the Mount; he would say:

"This man, this *man*, though he may be simple like a child, knows in his heart and shows through his actions everything I have to teach you. The wisest among you can learn from his example. You will find none better. He is my true disciple."

--Dr. Attitude



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News from

We really don't like to whine, but...

In November, McLean County Voice for Choice held a community meeting at the Bloomington Public Library to discuss the future of reproductive rights in McLean County, in Illinois, and in the United States.

This meeting was especially important, given we're headed into a major election year, one in which reproductive freedom WILL be an issue.

Organizers were greatly disappointed that precious few from the McLean County pro-choice community attended. Our detractors might say that's because they outnumber us. Hardly. We say that perhaps:

1. We think we have a mostly pro-choice legislature in the Illinois and Federal governments. WRONG.
2. We think since we elected a pro-choice president several years ago, and the Supreme Court is looking pretty good, reproductive rights are secure. WRONG.
3. Roe v. Wade has been law for so long now, surely they'd never repeal or "gut" it. WRONG, WRONG, WRONG.
4. Some of us say, "I'm pro-choice, but...I just don't have the time to get involved...I just don't have the courage to confront the issue...I just don't want to make any trouble...There will always be those 'activist' types who will fight these battles instead of me..."

For those of you who support the pro-choice movement in any way—be it with your labor, your money, your time, or your voice speaking out above those who seek to take away our reproductive freedom...THANK YOU.

And for those of you who lend a supportive spirit—THANK YOU also.

We have to tell you that a small tenacious, loyal, and increasingly older and wearier group of activists in the Bloomington/Normal community need your help. We need your energy, your fresh ideas, your donations of time and talent. We need your help in educating, informing and gaining support from your friends and neighbors. We need to hear you tell legislators you won't stand for any chipping away or outright undoing of laws that protect our rights to control our own bodies.

McLean County Voice for Choice meetings are held at 7 p.m. the 1st and 3rd Tuesday each month at the Connections Community Center at 313 N. Main, downtown Bloomington. (across from the Bistro.) Your comments, ideas, donations or other correspondence can be sent to P.O. Box 905, Bloomington, IL, 61702-0905. Your letters to the editor of our local paper can be sent to the Pantagraph, Letters to the Editor, 301 W. Washington St., Bloomington, IL 61702-2907. Your messages to legislators can be sent online at <http://www.house.gov/writerep>.

NARAL challenges Bush: give young women all the facts

In a challenge to George W. Bush to be honest with America that as President he wants to end legal abortion, and to be honest with young Texan women about their reproductive options, Kate Michelman, president of the National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League (NARAL), and Kea McLaughlin Executive Director of the Texas Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League (TARAL), urged Bush and Texas officials to revise materials prepared to provide information to pregnant minors about their rights.

The Texas Department of Health conducted a hearing on the content of state-mandated materials informing pregnant minors of their rights under the state's new parental notification law. According to NARAL, the materials include medically-inaccurate information and don't outline all options available to minors.

"Young women dealing with a crisis pregnancy already face a world filled with fear and uncertainty," said McLaughlin. "We must not add to their apprehension by providing them with false information about the choice that lies before them. They must be able to rely on accurate answers and unbiased counsel in their time of need."

"We are concerned that [Texas] Health Commissioner Archer, who has a documented history of opposition to reproductive rights, is representative of the people Bush would appoint if elected President," said Michelman. "George W. Bush is committed to overturning Roe v. Wade and will have an opportunity to do so if he is elected President through appointments to the U.S. Supreme Court."

—Source: National Abortion Rights Action League.

Presidential candidates' positions

Pro-Choice Al Gore

- As a Senator, voted 41 out of 48 times protecting the right to choose, with seven abstentions.
- Co-sponsored the Freedom of Choice Act which would have codified Roe v. Wade into law.
- Opposes laws requiring parental consent before a minor can obtain family planning services.
- Opposed legislation preventing servicewomen and their dependents from obtaining privately funded abortions at overseas military hospitals.

Bill Bradley

- Voted 103 out of 106 times, with two abstentions, to protect the right to choose.
- Unequivocally supports a woman's right to choose.
- Co-sponsored the Freedom of Choice Act which would have codified Roe v. Wade into law.
- Opposed the Hatch amendment which would

Rape Crisis Center of McLean County

We're a non-profit volunteer group whose main purpose is to offer assistance and support to victims of sexual assault and their friends and families.

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Voice for Choice

have allowed states to restrict or outlaw abortion.

- Opposed legislation that would have prevented federal employees from choosing health insurance plans that cover abortion even in cases of rape, incest or life endangerment of the woman.

Anti-Choice

George W. Bush

- Signed 18 anti-choice provisions into law as Governor.
- Supports a constitutional amendment to ban abortion.
- Opposes abortion except in cases of rape, incest or when the woman's life is endangered.
- Opposes protecting women and doctors from violence at reproductive health clinics and facilities.
- Supports laws requiring parental consent before a minor can obtain an abortion.
- Would deny doctors the right to determine the safest medical procedures for their patients, even when the woman's health is at risk.
- Supports unnecessary waiting periods before a woman can obtain an abortion.

John McCain

- As a Senator, voted 82 out of 86 times to restrict a woman's right to choose.
- Voted against protecting women and doctors from violence at reproductive health clinics and facilities.
- Supports laws requiring parental notification before a minor can obtain reproductive health services.
- Voted to deny doctors the right to determine the safest medical procedure for their patients, even when the woman's health is at risk.

Dan Quayle

- As a Senator, voted 32 out of 41 times (with 6 abstentions) to restrict a woman's right to choose.
- Supports a constitutional amendment to ban abortion.
- Supports allowing Congress and individual states the right to prohibit or restrict abortions.
- Supports unnecessary waiting periods before a woman can obtain an abortion.

- Opposes abortion even when the pregnancy is a result of rape.
- Supports laws requiring parental consent before a minor can obtain an abortion.

Pat Buchanan

- Supports a ban on abortion without exceptions for life or health of the woman.
- Would appoint Supreme Court justices who will overturn Roe v. Wade.

Gary Bauer

- Unequivocally opposes a woman's right to choose.
- Supports a constitutional amendment to ban abortion.
- Supports laws requiring parental notification before a minor can obtain contraceptives or an abortion.

- Supports a "fetal personhood" law.
- Would deny doctors the right to determine the safest medical procedures for patients, even when a woman's health is at stake.
- Would deny access to family planning services to women who rely on the federal government for their health care.

Steve Forbes

- Supports a constitutional amendment to ban abortion.
- Opposes abortion except in cases of rape, incest or to protect the life of the mother.
- Supports laws requiring parental consent before a minor can obtain an abortion.
- Would deny doctors the right to determine the safest medical procedures for their patients, even when the woman's health is at risk.

John Kasich

- As a Congressman, voted 123 out of 124 times to restrict a woman's right to choose.
- Voted to deny doctors the right to determine the safest medical procedure for their patients, even when the woman's health is at risk.
- Supports laws requiring parental notification before a minor can receive contraception.
- Voted against protecting women and doctors from violence at reproductive health clinics and facilities.
- Opposes testing development, or approval for medical alternatives to surgical abortion, such as mifepristone formerly known as RU-486.

- Opposes equitable prescription coverage for the full range of FDA-approved contraceptives as part of the Federal Employee Health Benefits Plan.

Bob Smith

- As a Senator, voted 84 out of 84 times to restrict a woman's right to choose.
- Supports a constitutional amendment to ban abortion.
- Voted against protecting women and doctors from violence at reproductive health clinics and facilities.
- Voted to deny doctors the right to determine the safest medical procedure for their patients, even when the woman's health is at risk.

Lamar Alexander

- Supports laws giving states power to restrict access to abortion.
- Supports laws providing state authority to restrict abortion even in cases of rape.
- Supports unnecessary waiting periods before a woman can obtain an abortion.
- Supports laws requiring parental consent before a minor can obtain an abortion.

Note: Some of these candidates may have dropped from the race but we left them in for added perspective.



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Reviews, reviews,

Mind Candy

Welcome Post Amerikans to the ecozoic millennium where, everything old is new again, where the new will be old real quick and where even in Bloomington we'll make the 20th century look like the dark ages, that is, if we don't destroy our fragile planet. Mind Candy will continue to grace the pages of *Post Amerikan* in the new millennium to bring your gray matter some stimulation. Some will be salubrious; some will be enriching; some will be radical; some will be totally useless, yet totally fun. Okay, here we go again... Take a sip from your beverage and sit back.

Imagine that you're standing in front of an audience being honored for the finding of life on another planet, perhaps by some little green off-planet folks. Not up to interstellar travel you say? How about clicking on to "setiathome.ss/berkeley.edu" and going to sleep for the night. There are over a million folks doing just that. Remember Seti, the broodingnagian electronic ear that searches the celestial body for some alien chatter? Well, Seti is asking for your help by having those of you with personal converters download a chunk of data. Whilst you're not using your p. c. this chunk o' data is picked through and if your p. c. is the lucky one that sifts out some signal from a mystery planet you get your 15 minutes of fame. The downloaded program also makes a cool screen saver. It's one of the little things you can do to save the planet without wearing an "S" on your chest.

Okay, now for zines: Five of them this time around, a mish mosh of fun stuff. All are collectibles, and are better than Pokemon cards for trading at your fave coffee house.

Doris (c/o Cindy, P.O. Box 1734, Asheville, NC 28802, USA, \$1.50 by mail) The format is eclectic, fragmented pieces of thought that seem to strike their own harmony. Miro-like drawings float through much of the text adding an edge to the punchline-less stories that range from incest, to coming of age in a world that does not fit, to curing hiccups involving a whole circus worth of people who weave in and out of Cindy's life. When you hit the last page you'll say, "No, no, wait!" kind-a like ya do when you're watching a good show on the tube and at the crescendo "to be continued" flashes up on the screen. Still, Cindy seems to be somebody you'll say "c'mon let's go play" to.

Etidorpha (P.M.B. 170, 40 East Main Street, Newark, DE, USA -2 stamps + 2 bucks + 2 IRC's, is that the best price or what?) From the acuminous mind of the amaranthine Fran, who blesses us with Lilly on the Beach comes a little pocket sized gem called Etidorpha. This little teaser is laced with deeply personal, heartfelt stories that reminded me of sitting up all night with a dear

friend, to speak of the higher aspects of life: spirituality, love death... and the music of the spheres... or perhaps to spin some fables. Reading Fran's work and seeing her current artwork or photos is always rewarding. Fran is emerging like a phoenix from the ashes of our askewed society. Whatever her destination is, I'm sure it will be quite amazing. I had the pleasure to read three issues of Etidorpha and I enjoyed each issue, especially issue #1. I failed to connect the dots to at least one story, but all in all, I loved Etidorpha and I highly recommend anything that Fran shares of herself with the universe.

Mommy and I are One (P.O. Box 643, Allston, MA, 02134, USA, \$4.95, write the for availability of back issues and current issues) I was puzzled how I would write a review for Mommy and I are One because the only issue I read was solely about Michael Jackson. Wait! Before you stop reading, it was brilliant. Especially the interviews with such notables as: The Mighty, Mighty Bosstones, Megadeath, and Luscious Jackson to name a few. Many of these pop icons were disarmed when asked how they felt about M. J., which translated very well into the articles, and were a scream. Mommy and I are One is put out by Jessica Hundley with some help of her friends. If the other issues are half as funny and as well put together as the M.J. issue, I'd say rob your piggy bank and scoop them up pronto.

Cement Squeeze (P.O. Box 2112, Tempe, AZ 85280-2112, USA) Rich with texture is this zine from the desert. Each issue starts with a quote from Edward Abbey, "It's better to write the truth for a small audience than tell lies for a big one." A better quote for Cement Squeeze has not been uttered. The graphics are fun, the poetry is insightful and well composed and the articles are diverse and thirst quenching. Articles range from politics (left to center), to medical usage of marijuana, to civil disobedience, human cloning, the Zuni astronauts, green-isms, prison abuse and there was a heart wrenching listing of victims (no matter what side of the coin you're on) of the Branch Davidian in Waco, TX by name, age, race, and country of origin. The premier issue was put out in Oct. '94, which is ancient in the zine world. It's only six bucks a year (quarterly); a steal that Abbie Hoffman would sanction.

The Realist (P.O. Box 1230 Venice, CA 90294) Let me end this edition of Mind Candy with a soft swan song. By the time you're reading this review, one of the best zines that has ever been created will no longer be producing new issues. I'm alerting all of you in Bloomington of this so you'll write The Realist and grab up as many of the back issues as possible. The zine publishers

of the world should lower their proverbial flags to half mast in tribute to The Realist's slumber.

Paul Krassner, of "the Chicago eight" fame, and one of the who's who of the beat generation, and penultimate counter-culturist sculpted this golden, yet tiny zine. I lapped up stories about the last days of Anita Hoffman (Abbie's wife); the tabloidization of America; a drug bust on Ken Kesey's pad; a bunch of conspiracy stuff; along with regular, but hardly ordinary, features like "Court Jester," a tossed salad of juicy tidbits; "Media Freak," a krassnerian media watch; and, and, and lots of stuff that you'll wonder if it came from a parallel universe. Farewell to one of the best. I'll be hopeful that I can cuddle up with all of the back issues, and that Paul Krassner lays some more goodies on us in the future.

Well Post Amerikans, that's all I have for this edition of Mind Candy. I hope you dig the stuff offered this time around - if not shoot me! Mind Candy is always looking for stuff to review. Send your zines, photos, ideas, comments, love letters and questions to me at:

Nikolai Zarick #162110
SB-538, C.C.I.
900 Highland Ave.
Cheshire, CT 06410-1698

Mind Candy's Top 25 Broadcast TV Shows of the 20th Century

- 1) Twin Peaks
- 2) The Prisoner
- 3) Northern Exposure
- 4) Baghdad Cafe
- 5) Pee Wee's Playhouse
- 6) The Soupy Sales Show
- 7) The X-Files
- 8) Cracker
- 9) Nothing Sacred
- 10) Vengeance Unlimited
- 11) Action
- 12) Dangerous Minds
- 13) My So Called Life
- 14) Monty Python's Flying Circus
- 15) Kids-In The Hall
- 16) Fridays
- 17) Alley McBeal
- 18) Homicide: Life On The Street
- 19) Cupid
- 20) The Twilight Zone
- 21) The Outer Limits (old and new)
- 22) Nowhere Man
- 23) American Gothic
- 24) Star Trek: The Next Generation, D. S. H., Voyager
- 25) P. B. S. (nearly everything: Mystery, Masterpiece Theatre, Nova, Nature, Frontline, This Old House, . . .)

If I'm wrong shoot me!

--by Nikolai Zarick



reviews

Ravenswood: The Steelworkers Victory and the Revival of American Labor

by Tom Juravich and Kate Bronfenbrenner
Cornell University Press, ISBN 0-8014-3633-8

Reviewed by Mike Matejka

"One day longer" - was the motto for locked-out steelworkers in the early 90s at the Ravenswood aluminum plant in West Virginia.

The story of that struggle and the innovative tactics that turned what looked like defeat into victory is chronicled in a new book *Ravenswood*, by Tom Juravich and Kate Bronfenbrenner.

The 1980s were a dismal decade for labor. After President Reagan fired the Air Traffic Controllers in 1981, it seemed every union battle was a defeat. Phelps-Dodge copper, Eastern Airlines, Hormel meatpacking, the list seemed endless. In Central Illinois in the 1990s, workers at Caterpillar, Firestone, and A.E. Staley fought bitter defensive battles to retain basic job rights.

At first glance it seemed Ravenswood would join that roll-call of fallen flags. The Steelworkers' local in that tiny West Virginia town was fighting an internationally financed corporation that seemed oblivious to their efforts. Aluminum is not a product consumers buy directly, so a boycott or other traditional campaign would be difficult.

The story was typical. A long established plant owned by Kaiser Aluminum was sold to an start-up firm that was debt over-burdened. The new owner, Ravenswood Aluminum Corp. (RAC), immediately began cost-cutting, which included poorer plant safety.

When contract negotiations broke down the union was locked-out on Oct. 31, 1990. The first reaction was traditional-picket lines to try and keep strikebreakers out and support for locked-out workers and their families.

This helped build unity and a militant spirit, but the workers were still isolated. Users of Ravenswood products, like Stroh's and Old Milwaukee, were pressured to quit using Ravenswood's product. Corporate research revealed some startling facts which soon had West Virginia steelworkers flying to Europe, tracking down a corporate outlaw.

One of RAC's principal holders was Mark Rich, an American living in Switzerland because there was a \$750,000 reward in the U.S. for his arrest. Rich was wanted for tax fraud, racketeering and conspiracy. Plus "trading with the enemy," having sold grain to the Soviets during the 1979-80 embargo and shipping oil to South Africa during the international boycott of this nation.

AFL-CIO and Steelworker union staff, along with rank and file members, began to fly to Europe, building alliances with European trade unionists and smoking out the corporate outlaw whose money was invested in RAC.

Even with strike breakers in the plant, the union local continued to monitor in-plant conditions, reporting OSHA and environmental dangers, further harming the company's reputation and pocketbook.

The union's documentation of Rich's record helped stall his purchase of a Slovak aluminum smelter. Rich had been close to deposed Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceausecau. The Steelworkers cultivation of international contacts paid off on February 4, 1992, when 20,000 Romanian workers protest Rich's presence in their country and cheered for the American steelworkers.

With international pressure mounting, a militant presence at the plant gate and with

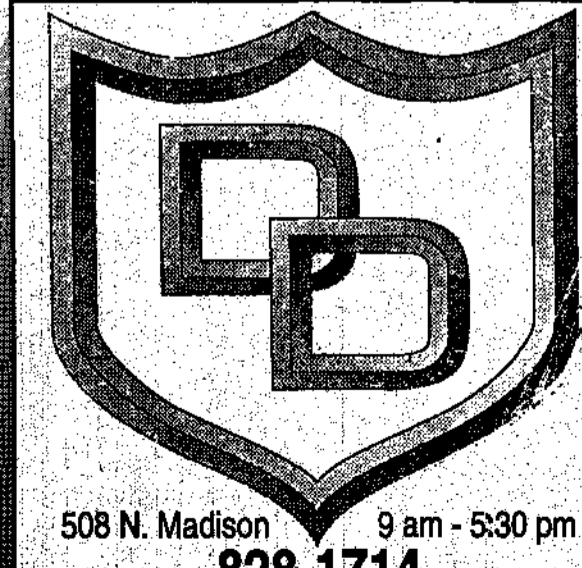
attention state and federal government investigations of RAC, negotiations finally resumed. On June 29, 1992, Steelworkers Local 5668 member returned to work with a union contract.

This well-written and easy-to-read book is significant. First, it captures the voices and the spirit of local union members facing an uphill battle. Secondly, it tracks the thorough research needed to corner corporate power. Finally, it shows workers cultivating global allies to win in an age of international capital. Through combining these three, the Steelworkers maintained their contract and conditions at Ravenswood.

These same lessons were used by the Steelworkers to salvage a contract at Firestone and by the Teamsters at UPS. Significantly, the Teamsters began their research and their union building two years before their contract expiration, not waiting for the crisis to react.

Global capital rules today; thanks to Ravenswood, workers can learn sophisticated tactics to face distant owners. This book is a key tool for a revived and effective labor movement and shows that all the components outlined combine to make effective union campaigns.

--McLean & Livingston Counties Labor News



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reviews cont.

Queer interest films

Okay, many of these movies probably will never get to our neighborhood cineplexes, but chances are almost all of them will play in the Chicago or St. Louis areas. You also might be able to catch a few of them at the New Art Theatre in Champaign or the Normal Theater.

If all else fails, remember that all of these films will come out on video sooner or later. In Bloomington/Normal, The Movie Fan Video Store consistently stocks gbt-friendly films that usually can't be found at other venues.

Wallowitch & Ross: This Moment

Release date: 12-99

Documentary portrait of New York cabaret performers John Wallowitch and Bertram Ross, whose professional and romantic relationship spans three decades.

Anna and the King

Release date: 12-99

Starring Jodie Foster and Chow Yun-Fat—and we wouldn't miss this one for the world.

Creature

Release date: 1-2000

Paris Patton's documentary about transgendered Stacy Dean explores her life—going back to her childhood in North Carolina, and her life in Los Angeles today.

Eye of the Beholder

Release date: 1-2000

Hmmm...k.d. lang, Ewan MacGregor, Jason Priestley, and Ashley Judd in a film by the director of Pricilla!

The Big Tease

Release date: 1-2000

A gay Glaswegian hairdresser journeys from Scotland all the way to Hollywood with hopes of winning the World Freestyle Hairdressing Championship. Yes, it's a comedy.

Emporte-Moi (Set Me Free)

Release date: 2-2000

From the director of Anne Trister: Poignant coming of age tale of a young girl and her relationships with her family, her teacher, and her female classmate.

Gendernauts

Release date: 2-2000

The filmmaker's trip to San Francisco turns up a number of gender-defying individuals, each with a fascinating personal story to share. Profiles include Annie Annie Sprinkle, Susan Stryker, Texas Tomboy, and Jordy Jones.

But I'm a Cheerleader

Release date: Spring 2000

The story of a girl (Natasha Lyonne) sent to homosexual "rehab" by her parents. Also starring Clea DuVall, Cathy Moriarty, RuPaul, Bud Cort, and Mink Stole.

Love's Labour's Lost

Release date: Spring 2000

Shakespeare's comedy updated to a 1930s musical. Starring Nathan Lane.

X-Men

Release date: 6-2000

Sir Ian McKellan and Patrick Stewart in a film by Bryan Singer. How gay is that?

The Next Best Thing

Release date: Summer 2000

The fag hag movie to end all fag hag movies—starring Madonna and Rupert Everett.

—List Courtesy of PlanetOut.com

The Normal Theater (Beyond Normal Films)

209 N. Street

Normal, IL 61761

(309) 454-9722

<http://www.cyberianet.com/normal.htm>

New Art Theatre

126 W. Church Street

Champaign, IL

(217) 351-7368

<http://www.shout.net/~newart/newArt.html>

The Movie Fan

401 N. Veterans Parkway

(Cub Foods Plaza)

Bloomington, IL 61704

(309) 662-5723

Mentor and Muse

Five painters will premier in the inaugural exhibition entitled "Mentor and Muse" at the new river front Foster Art Center location of the Peoria Art Guild. The exhibition will run through Saturday, February 19, 2000.

This exhibit showcases five women painters/printmakers who are exhibiting together for the first time. Barbara Bolser, Cynthia Kukla, Davida Schulman, Mary Stamberger, and Sigrid Wonsil have these important characteristics in common:

- They all paint from a life of deep experiences that are openly revealed in their work.
- They are all Illinois residents and natives who live in different parts of the state.
- Four of these women all had the courage to return to art on the graduate level after raising families. They all received their Master of Fine Art Degrees from Illinois State University where they encountered the woman who would become their mentor, Cynthia Kukla.

Cynthia Kukla uses images and narration to explore mythology and how it lives in contemporary life by exploring Egyptian and other ancient sources.

Sigrid Wonsil uses image and narration to document aging. Sigrid is a registered nurse

whose work depicts scenes in nursing homes that, especially as life ends, most of us do not have the opportunity to witness and honor.

Davida Schulman uses image and narration to document contemporary perceptions of women. Davida has courageously used searingly honest self-portraits to deconstruct the conventions of female beauty.

Mary Stamberger and Barbara Bolser use abstracted images for their unique narrations that reveal and conceal elements of personal autobiography.

In her daring paintings, Mary Stamberger masterfully morphs common household objects to create an ironic-iconic world that we have all experienced emotionally.

Barbara Bolser's paintings are a rendering of childhood landscapes drawn from memory but mediated by adult understanding. Her paintings examine some of the mythologies of that childhood.

"Mentor and Muse" will appear at the Peoria's Foster Art Center, 203 Harrison Street.

For more information, contact John Heintzman, Exhibitions Committee or Rob Watson, Curator at 309-637-2787.



Cynthia Kukla, *Geneva Series: First Cause Paintings I*, inks and casein on paper



Books I read

Greentown: Murder and mystery in Greenwich, America's wealthiest community.
Timothy Dumas

Murder in Greenwich: Who killed Martha Moxley?
Mark Fuhrman

Certain words come to mind when you mention the Kennedy family. During my mother's generation the prevailing words were "Camelot" and "assassination." Images of these words defined a generation. What a difference 30 years makes. Today, mention the word Kennedy to anyone under forty and images of date rape, alcoholism and irresponsible behavior rule.

In 1975, when the country was still enamored with the Kennedy clan, a 15 year-old Greenwich, Connecticut teenager was brutally beaten to death within 100 feet of her front door.

The main suspects - you guessed it, were Kennedys. Teenagers Tommy & Michael Skakel were not blood Kennedys, (they are nephews of Ethel Skakel Kennedy, ie. Bobby Kennedy) but Kennedys nonetheless, for they enjoyed all the privileges that were associated with the name.

Two books that were recently published tell the story of Martha's "unsolved" murder and the cover-ups and silence that hindered its investigation from the beginning and continue to this day.

Although both books describe the murder, motive and suspects, Mark Fuhrman's investigation is more impressive and thorough. Using diagrams and autopsy reports, the reader is left without question who killed Martha. The only question left to ponder is how can the killer(s) be brought to justice when no one is willing to cooperate and when much of the 25 year old evidence is missing or contaminated.

Becoming Anna: The autobiography of a sixteen-year-old.

Anna Michener

"My grandmother says I destroyed my mother before I was even born." These are the first words in Anna Michener's memoir of her painful childhood in which she suffered physical and emotional abuse by her unstable parents and grandmother.

One of those privileges of course is committing crimes and getting away with them. And that is just what one of them did in this murderous rage attack that was sexually based. Allegedly, Martha turned away one boy's advances (either Tommy or Michael's) so he took a golf club and bashed her head in. After seeing she was still alive, he dragged her body across the road (face down) and jammed the broken shaft of the club through her neck. Nice boys, those Skakels.

Anna became the scapegoat for her family's many problems and was institutionalized as a result.

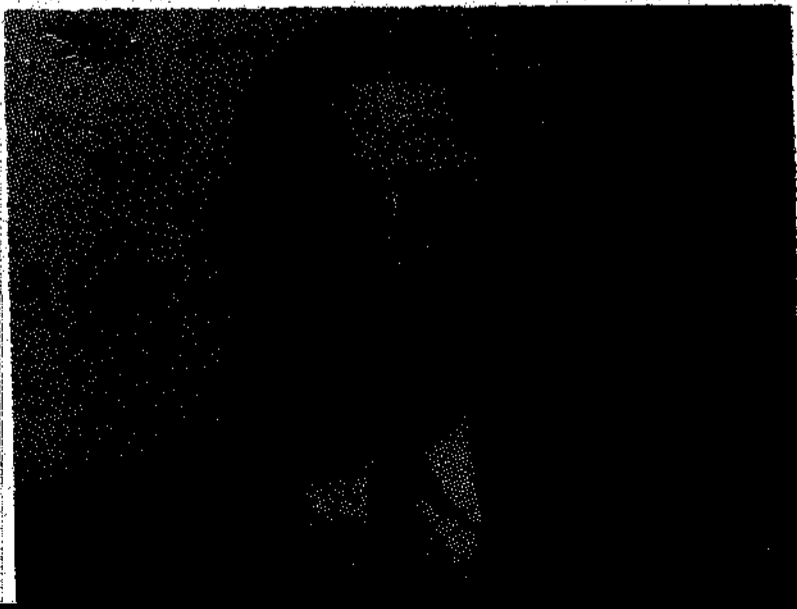
"Becoming Anna," is a poignant story of a young vulnerable child who was thrown into juvenile mental health wards on the insistence of a family who would rather get rid of her than to face their own problems.

Anna takes us into the world of psych wards, where the neglect, abuse and a lack of compassion is sometimes much greater than many of the homes that these children came from. This is a harrowing, forthright account of a sixteen-year-old girl who was eventually saved because someone took the time to listen and most importantly - believe her story.

-towandal

What?

The Post Amerikan needs money? James, get my checkbook!



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Chris Zimmerly's new book first-rate

I had the pleasure of seeing Chris Zimmerly read a couple of years ago at Life's Little Perks in Normal and I have to say he definitely caught my attention with not only his reading style, but his poetry as well. He read with such intensity and gravity, like his poetry, that he left an impression on me I will never forget.

His book Get In The Mother Lovin' Car is filled with poems and prose, some of which you may have read in past issues of the Post Amerikan, that will catch your attention with their depth and artistry. The poems subjects range from the battle at the Alamo to the perspective of an aborted fetus. In the stories you can read a Twilight Zone-like story about clocks that tick "backasswards" or a beautifully detailed story about a day in the life of an old man. There are photographs too for visual stimulation that are very pleasing to look at.

One of the things I liked about Get In The Mother Lovin' Car was the way some of the words were printed in the poems to emphasize the feelings or the meaning of the poem. In "Rain on Stttttttering Rain Cloud," a poem about a boy who was molested by his priest, the words are printed as the boy talks:

"Nnnnnnnus m-m-made mmmme sttttttutter
P-PPriest, he ffffffelt mme up
Nuns made me stutter
The ppappppriest felt me up
Thththey ttttold mme I wwwwas
go-go going straight to Hell"

An interesting thing about this book is how the words are printed to show emotion. Notice how the fourth line is bold (In the poem it is in a different type also.) to show the pain and anger that the boy feels about being "felt up" by the priest. This sort of thing is found throughout the book and adds a nice touch to this already original poetry.

Chris's work is original. At first I thought it was kind of beat-like; he seems to be influenced by Jack Kerouac. But his noticeable style makes all the difference between beat and originality.

The photographs, accompanying many of the poems and the stories, portray the theme of the work in a way that is as intriguing as the work itself. In the poem "2 Snowfolks In The Sun," a poem about male and female "snowfolks" melting, there is a photo of a statue on the front of a large church. With that piece of art you get the feeling that the dying snow couple are going to make it to heaven. Around some of the other poems and stories there are photographs of traffic jams, birth control pills, and birds to name a few. Imagine what kind of themes they are portraying.

There are other photographs in Get In The Mother Lovin' Car that were taken for their artistic quality. By themselves they stand out and are very appealing. They do not seem to be there to accent the poems or stories, though they could.

In Chris's stories you really get a feel for the characters by their dialogue and the way they are described. The stories are also vividly detailed to leave you with a sense of "being there." This is an example that is from "Mr Han Visits The Flower Pot." (The story about the day in the life of an old man.):

"The glass door rings chimes as Mister Han enters the Flower Pot. Aroma ripe flowers tickle his long nose like a caterpillar stretching in a new cocoon."

You can almost smell the "aroma ripe flowers." And the way he used the caterpillar stretching to describe the aroma of the flowers tickling his nose was very creative.

The stories, like the poems, also have the print and type, which is only on the dialogue, to give you an idea of what the characters are like in a different way than just reading about them. This is an example from "Turn." (The story about the clocks that tick "backasswards."):

"It'll show off that bracelet you got me, Robbie," Davis justified.

In italics the dialogue makes Davis, who happens to be a woman, seem like a pretty, sensitive sort of person. There are other

examples of different kinds of print and type that portray characters' attributes in Get In The Mother Lovin' Car. All of the stories are very interesting and worth reading.

If you've never read any of Chris Zimmerly's work, I highly recommend it. He is a talented artist whose work is very impressive.

If you would like to own a copy of Get In The Mother Lovin' Car send \$15 (not including postage) to Z'Revolutionary Evolutionaries, P.O. Box 540907 Dallas, TX 75354 or call toll free (877-726-7222).

--David Hall

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

COLONEL STONEY LECTURES THE KIDS--

Boys, don't step on your own dick.
Boys, wear a condom because
HPV is karmatic luggage.

COLONEL STONEY LECTURES THE KIDS--

Boys, don't step on your own dick.
Boys, wear a condom because
Herpes is a hitchhiker that won't get out of the car.

COLONEL STONEY LECTURES THE KIDS--

Boys, don't step on your own dick.
Boys, wear a condom because
AIDS is a 1st Class Ticket on the Titanic.

COLONEL STONEY LECTURES THE KIDS--

Boys, don't step on your own dick.
Boys, wear a condom because
Clap on, clap off--pissing burning fire hurts! Chancres are ugly.

COLONEL STONEY LECTURE THE KIDS--

Boys, of course she is on the pill,
Don't step on your own dick.
Boys, wear a condom.

COLONEL STONEY LECTURES THE KIDS--

Girls, of course you're on the pill,
Don't let a dick step on you.
Girls, make the boys wear a condom.

COLONEL STONEY LECTURES THE KIDS--

Boys, open doors for girls & bless them when they sneeze.
This will make them smile;
Miracles happen when a girl smiles.

COLONEL STONEY LECTURES THE KIDS--

Girls, keep the Golden Rule in mind--Kiss longer, snuggle more & don't forget
Blowjobs make every boy feel like the President.
Girls, if you don't like the taste, lemonade is a good chaser.

COLONEL STONEY LECTURES THE KIDS--

Boys, keep the Golden Rule in mind--Kiss longer, snuggle more & don't forget
The clitoris is at the top of the taco.
Boys, if you don't like the taste, think about football.

COLONEL STONEY LECTURES THE KIDS--

The best way to find a genuine smile on your face
is to introduce yourself to your Lover
& please take the time to make Love.

--Chris Zimmerly

Mental illness awareness cont.

Mental health service consumers, advocates, and service providers advocate the following additions to the state budget for mental health services:

—Appropriate \$8.75 million to insure the availability of appropriate medications for children and adults with mental illness living in the community. This amount is based upon a targeted average grant of \$50,000 to each of the 175 comprehensive community mental health centers in Illinois.

—Appropriate \$14 million to provide additional case management services to 12,000 persons. This amount is based upon an average cost for salary and fringe benefits for case managers of \$35,000 and a ratio of one case manager for 30 clients. These services would be targeted to: persons currently in jails, nursing homes and homeless shelters with the goal of insuring their successful reintegration into the community and reducing the likelihood of their future involvement in the criminal justice system or their need for more expensive psychiatric hospitalizations or residential services.

—Appropriate \$35 million to increase the availability of psychiatric services to children and adolescents in Illinois. This amount is based upon target grants of \$200,000 to each of 175 comprehensive community mental health centers to hire psychiatrists to provide mental health services in schools throughout the state.

—Appropriate \$55 million to provide supported and assisted housing to 2,000 additional persons. A recent state survey found that we are providing this service to only 4,000 of the 44,000 persons who need it. If we add 2,000 units per year we can close this service gap in 20 years.

—Appropriate \$480,000 to expand the program begun during the current fiscal year which provides mental health services to children and adolescent in the juvenile justice system. This amount is intended to serve an additional 50 youths with the goal of reducing the likelihood that these youths will impose substantial costs on our criminal justice system in future years.

—Appropriate \$6 million to create a pilot program providing crisis respite beds for children and adolescents with serious mental illness. This amount is based upon providing a five bed facility in each of the six regions of the state at a cost of \$200,000 per bed. Crisis respite services will help prevent more expensive hospitalizations.

—Appropriate \$9.9 million to provide a 3% cost of doing business increase for the community mental health system, designed to insure a comparable increase in compensation to community mental health workers. This money is needed primarily because, over the last decade, the compensation of those responsible for providing care to persons with mental illness has not kept up with inflation. This has made it very difficult to attract and retain persons with education and experience needed to perform these difficult jobs.

—Total: \$129.13 million

—from NAMI of Livingston/McLean Counties



BEST ORIGINAL LIVE MUSIC in the TWIN CITIES

Figure 31

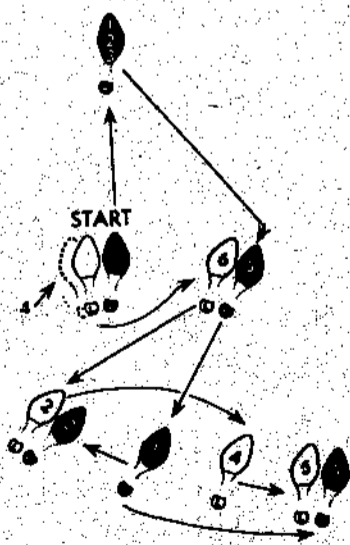
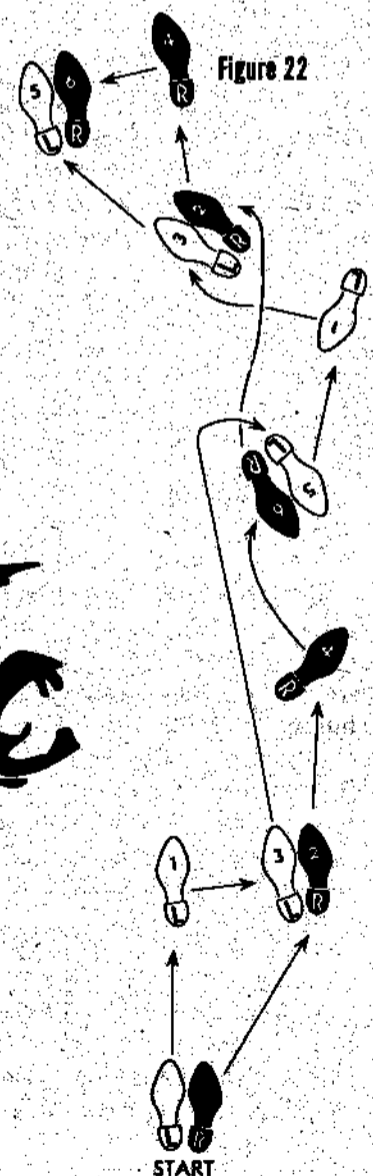


Figure 22



The Lizard's Lounge 612 N. Main Street. Bloomington, IL 309.827.9580

Mental illness

Report criticizes NIMH for inadequate research on severe mental illnesses

The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) has failed in its primary mission to support research on schizophrenia, manic-depressive illnesses, and other severe mental illnesses, charges a new report issued Dec. 6 by the NAMI and the NAMI Research Institute/Stanley Foundation Research Programs.

According to the report, *A Mission Forgotten: The Failure of the National Institute of Mental Health To Do Sufficient Research on Severe Mental Illnesses*, NIMH supports research on a wide range of behavioral problems on "everything from language processing, reading problems, and geometrical reasoning to romantic relationships, infant sleep problems, the parentage of eastern bluebirds, the behavioral endocrinology of prairie voles, and social change in Czechoslovakia."

Furthermore, at least 15 percent of NIMH funding supports research on diseases such as AIDS and Alzheimer's that are the primary responsibility of other federal research institutes. In fact, in 1997 NIMH spent more on AIDS research (\$60.2 million) than on schizophrenia research (\$57.1 million). Clinical and treatment-related research on severe mental illnesses is especially neglected by NIMH: clinical research on manic-

depressive illness receives just 1.1 percent of the NIMH research budget, panic disorder 0.9 percent, and obsessive-compulsive disorder 0.5 percent.

"NIMH is an institute that has lost its way in the research woods," said Dr. E. Fuller Torrey, the senior author of the Stanley Foundation Research Programs. "The results show a shocking failure by NIMH to carry out its primary responsibility on diseases which cost the nation at least \$74 billion each year. There is a direct relationship between NIMH's failure to do its job and the fact that individuals with severe mental illnesses are filling our homeless shelters and jails."

NAMI Exec. Dir. Laurie Flynn, a co-author of the report, said, "There are more than five million Americans with severe mental illnesses waiting for better treatments."

Flynn praised recent efforts of current NIMH Director Dr. Steven Hyman to improve his agency's research portfolio, but cautioned, "We've seen only the beginning of what needs to be done to get NIMH back to its original mission."

The report summarizes a study of 2,277 NIMH-funded research grants for Fiscal Year 1997. Each grant abstract was independently rated by two members of a five-person professional review committee.

SPI Conference draws large attendance

A highlight of the SPI Conference at Champaign Dec. 1, 2, 3 was a talk by Susan Rogers. She is a Director of Special Projects for the National Mental Health Consumers' Self-help Clearinghouse.

Rogers, an activist in the consumer/survivor movement for 15 years, talked about her recovery from the perspective of someone who has been hospitalized for disabling depression and who has worked hard to maintain her recovery despite periodic setbacks. "I will always have to struggle," she said.

Rogers listed many important factors persons with psychiatric disabilities need in order to achieve recovery:

- Friends. Get connected to people...help others
- Courage...to keep going when things are tough
- Goals. Dream big, but "chop it up into pieces." It's the journey, not the goal that counts.
- "Fake it until you make it." You may not always feel confident or in control, but you keep going.
- Take care of yourself. Enjoy living.
- Forgive yourself.

-Give yourself credit. Do the best you can and then do one thing more.

-Hope is indispensable. You never know...often the worst is followed by the best.

-Network. Attend consumer meetings and summits.

-Have a recovery vision.

-Advocate for legislative change.

Rogers received a standing ovation for her personal story.

Anthony tells importance of recovery

Following Roger's talk William Anthony, director of the Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation at Boston University, said that recovery is a vision brought on by consumers. "I'm only a messenger."

DSM3r tells of decreasing capabilities of schizophrenia, Anthony said, so "What has changed?" It was the recovery/vision belief that things can be better. It's consumer based. It's not "continuity of care"...it's not "comprehensive services." Anthony said the last chapter of his new book coming out in 2000 will be on vision/recovery.

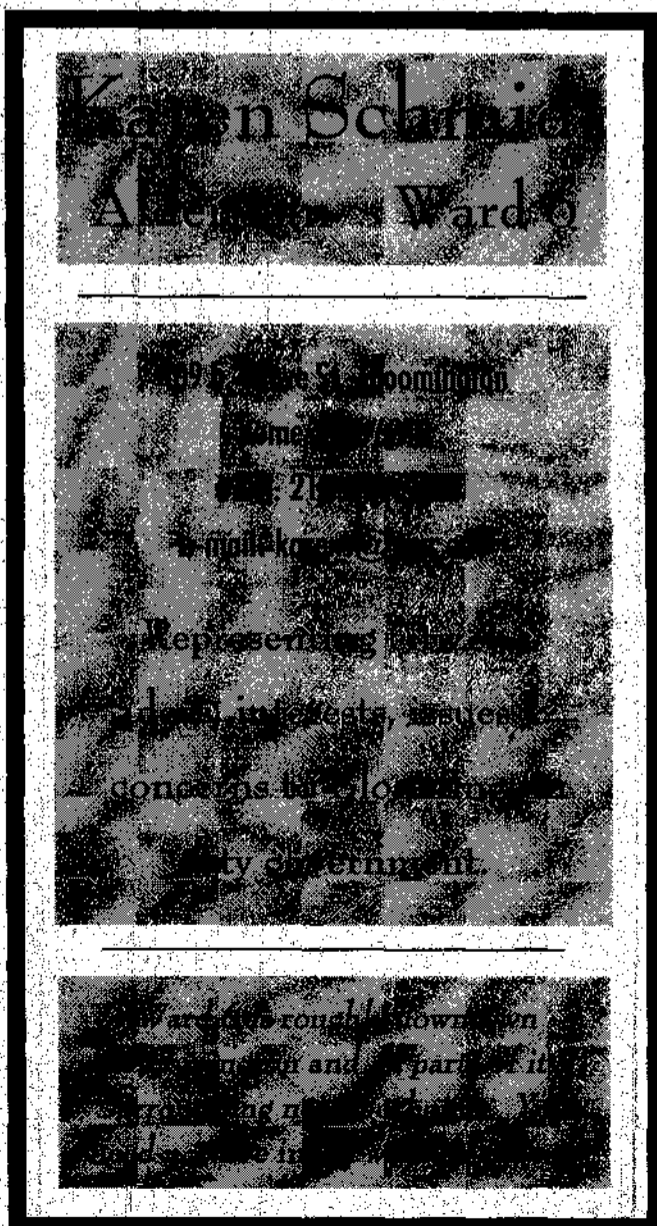
Anthony stated that medications are only a part of recovery. They help ameliorate symptoms, but recovery requires a variety of things such as courage, hope, goals, time, structure and action by consumers.

Addressing the professionals, Anthony said recovery can happen without professional help through life experiences, family, friends, goals. He said recovery is not biological or chemical unbalance or whatever. You can help people regardless of the "cause." Recovery can happen even with relapses. He said choice of goals is important.

Anthony said our worst practices are how we treat the mentally ill and homeless. They must have a place to live. There is no recovery element for the homeless.

My passive protest of the Oct. 9 Walk and Vigil

I stayed home from the Oct. 9 Walk and Vigil for those whose lives were cut short by mental illness. My line of thinking was that supporting psychiatric experimentation continues a long history of victimizing patients through the crudities of random medications, electroshock and lobotomies, and at least it does not recognize all the people who paid so dearly for the developments we have today. I spend a lot of time examining the social, personal and spiritual causes of illness, and



awareness

believe that the best mental health care givers seek constantly to understand the importance of these aspects. The Walk was to be a day when the more progressive care givers and all consumers could join together in a show of courage, and in this sense I am sorry that I stayed home.

I have had many friends with mental illness who died young, all of whom were dependent on the system for survival. Most of these were clearly preventable deaths. Largely because of my proximity to these tragedies, I have had to take a good look at myself and enlarge my sense of who I may be capable of helping. As "mentally ill" people, many of us find ourselves scattered—we have constant difficulty concentrating, prioritizing and carrying through with our personal responsibilities. But perhaps one of our blessings is that we seem to have been lifted out of the competitive spirit prevalent in the rest of society. We have all learned a lot about survival. We know that survival does not come at the expense of others. Our grief is deep, and we refuse to make scapegoats out of the less fortunate ones of us who have died young.

In order to recover, we each must move forward, to stand and face what has troubled us. But blindly supporting a spirit of experimentation may be tantamount to tolerance of unacceptable tragedies. It's time to investigate the funding of psychiatric experimentation and stop conflating it with our urge to find closure for ongoing tragedies which are happening in our community.

—Polly Price

For families: Clues to a mental illness

- A previously polite and caring person suddenly becomes insensitive.
- A person begins to behave inappropriately with those in authority.
- A decisive person begins to vacillate, postpone decisions, upsets schedules, and seems foggy in his or her thinking.
- A person talks from subject to subject without connection. He/she seems pressured to continue speaking, is repetitive and rambling, and rarely pauses to let the other person enter into a dialogue.

Many of these symptoms are ignored within families because of false loyalties. Parents, especially, often blind themselves to evidence of severe problems with their children because they view the children as extensions of themselves and defend them right or wrong.

—Most important clue: A child who is consistently a loner and is clearly living a fantasy life needs professional help. If you find yourself excusing this pattern of behavior by suggesting that your child is too bright to play with others, beware! Chances are that it is too painful for you to face the prospect of your child's trouble—but ignoring it hurts the child. Another clue: If a teacher suggests that a child be taken to a psychologist.

When the pattern of difference in a person's behavior is very clear to you, tell the person in a very caring, non-threatening way. Don't say, "Your acting strange." Better: "I can't put my finger on it, but something seems different about you. I care for you and I think you should talk to somebody about it. I know a person I've talked to myself. Maybe we can go together. I'll introduce you."

In a family, the clear message should be: "I'm with you all the way in this."

Making the mental health system work

We all have seen headlines about the smaller number of individuals with mental illness who have committed violent acts or read about the large numbers of mentally ill persons who are homeless or who end up in our prisons or jails or who are not able to work due to mental illness. We know that these are signs that the mental health system is not functioning in Illinois as well as it should.

The major reason for these failures is that, despite our healthy economy and the fact that Illinois is among the richest states in the country, we still rank below the average state in expenditures for mental health services. One cannot provide adequate mental health services without sufficient funds. Our spending per capita is so much lower than the average state that to bring it up to average would require an additional expenditure of \$114 million per year on mental health services. Illinois' rank among the states in per capita spending for mental illness should more nearly approximate its ranking in per capita income. However, a more achievable goal would be closing this \$114 million gap during the next two or three years.

Fortunately there have been dramatic improvements in the types of treatments available to persons with mental illness. These include improvements in psychotropic medications, new types of living arrangements and innovative ideas about delivering mental health services to children, adolescents and adults in a variety of settings. Thus, while simply spending more money will not necessarily make Illinois a more healthy, productive and competitive state, carefully targeted expenditures will make a difference. Moreover, continuing the current low level of spending will only result in future wasteful spending on the criminal justice and mental health systems.

Because these developments have provided an opportunity for substantial improvements in the mental health system, organizations representing persons with mental illness and their relatives, other advocacy organizations and mental health providers across the state have joined together for the first time to support a program of targeted, cost-effective increases in state funding for the treatment of mental illness.

The increased appropriations we propose are targeted to the community mental health system. That is because the state has been able to improve the staff-patient ratios in the state-owned facilities and the quality of care in these facilities. However this improvement was accomplished, at least in part, by reducing the number of persons these facilities serve. As the state deflected more and more severely ill clients from state hospitals, this has placed substantial additional burdens on community treatment providers to serve these clients without an accompanying increase in funding.

The problems listed above have been caused, in large part, by the failure to increase funding for the community mental health system in relationship to the number of clients being served and the severity of the illnesses from which these clients are suffering. Because further reductions in expenditures for state operated facilities counter productive and because these hospitals deliver a needed service to the most severely ill clients that must be preserved, they should not be used as the source for the additional funds needed by the mental health system.

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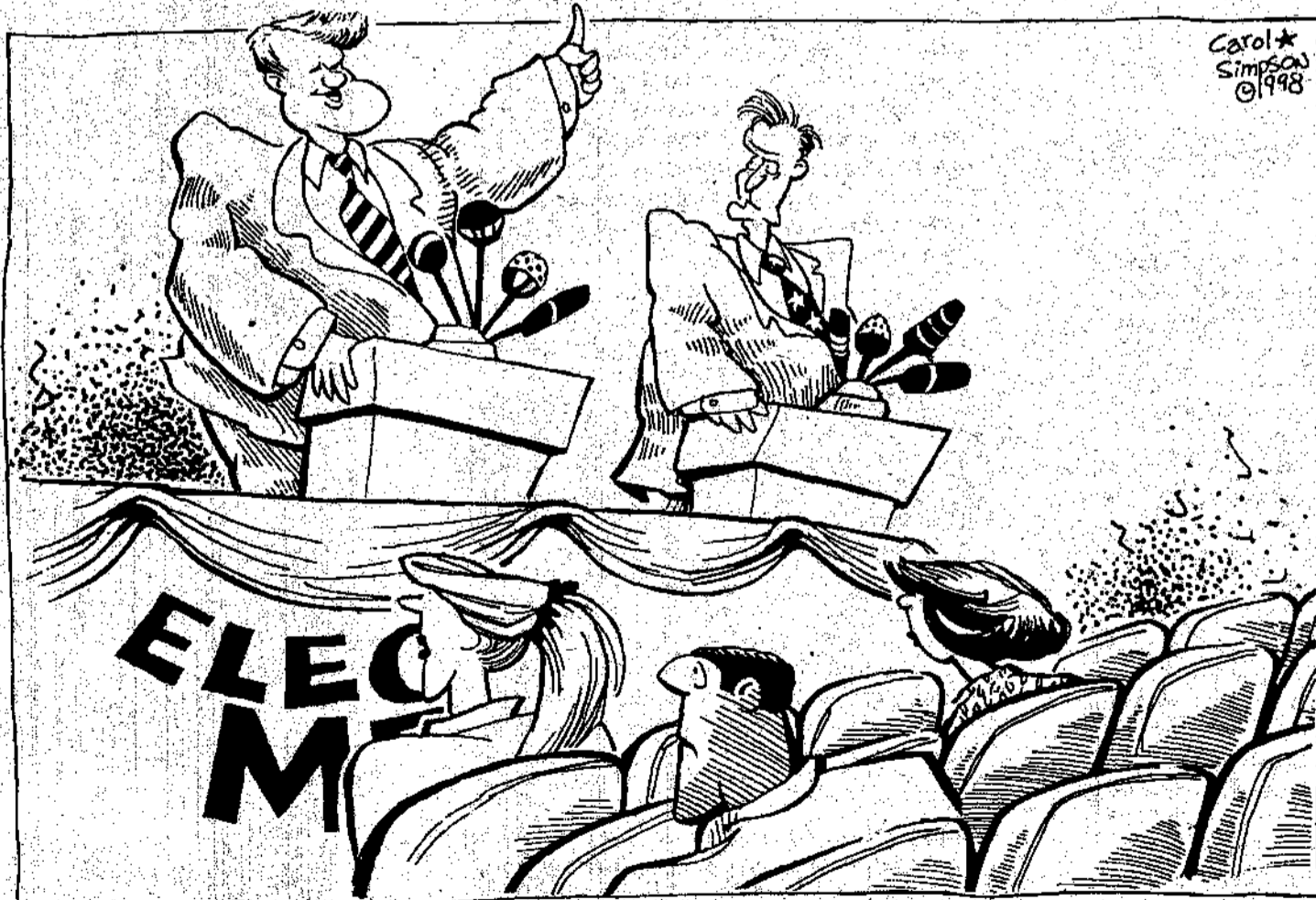
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