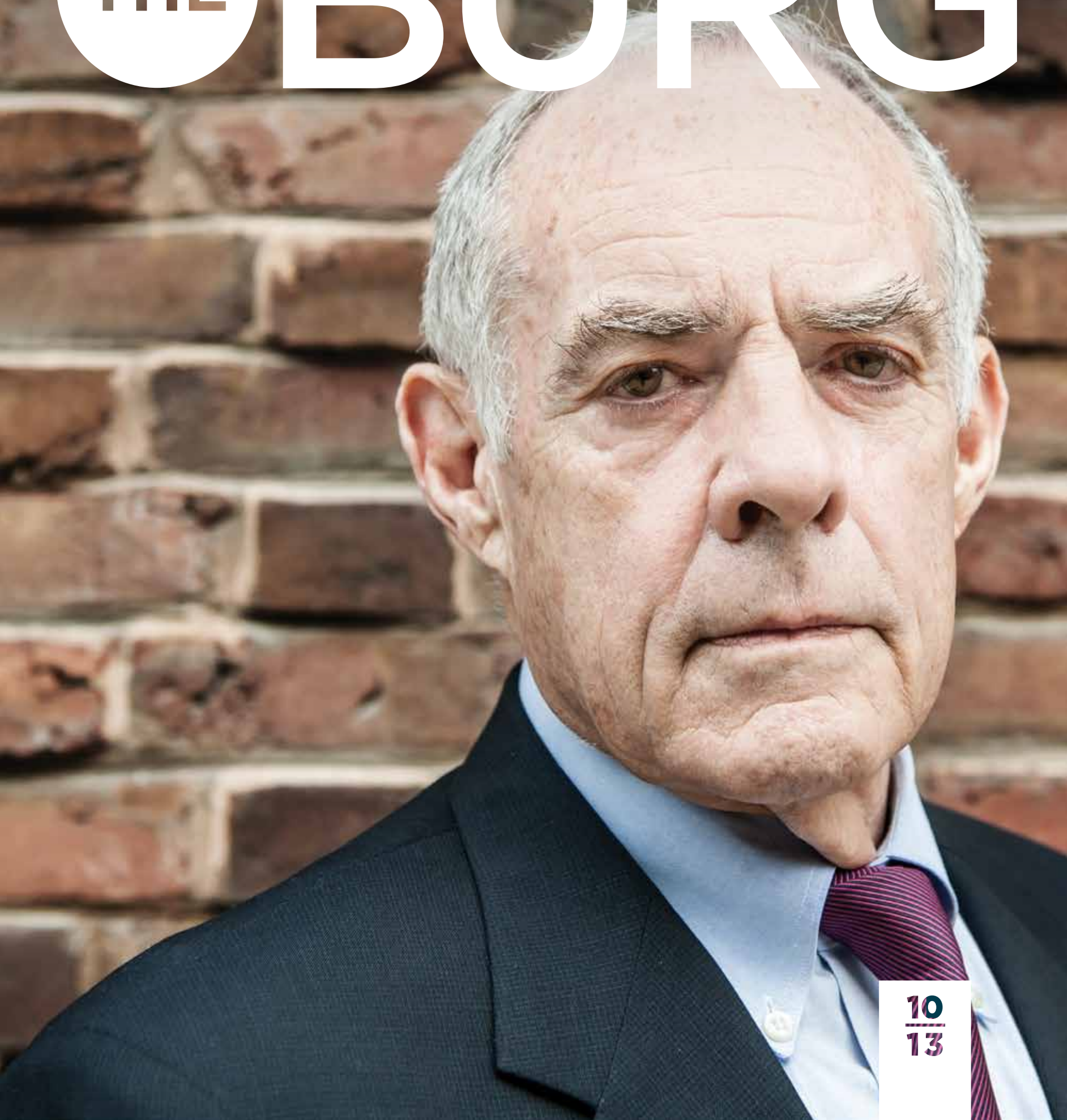


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13

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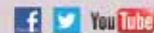
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- 9. CITY VIEW
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IN THE BURG

- 14. AROUND TOWN
- 20. BOO! BURG



GOOD EATS

- 22. HOME COOKING
- 23. RESTAURANT PROFILE
- 24. WINE TIME



THEBURG LATINO

- 26. AWARDS & PREVIEW



HOME FRONT

- 28. YOUNG BURGERS
- 31. HALL PASS



CULTURE

- 29. CREATOR
- 34. BURG BOOKS
- 35. ARTIST PROFILE
- 38. CITY CINEMA
- 40. MUSICAL NOTES



HAPPENINGS, 41



SHUTTERBURG, 44



SPORTS & HEALTH

- 46. MOVE IT!
- 47. GREAT OUTDOORS
- 48. FAMILY HEALTH
- 50. THEBURG BLOG



COVER ART BY: DANI FRESH
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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

In our nearly five-year history, TheBurg has become known for cover designs that artistically portray life in our region. Straight-up portraits? Not so much. Until now.

This month, Harrisburg receiver William Lynch becomes our first cover model. We decided on a newsmaker portrait partly because we like to shake things up and partly because the receiver and his team have played such a vital role in our recent history.

In fact, inside TheBurg, we devote a number of pages to the Harrisburg Strong plan. By this point, you probably have read and heard much about it. However, we hope our stories and columns will reinforce some of its most important elements, including how we got here and what the plan contains, while also offering new perspectives.

On a lighter note—it's almost Halloween! At TheBurg, we tend to shy away from tired, clichéd story angles (no articles on the hottest costume trends here). But we managed to dig up a couple of spooky, bloody stories that may have slipped the notice of other media.

With the arrival of the indoor season, our October issue also has a heavy emphasis on food and drink. Pasta, mushrooms and a bold red wine are all perfect for the chillier weather now descending upon us. So, get yourself a bowl of comfort food and something nice to drink and enjoy the read.

LAWRANCE BINDA
Editor-in-Chief

GENERAL AND LETTERS

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SOVEREIGN CREATURES, P. 14 • HARRISBURG STRONGER, P. 16

AT HOME, AT LAST, P. 18 • THE HILLS ARE ALIVE, P. 36

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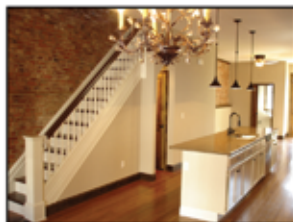


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A STRONG PATH FORWARD

Receiver's plan gives us the chance to recapture our city's glory.

BY J. ALEX HARTZLER

Something very important happened in our political system recently in Harrisburg. Led by receiver Bill Lynch, officials across the political spectrum came together to solve a very difficult fiscal problem for the city. In doing so, they demonstrated that our political system still works and that seemingly intractable problems can be solved through hard work, persistence and a willingness to trust and cooperate—the essence of leadership. This is the best that we can ask from any of our elected and unelected public officials.

Hard as it may be to believe on the surface, Democratic Mayor Thompson worked cooperatively with Republican Gov. Corbett and a bi-partisan team of Dauphin County commissioners to put together a negotiated plan to solve the Harrisburg debt crisis while avoiding the crushing prospect of bankruptcy, which the City Council then reviewed and voted to approve. All of those leaders deserve our thanks and appreciation.

Is the plan perfect? Of course not. By its very nature, a negotiated solution will leave every party wanting, as is the case with this plan. All parties are taking a “haircut,” so to speak, to make the deal work. No doubt there is shared pain required by the city’s residents. The extension of the 1 percent increase in the EIT will cost the median family making \$30,000 a year an extra \$300 annually. However, if a tax increase had to happen, which under any scenario it certainly would, this is the fairest tax and far preferable to any increase in already high real estate taxes.

But look at what also happened: The bond insurance company (AGM) took an \$89 million haircut, as it should have. And the commonwealth will have to contribute \$5 million a year to the city budget (which it will be under tremendous pressure to continue) and has helped to guarantee the parking revenue and price for the sale of the incinerator. Yes, parking rates will go up about 15 percent (or \$23 per month for a space in a public garage), but even this is a good thing from the perspective of Harrisburg citizens. This is one of the few ways that we have to raise money from people who do not actually live in our town (in other words, a commuter tax). A few more people may carpool or take the bus instead—for the sake of the environment, I hope so—but the rest will pay their small part.

Despite this favorable progress, not all city leaders are willing to demonstrate the spirit of good faith, cooperation and optimism required to get things like this done. An example is the recent presentation by Controller Dan Miller during City Council’s public hearing on the Harrisburg Strong Plan, in which he called on council members to reject the plan and opt instead for...what exactly? Putting aside for the moment that many of Miller’s facts and assumptions were simply wrong (as pointed out by several stakeholders and officials in attendance at the meeting), Miller failed to offer any explanation for how rejecting the plan, and all the uncertainty and costs associated with it, will somehow result in a better outcome for the city’s residents. Even City Council’s own independent review by Alvarez & Marsal, which Miller had previously recommended, indicated that the Harrisburg Strong Plan was the most promising option available for the city.

As much as Miller wishes it were so, we are not Detroit, and we are not going bankrupt if this plan is carried through as proposed. The only thing that further delay and dithering will do (after four long years) is cost the city’s residents more money while preserving Miller’s central campaign theme of bankruptcy. While Miller may want that in order to somehow prove he was “right,” the rest of us should reject it wholeheartedly, as our City Council did with its votes in support of the plan. For that, our council should be applauded for exhibiting tremendous leadership in the face of complex and difficult proceedings.

Let’s follow the receiver’s, the mayor’s and council’s lead and continue to move Harrisburg forward and not waste one more day or one more dollar of our citizen’s hard-earned money on politically motivated attempts at delay and obfuscation. There are many more issues the city has to deal with, including finding ways to attract more residents and businesses so that we can turn our city around and begin to grow our population base. Issues of safety, economic competitiveness, infrastructure and schools are high on the list of our problems to solve, but we can solve them if we finally get this crisis behind us.

Nearly 100,000 people lived in Harrisburg a half-century ago, almost twice as many as today. However, if we get back to work and focus on growth and opportunity for jobs, housing and investment, I believe that Harrisburg has the potential to rediscover its former glory and rightful spot as a leading capital city.

J. Alex Hartzler is publisher of TheBurg.



Photo Credit: Paul Barker

HARRISBURG STRONG GETS THUMBS UP

A near-unanimous City Council last month affirmed most elements of the Harrisburg Strong financial recovery plan for the city, followed days later by the approval by a Commonwealth Court judge.

The council vote allowed major elements of the plan to move forward, including the sale of the incinerator, the long-term lease of the city’s parking assets, an increase in the earned income tax rate and changes to union contracts. In sum, the council:

- Approved the sale of the debt-ridden incinerator to the Lancaster County Solid Waste Management Authority.
- Voted to raise parking meter rates and lease the city’s parking assets to the state Economic Development Financing Authority (PEDFA), which, in turn, will subcontract the operation to Standard Parking Corp.
- Extended a hike in the earned income tax rate to 2 percent through 2016.
- Approved the installation of 88 new parking meters in Midtown, mostly on N. 3rd Street from Verbeke to Reily streets.
- Agreed to changes in union contracts for police and non-uniformed city employees.

Following the council vote, Commonwealth Court Judge Bonnie Brigance Leadbetter held a hearing on the plan and gave it her blessing. About 18 months ago, she had approved the preliminary plan and needed to OK the many changes to it.

The complex Harrisburg Strong plan promises to relieve the city of its debilitating debt load. Highlights of the plan include:

- Sale of the incinerator for net proceeds of \$126 million to \$132 million.
- Long-term lease of the city’s parking facilities, including about 10,000 garage, surface lot and metered spaces, for around \$260 million.
- Elimination of most of the city’s long-term debt and a promise of a balanced budget through 2016.
- The receipt of ongoing revenue from the leased parking assets.
- The creation of three not-for-profit entities that would pay for infrastructure improvements, economic development initiatives and retired city worker healthcare.
- Settlement of most litigation and claims against the city, with several creditors accepting less than what they were seeking.

Before voting, City Council members amended the legislation so that their votes would take effect only if the Harrisburg Strong plan is implemented by all parties per the agreement.

MORE COPS ON THE BEAT; NEW CAPTAIN NAMED

The Harrisburg Police Department has moved an additional 17 officers to street patrol, Mayor Linda Thompson said last month.

The boost helps address the high volume of calls that has taxed the existing patrol force, frequently requiring officers to work overtime.

The 17 officers, along with two administrative positions, will be drawn from specialty units that focus on areas like street crime and housing. The move demonstrates that having sufficient cops on patrol is the department’s top priority, said acting Police Chief Thomas Carter.

Separately, force veteran Deric Moody was promoted last month to captain, heading up the department’s criminal investigations division. In that post, Moody replaced Carter, who took over as chief after the sudden retirement of former Chief Pierre Ritter.



NEW RESTAURANT BUILDING APPROVED

Downtown Harrisburg soon should add another new restaurant to its mix after a building project received zoning approval last month.

The Zoning Hearing Board unanimously gave the thumbs up to a proposed building for a small empty lot at the corner of State and N. 2nd streets. The building would be a single full story with a mezzanine level, enough to accommodate about 60 diners at a time.

Developer WCI Partners LP needed a variance and several special exceptions in order to start work on the proposed Italian-style restaurant at 200 State St., said WCI President Dave Butcher.

Butcher did not estimate when the project might start, as the company still needs to receive City Council approval of its land development plan and finalize an agreement with the proposed restaurant operator.



PERMANENT HOME FOR GAMUT

Harrisburg theater-goers soon will have a new venue to experience some of the area’s finest children’s and classical theater, as Gamut Theatre Group announced plans last month to relocate to an historic downtown church at 15 N. 4th St.

Gamut finalized its \$435,000 purchase of the First Church of God, constructed in 1854. It now will renovate the 12,000-square-foot church to accommodate its two troupes: the Popcorn Hat Players Children’s Theatre and Harrisburg Shakespeare Company.

The renovation will proceed in two phases, said Gamut’s Executive Director Melissa Nicholson. Phase one, estimated to cost \$700,000, will include construction of a main stage and a complete upgrade of the building’s physical infrastructure, she said. Phase two, priced at about \$400,000, will include a second theater for children’s productions, as well as classrooms and other supporting spaces, said Nicholson.

Gamut has operated from rented space on the third floor of Strawberry Square for 20 years. Recently, it has actively sought to purchase a permanent home, almost moving to Lemoyne last year before that deal fell through.

Gamut will continue to produce plays at its current location before its planned move in fall 2014. It has kicked off a fundraising campaign to raise the \$1.6 million needed to complete the project.

CRAFT BEER COUNTRY

A dozen breweries joined together last month to form the Hershey Harrisburg Craft Beer Country.

The new coalition will work with Dauphin County and the Hershey Harrisburg Regional Visitors Bureau to promote the area’s craft brewers and attract beer enthusiasts to our region.

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- Boas St., 255½: J. Dewey to A. Cornelius, \$116,000
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- Cumberland St., 268: Secretary of Veterans Affairs to W. & G. Landon, \$84,000
- Derry St., 1801: LandVest Harrisburg LLC to Dream Plaza LLC, \$1.856,000
- Emerald St., 232: K. Nyhart to T. Janz, \$60,000
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- Green St., 1608: J. Williamson to PA Deals LLC, \$45,280
- Hudson St., 1148: PA Deals LLC to J. Gaidos, \$109,900
- Meadowlark Pl., 3012: Dept. of Housing & Urban Development et al to E. Virella & J. Rojas, \$36,500
- N. 2nd St., 2333: S. Habtemichael to C. Cullis, \$124,000
- N. 4th St., 3303: M. & H. Elbaum & J. Johnson, \$90,000
- N. 5th St., 1526: J. Vargas to R. Barzyk Jr., \$79,900
- N. 5th St., 1738: J. Murphy to CNC Realty LLC, \$125,000
- N. 5th St., 2226: Fannie Mae to M. Christa, \$34,000
- N. 7th St., 2209: PSG Real Estate LLC to Sam Hill Properties, \$220,000
- N. 7th St., 2210 & 660 Woodbine St.: P. Goldberg to Sam Hill Properties, \$180,000
- N. 15th St., 165: B. Niles to D. Deligny, \$59,800
- N. Front St., 2837, Unit 103: Helen Smith Trust to F. Clark, \$75,000
- Penn St., 2309: LJC Properties LLC to Herlason LLC, \$37,500
- Radnor St., 410: Harrisburg Rentals LLC & Norman’s Realty Services Inc. to H. Lee, \$75,000
- Revere St., 1613: J. Rodriguez to N. Rodriguez, \$50,000
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A WELCOME RE-DEVELOPMENT

Late to the game, Harrisburg begins to see value in preserving its historic legacy.

BY LAWRENCE BINDA

“Why can’t we . . . ?”
When people tell me they’ve just returned to Harrisburg from a trip, they often approach me with one type of question. They’ve gone to D.C. or New England or—God help us—

Europe, and they want to know:

Why can’t we have the charming houses and shops of Georgetown?

Why can’t we have a great public transit system like Boston?

Why can’t we have the clean streets and rock-solid infrastructure of Munich or Geneva or Amsterdam?

I have that thought too. I sometimes have it even when I’m just down the road in Lancaster, a small, midstate city like Harrisburg, but one that has had much greater success in reviving its fortunes.

Recently, that thought hit me hard when I was in Baltimore, a city that, in some ways, reminds me of a supersized version of Harrisburg. Baltimore is also a water town that suffers to this day from post-industrial decline. It has made some forward strides, but much of the city remains poor, troubled and gritty.

Baltimore has made the most progress reviving residential areas near the Inner Harbor. Walking around Fells Point, I remembered when that neighborhood was just beginning its comeback, a renaissance that now has spread to surrounding blocks. Today, who can walk around the winding, colonial-era cobblestone streets, hard against the harbor, and not be charmed by the restored brick houses, narrow sidewalks and 200-year-old taverns?

Imagine this: Fells Point was nearly smashed into extinction. In the 1960s, an elevated highway plan almost destroyed the neighborhood until a revolt by residents killed the project. Today, it’s the very preservation of those old houses, shops and streets that has allowed Fells Point to become a beachhead in the re-population and revival of the city.

Other American cities, of course, have followed a similar pattern. Manhattan was almost cut into ribbons by three highways that were planned, east to west, through the borough. In D.C., the “inner loop” expressway nearly doomed chunks of Capitol Hill and other neighborhoods. Like in Baltimore, the people there, already angered by other road projects and misguided attempts at “urban renewal,” which leveled large parts of their historic cities, finally fought back. Then the rebuilding began.

Which circles me back to Harrisburg.

Harrisburg’s history follows a similar path, but we’re very late to the game of preservation and revival. Yes, we had the post-war disasters of highway construction, including the widening of Forster Street, which may have harmed the city more than any other single project. We also experienced the leveling of historic buildings and blocks, which has given us eyesores as varied as the Town House and state Archives buildings, among many others.

But Harrisburg suffered an additional wave of destruction, well after most other cities had wised up to the importance of preserving their historic legacies. During the 1980s and ‘90s, the razing continued so that, today, Harrisburg’s largely Victorian-era downtown has been broken up into a confusing mess of architectural styles, too-big buildings and surface parking lots and garages.

But now we finally may have learned our lesson.

The announcement last month that Gamut Theatre had purchased and will transform the historic First Church of God into its new home was a singular event in the history of this city. The church’s congregation had become too small to support the circa-1854 building. So up stepped Gamut, which had been looking for a place to buy (almost moving to the suburbs in the process) after renting in Strawberry Square for 20 years.

Gamut’s purchase builds upon a trend that has been rapidly gaining steam in this city. Just in the past few years, the buildings that have been saved, renovated and often repurposed read like a who’s who of historic structures from historian Ken Frew’s seminal study of city architecture, “Building Harrisburg.”

Riverview Manor. The Governor’s Hotel. The Kunkel building. The Furlow building. The Gannett Fleming building. The Glass Factory. William Seel building. Tracy Mansion. As I write this, Brickbox Enterprises is finishing up its conversion of the Barto building to the LUX condominiums; WCI Partners is repurposing the once-deteriorating Moffitt Mansion on Front Street into a new home for WebpageFX; GreenWorks is turning the old Keystone Bank building into a new home for the Susquehanna Art Museum.

Coming soon: the renovation of the Stokes Millworks building into a farm-to-table restaurant and, we’ve just learned, the repurposing of another building into a home for Alter Ego Brewing Co., both due to open next year.

These conversions give the lie to the Reed-era claim that Harrisburg had to destroy itself to save itself. It’s been said that Steve Reed never met a bond deal he didn’t like. I would add that he rarely met a demolition permit he didn’t like. The losses of historically important buildings during his lengthy administration are their own type of tragedy.

Urban renewal in places as varied as Pittsburgh, Washington and Kansas City worked only when these cities embraced their history and stopped flattening it. People want to visit, dine, shop and spend their money in places that are visually appealing, charming and walkable. They may even want to live in them. They tend to avoid cities and neighborhoods that are, for lack of a better word, ugly—whose historic charm has been stripped away, replaced by urban highways and by hulking, cold, unwelcoming buildings too large for their 200-year-old streets.

Certainly, it’s not all roses in Baltimore, which has lost many historic buildings due to misguided urban renewal and road projects there, particularly in and near the central business district. Perhaps that’s why, while historic Fells Point was bustling during my recent visit, downtown was, as it typically is on weekends, a virtual ghost town—empty, almost eerily quiet, unpleasant to be in and walk around.

To its fortune, Baltimore is big enough to absorb and partially recover from past mistakes. While some areas may have been ravaged, the city has other colonial and Victorian neighborhoods that, still largely intact, can act as anchors for future growth.

Tiny Harrisburg does not have that luxury. The state already has gobbled up several historic downtown and near-downtown areas, and road and building projects have consumed much of the rest. As a result, the city has just a few downtown streets that retain their Victorian-era allure. Midtown has more of a legacy to build on, but it also has lost much of its historic character, with too many blocks fallen to empty lots, bland housing complexes and general dilapidation.

The half-full side of this issue is that Harrisburg seems finally to have reached a point where other cities were 30 years ago. The mindset appears to have changed from a preferred option of leveling historic buildings to one of wanting to save and re-use them.

Concern for the city’s history finally seems to have migrated from a few preservationist “nuts” into mainstream thinking by developers, officials and residents. Perhaps that’s because the city government no longer has the capacity or money to lead large-scale re-development projects. Maybe it’s because people have become more conscientious of preservation or are at least willing to consider the idea that renovated and re-purposed buildings can continue to serve a function and be good for business.

Whatever the reason, it’s a welcome development. Harrisburg has lost so much that its downtown may never have the charm of renovated areas of downtown Lancaster or York, much less the appeal of desirable neighborhoods in larger cities. However, it retains enough of its legacy that, with a little fixing, scrubbing and streetscaping, the city could be a far more desirable place to visit and live in. And that’s good and that’s timely because, in this country, urban living is where the arc of history is bending. **B**

Lawrence Binda is editor-in-chief of TheBurg.

GETTING STRONGER: OFFICIALS REACT TO RECEIVER'S PLAN

Fresh Start for the Capital City

BY ROB TEPLITZ



Harrisburg's financial challenges have made national and international headlines over the past few years. It's been a trying time for citizens who live, work and play here. The crisis also has cast a shadow over the capital of our great commonwealth.

Since taking office in January, one of my top priorities has been to lift that shadow—and our hopes—for a more prosperous city and region. Working with local city leaders, I believe we're starting to see a clearer, brighter future ahead.

Specifically, the announcement of the Harrisburg Strong Plan marks a big step

toward moving central Pennsylvania forward.

I want to thank local and state officials for their ongoing efforts to develop and implement plans to address these critical issues, especially city receiver Maj. Gen. William Lynch and his predecessor, David Unkovic.

Although having state-appointed "outsiders" to solve local problems is hardly ideal, I have seen up close the genuine concern that Lynch has for our community. He has worked tirelessly with local leaders to draft a comprehensive plan to solve long-standing, fundamental problems that simply cannot be left unresolved any longer.

The Harrisburg Strong plan addresses both the crushing debt from the incinerator project and the annual structural deficit in the city's budget. The plan meets the criteria that I laid out last year—participation of all stakeholders in the process, shared sacrifice in the final outcome and the least amount of pain possible all around.

Not every element of the plan is perfect, but the plan as a whole is quite good. I am also pleased to note that, although everything had to be left on the table for leverage during the negotiations, the plan does not include bankruptcy, a commuter tax or a county sales tax.

There's still much work to be done, and I will continue to play an active role.

Harrisburg deserves ongoing state support for providing fire and emergency services to the Capitol complex. For the first time, the 2013-14 state budget included full funding—\$5 million—to the city for these services. Rep. Patty Kim and I are drafting legislation to permanently require full funding from the state, so that the city is not dependent on the vagaries of the annual budget process. Notably, the Harrisburg Strong plan relies on this funding in future years.

Additionally, those involved in the incinerator project must be held accountable for their actions. My Senate colleagues and I have been calling for a criminal investigation since last year, and I'm pleased that the state attorney general has publicly confirmed that one has begun. The Harrisburg Strong plan also appropriately includes the pursuit of civil claims against those responsible.

Finally, there's a clear need to improve state oversight of municipal financing deals across the state. My Senate colleagues and I have introduced a bipartisan legislative package that makes critical reforms to prevent another fiscal catastrophe here and in other cities.

While there will be much work ahead, the Harrisburg Strong Plan will put Harrisburg on the right path toward fiscal solvency, which will benefit our entire region.

Harrisburg didn't get into this mess overnight, and it won't get out of it overnight either. We must continue to take steps at the local and state levels to prevent another financial fiasco here and elsewhere across Pennsylvania.

But thanks to a team effort and new leadership, we can start to see a clearing of this financial mess. It is critical that we stay united and keep moving forward together. **B**

State Sen. Rob Teplitz (D) represents the 15th Senatorial District in Dauphin and York counties.

Harrisburg: Ready for a Renaissance

BY PATTY KIM



I remember sitting across from Harrisburg receiver Gen. William Lynch in a meeting last year as he told us that bankruptcy should not be the goal to get the city out of its financial problems.

Although I agreed with him, I told him that we are essentially going through the bankruptcy process. From what I learned while I was on City Council and from interviewing bankruptcy experts, before filing, we needed to do two things: make every effort to pay down the debt and negotiate in good faith with our creditors.

I knew that the receiver and his team would

develop a plan that would contain these two parts and that the plan would either get us to financial stability or put us in a great position in bankruptcy court. Thankfully, we see a path to financial stability that avoids bankruptcy with the receiver's "Harrisburg Strong Plan."

I believe the plan will set us in the right direction to get out from under the incinerator debt while sustaining us for the future. After studying this plan, I noticed a major difference from the previous plans that I reviewed during my time on council. Not only does it address the massive debt situation, but it provides tools for the city to recover. In addition to leasing the parking garages, selling the incinerator and restructuring general obligation debt, the plan sets funds aside for infrastructure needs and economic development.

Previous plans suggested we sell everything off, which would leave Harrisburg "high and dry" with very little to work with going forward. I appreciate the receiver and his team for thinking through the present and future needs of our city, including the Verizon Tower lease and finally resolving the "CIT" loan.

Unfortunately, parts of the plan continue to burden the city's taxpayers. The extension of the earned income tax will hurt the working poor, and the tipping fee for city residents is still very high compared to what county residents pay. I knew the plan would impact all of us, but, because of the increased burden on city residents, it's important that the commonwealth follows through on its commitments.

Thanks to a combined effort by the receiver, Sen. Teplitz and myself, \$5 million was allocated in the 2013-14 state budget ensuring Harrisburg will finally get sufficient compensation for the fire protection services it provides to the Capitol complex and other state buildings. For years, the city only received around \$1 million annually, which was cut to less than \$500,000 for two years before being increased to \$2.5 million last fiscal year. Sen. Teplitz and I have legislation that will ensure the commonwealth follows through on its commitment to Harrisburg. The Harrisburg Strong Plan asks a lot from city residents for years to come. We expect our colleagues in the legislature and administration to recognize that and support the very same sustained commitment from the commonwealth.

Officials at all levels of government must be on the same page and working in the same direction for the good of the city. If we all work together using the receiver's plan as our guide, I believe that Harrisburg can emerge from this process a much stronger city ready for a renaissance. **B**

State Rep. Patty Kim (D) represents the 103rd legislative district in Dauphin County.

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HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?

Harrisburg Strong's mission: to clean up a big mess that never should have occurred.

BY TARA LEO AUCHEY

It was a creative mess made. Therefore, it will take creative means to clean it up.

The city of Harrisburg's debt crisis is a national story, but one with still a bit of local confusion. Undoubtedly, the public understands there is a mess—a complicated, contemptible one at that. But, truth be told, there are still so many of us wondering: How did this happen?

There are several theories and quite a few facts.

The long and short of it is this—a public project went bad combined with normal urban municipal fiscal challenges, overlaid with antiquated systems of governance and tinged with political perversions.

However, to say the incinerator is a public project gone bad is an understatement. In 1972, the incinerator was built as the region's answer to its waste. Ideally, the facility would convert trash to steam and electricity, which the city would sell. Ideally, the trash would be flowing in from places local and afar. Ideally, the whole thing would run cleanly, smoothly, efficiently and profitably. That was the public message.

In reality, that hasn't happened as planned or promised. Never quite right since it was built, the peak of the incinerator's troubles came in the 1990s, when massive disrepair plagued it, and Dauphin County decided it was cheaper to use a landfill for 10 years instead of the city's facility. With that county decision, the incinerator lost immense value.

Environmental and operational problems exacerbated the situation. In 2003, the incinerator was \$104 million in debt. At that point in time, the options were either to shut it down or fix it up. It was decided to do the latter.

In order to enable the modernization and retrofit, the county agreed, upon completion of the construction, it would bring all of its trash back to the incinerator. The county committed to guaranteeing some of the retrofit bonds. The city did, too.

Both received upfront guarantee fees for doing so.

The construction didn't go as planned. Barlow Projects Inc. was unable to finish what it started. More funds needed to be taken out. In 2007, the Harrisburg Authority, which owned and operated the incinerator, borrowed more money. The city and county stepped in again to provide loan guarantees and again received guarantee fees for doing so.

As with the first guarantee agreement, this one was voted on by the Authority board, county commissioners and the City Council, brought together by then-Mayor Stephen Reed, with only one dissenting vote among 10 elected officials. Current Mayor Linda Thompson in 2007 sat on the council for this guarantee and voted in favor of the borrowing. By 2008, the incinerator carried \$230 million in debt, was delayed in reopening and generated less revenue than anticipated.

While all that was occurring, the city faced year after year of structural deficits.

To combat this common municipal problem, the so-dubbed mayor-for-life Reed didn't raise taxes or services fees to meet the increased cost of running government. Rather, he located people and arrangements to devise injections of money, closing the holes that continually popped up. That money came by way of various refinances, funds and firms.

Professionals and consultants were brought in to help and paid well for their assistance.

As a result, Harrisburg residents are on the hook for what has become an accumulation of principal, interest, penalties, legal fees, consulting fees, advisory fees and more. Harrisburg is the first and only full guarantor of the incinerator's debt. As second guarantor, Dauphin County guaranteed \$144 million of it, but the agreement states that, for any payment the county makes, the city will pay it back. Neither the Authority nor Harrisburg has been able to make any of the incinerator's debt payments. For that reason, both the city and the Authority have suits filed against them by the county, bond insurer and trustees.

On top of that, the city has skipped multiple general obligation debt payments and vendor payments. City government has been cut to bare bones, and liabilities for a variety of inventive financial transactions loom on the horizon.

Taking what probably should have been a private business and attempting to make it something to generate revenue for the city, the incinerator is what makes Harrisburg's financial crisis so distinctive and serious.

While several parties facilitated the debt of the incinerator over 15 years of debacles, it is the city that's left holding the bag. The details of the incinerator saga tell a chronicle of political maneuvering, creative financing, cronyism, bad business and citizen apathy.

The city of Harrisburg has a population of just below 50,000 people and about 35 percent of those people live below the poverty line. It's estimated that 50 percent of the city's assessed property is tax exempt. Government buildings, hospitals, colleges and universities, churches and non-profits are concentrated here since it is both the capital of the state and the core of the region. This contributes to a daytime commuting population that doubles the total residential population.

Because of the incinerator fiasco, Harrisburg residents pay \$200 a ton to dispose of their own waste at a facility within city limits, one of the highest trash rates in the country. Contrary to popular notion, the city's taxes are not the highest in the area nor are utility fees besides trash rates extreme.

All of these dynamics have come into play as the state-appointed receiver and his team developed the plan to confront the task they're charged with—clean up this mess. As much as can be done. **B**

HYP HAPPENINGS - FALL 2013



First Friday Happy Hour

Molly Brannigans

Friday, October 4 from 5:30pm - 7:30pm

Second Wednesday Social

Abbey Bar at Appalachian Brewing Company

Wednesday, October 9 from 5:30pm - 7:30pm

New Member Social

Raspberries Lounge at the Hilton Harrisburg

Monday, October 21 from 6:00pm - 8:00pm

Monthly Dinner with Frank

Bangkok 56 - Thai Cuisine

Thursday, October 24 at 6:30pm

Tasting 101 - Craft Beer

Federal Taphouse

Sunday, October 27 at 11:00am

Tasting 101 - French Wine

Hilton Harrisburg

Thursday, November 14 at 7:00pm



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SOVEREIGN CREATURES

Harrisburg Strong arose from state government wielding its power, finally, in a responsible way.

BY PAUL BARKER

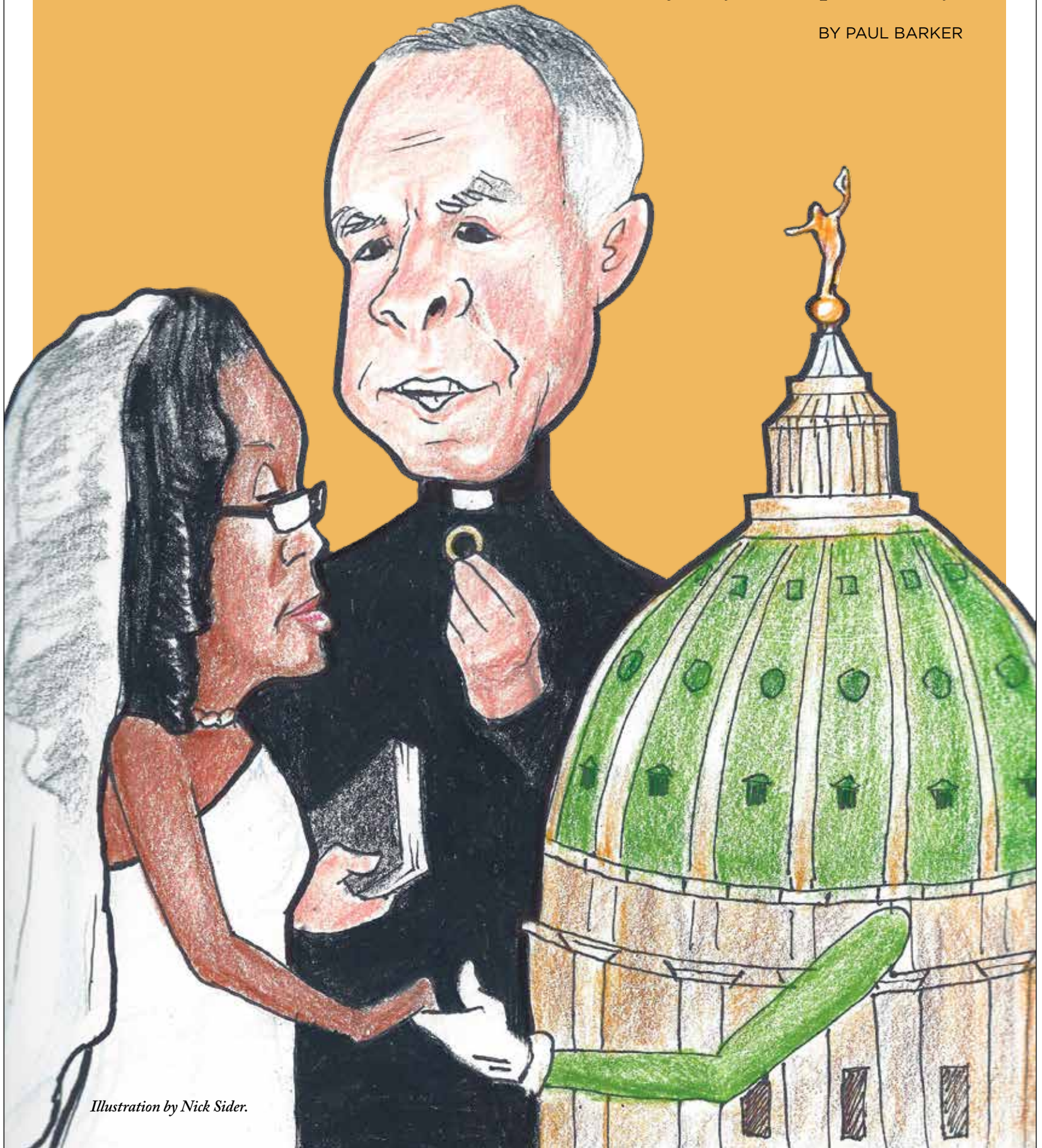


Illustration by Nick Sider.

IN THE SHOTGUN MARRIAGE THAT IS HARRISBURG'S RECOVERY PLAN, THE RECEIVER LEVERAGES THE STATE'S CONSIDERABLE POWER TO FORCE THE AILING CITY BACK TO HEALTH.

The most memorable lecture of my college years came at the end of a semester of medieval history. The professor, a birdlike German who wore thin scarves, drew a graph on the dry-erase board that charted two lines. One hobbled along, then spiked dramatically. The other, initially steady, dropped off where the first one climbed.

The downward line represented the incidence of plague. The professor wouldn't tell us what the upward line was. After a half-hour or so of politely listening to wrong guesses (medicine? hygiene?), he told us that the line represented government, as measured by quantity of paperwork. He then offered a theory: that the best explanation for the end of plague was the appearance of the power to enforce quarantine, vested in an increasingly centralized state.

When history looks back on Harrisburg, what will it see? On Sept. 19, Judge Bonnie Brigrance Leadbetter of the Commonwealth Court confirmed the Harrisburg Strong Plan, the state-appointed receiver's long-awaited roadmap for the city's financial recovery. During testimony, the receiver, William B. Lynch, said he was eager to see control of Harrisburg returned to its elected officials. One reason he opposed bankruptcy, he said, is that it prolongs the period of "someone else overseeing" the city's governance. This emphasis on local sovereignty belies what the plan, and the process that produced it, represent: the state's power to force an ailing city back to health.

In March 2012, shortly before his resignation, David Unkovic, the city's first receiver, spoke at an impromptu press conference about "corruption" in Harrisburg: "in the sense of a body being corrupted, deteriorated, just a bad situation." With regard to Harrisburg's corrupted bodies—its insurmountable incinerator debt, its millions in unpayable obligations, its ritual abuse of its municipal authorities and its waterlogged credit rating—the Strong Plan is an act of quarantine.

Take the receiver's plan for the incinerator. The facility, at least in theory, is a revenue-producing asset, generating proceeds by charging clients to dump trash and, to a lesser extent, by selling the electricity generated by burning it. What corrupts it is its spectacular debt, approaching \$350 million. The city guaranteed that debt when it was issued, and the debt service obligations have become the city's. As the plan puts it, the incinerator "is a liability of the City, not an asset." A key provision of the plan is to sell it to the Lancaster County Solid Waste Management Authority for around \$130 million.

A similar act of separation is proposed for the city's parking: its lots, garages and on-street meters. The plan transfers the assets to an outside partnership that will sign a long-term lease with the city for a term of 40 years. The lease is controversial, but there's a case to be made that it severs another of the city's damaged organs. Parking revenues have declined almost every year, from a high in the several millions of dollars to around \$250,000 in 2012. The drop is partly a result of increased maintenance and partly a result of complicated debts funneled through

the Harrisburg Parking Authority. (A decline in annual parking tax revenues, from \$3.3 million to \$1.9 million, is the result of further debt service obligations.)

An upfront sum from the parking lease will eliminate the authority's debt, around \$100 million, as well as the remainder of the incinerator debt. In addition, the transaction includes several projected revenues. It restores the income from parking taxes to \$3.3 million, and pledges two fixed payments—rent and an annual fee—that should start around \$2 million the first year and increase thereafter. Some have argued that the long-term lease surrenders a key asset of the city. But it also repairs a system that, like so many of the city's operations, had become inefficient and riddled with debt.

The plan also isolates the Harrisburg Authority from the reach of political opportunism. In recent years, the authority had morphed into a financing arm of the former mayor, issuing debt it could never repay and siphoning off cash to professional advisors and to a secret "special projects" fund. The Strong Plan makes short work of these back channels. Under the proposal, the authority will be whittled down to water and sewer operations. The authority will also assume relevant employees from the city into its payroll.

As the plan describes it, the disentanglement of the city and the authority is an act of mutual protection. The sewer system has fallen out of compliance with environmental regulations, and the impending updates are projected to cost upwards of \$50 million. The transfer "relieves the City from this burden and assures that the City can focus on the important process of fiscal recovery and the provision of core and essential services."

But the new structure will also "provide comfort" to several parties—suburban customers, government regulators and lending agencies—that can rest assured that the authority's rates and borrowings are not connected to the city's politics or financial liabilities. Part of the plan includes a \$26 million loan to the authority from a state infrastructure program, approval of which was conditioned on the operations transfer. You might say that, confronted with patients who were making each other sicker, the receiver forced them into separate wards.

At the September court hearing, Lynch emphasized cooperation. "I think that cooperation is what distinguishes Harrisburg from many other cities that fit the distressed category," he said. His "guiding principle," he testified, was to "start focusing on the positive" and to "point groups in a direction where they could see what was in it for them."

It may be true that Lynch achieved cooperation where before there was animosity. But this is a bit like the father at a shotgun wedding saying that what brought the couple to the altar was an agreement to get along. It neglects to mention the important role of the gun.

Consider the court decision, nearly two years ago, that dismissed City Council's application for bankruptcy. In July 2011, council members voted down a state-sponsored recovery plan that resembled, in broad outline,

what they would later get under Harrisburg Strong. It recommended the sale of the incinerator, the sale or lease of the city's parking assets, the reorganization of government functions and the reworking of union contracts. Like the Strong Plan, it did not include a commuter tax or a county sales tax. Council rejected it by a 4-3 vote.

While the mayor and council scuffled over the next step, the state maneuvered to bring the city under control. (This was an ironic development considering the state, through both negligence and collaboration, assisted the Reed administration in letting the city's finances run amok.) In June 2011, Jeffrey Piccola, the Republican senator for Dauphin County, introduced a bill to force the recovery plan's implementation by way of a state-appointed "management board." The House, meanwhile, amended the fiscal code, adding a provision that barred distressed cities of the third class (which is to say, Harrisburg) from filing for municipal bankruptcy.

When council filed for bankruptcy anyway, in October, it presented the court with a question of sovereignty. In her discussion of the case, the federal bankruptcy judge, Mary D. France, acknowledged "important concerns of federalism and respect for the power of states to manage their internal affairs."

The commonwealth brief was more candid. Under the heading "Petitioner is a creature of the Commonwealth," it surveyed a number of past opinions establishing state sovereignty:

Municipalities are "merely...creature[s] of the sovereign"... "They have no vested rights in their offices, their charters, their corporate powers, or even their corporate existence."....They are "fully subject to the control of the legislature, who may enlarge or diminish...[their] functions...or destroy [their] very existence."

France concurred, and threw out the city's petition. In the meantime, Piccola's bill had been amended to replace his "management board" with the novel concept of a "receiver." In December 2011, with the appointment of David Unkovic, the city entered receivership.

Last month, when City Council next faced a recovery plan vote, members nearly unanimously approved its provisions. (The lone dissent, on bills approving the incinerator sale and removing the residency requirement for city workers, was Sandra Reid.) They seemed to appreciate that the receiver had wrought solutions they couldn't have achieved alone. Neil Grover, City Council's attorney, noted in court that the receiver's team "provided leverage to negotiate with powerful entities" when the city had "no money and no power." Their efforts, he said, "got us to a place with very real benefits that would likely never be revealed again."

But council's willing approval also conceals a paradox. The power of the state to achieve "cooperation" is the same power that locked the city into receivership. Under the terms of Harrisburg Strong, the city will be free of its strangling debt and poised, at last, for recovery. It arrived here by tapping the state's capacity to intervene. But was there ever an option not to? **B**

Harrisburg, Stronger

A Q&A with Harrisburg Receiver William Lynch

TheBurg recently sat down for an interview with Harrisburg receiver Gen. William Lynch and his financial adviser, Steven Goldfield, to discuss elements of the Harrisburg Strong financial recovery plan. Key excerpts from that interview follow. The entire, unedited interview, which is substantially longer, can be read at our website, www.theburgnews.com.

■ **THEBURG:** The Harrisburg Strong Plan is very complex. What would you consider, from the perspective of residents, to be highlights of your plan and what would you like the residents to get from it?

■ **LYNCH:** Number one, the city of Harrisburg can put this awful incinerator debt behind it. I am a big believer in you are who you think you are, and the incinerator debt and all of that ugly history has become kind of the symbol of the city of Harrisburg. We need to get away from that, and this plan offers us that opportunity.

I think it's important for you and your readers to know also that ignoring the incinerator debt—if it had never occurred—the city would be in big trouble. The city's income does not match its expenses and, for some 30 years, it hasn't. What you see in the deals that people uncover—when you peel that back, it's almost always the same thing. There's a \$5, \$6, \$7 million hole in the general fund budget . . . that generated some cockamamie scheme, for lack of a better word, borrowing of money that, over time, has come back to be significant.

So, forget about the incinerator debt. Let's talk now about just managing the city's finances so that we can meet expenses with income. This plan offers a balanced budget through 2016—through the term of the plan. It offers income to the city through the lease of the parking assets, which will take it beyond 2016 and out into the future. And it offers the city the opportunity to craft for itself a predictable, stable financial future . . .

■ **THEBURG:** Is there any particular element in the Harrisburg Strong plan that you feel proud to have accomplished? Alternatively, is there something you wanted to make happen, but couldn't?

■ **LYNCH:** We would like to have made all this happen six months ago. The fact is that sometimes things like this just take time, and it's hard to define why that is. But sometimes, things need to mature.

So, what are we proud of? I'm very pleased with the fact that we were able to deal with the incinerator property that, frankly, isn't worth very much as it sits there as a business proposition when it's burdened by \$350 million in debt. What we were able to do was increase the value of that asset, number one, by seeking out a strategic buyer. And Lancaster County Solid Waste Management Authority is a strategic buyer . . . They were growing, and they wanted to expand. Purchasing our facility is much more efficient than trying to build a new one from scratch.

Then we were able to increase the value of that—and

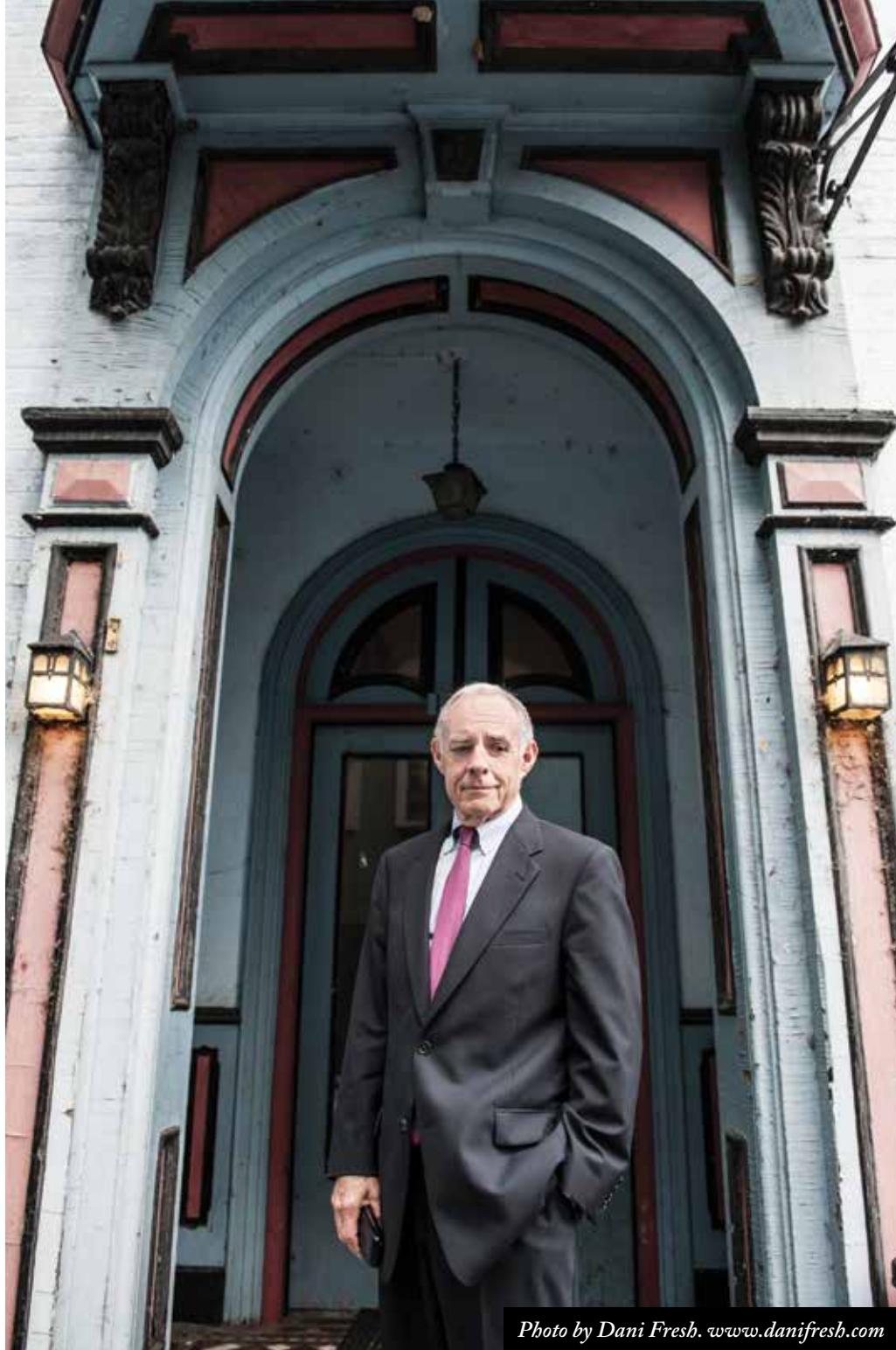


Photo by Dani Fresh. www.danifresh.com

I mean increasing the money that's on the table at closing—by brokering a contract with the commonwealth to purchase the electricity. But not purchase it on the spot market, which is what they normally do, but agree to a long-term contract. That gave LCSWMA some predictable income, which they like. But, much more importantly, it allowed for tax-free financing of the bonds that will have to be issued to take that old debt off the market. And that made for a lot more money at closing on the table. Not nearly enough, however—if you assume that we've increased the value of that to somewhere in the neighborhood of \$130 million—not nearly enough to satisfy \$350 million in debt.

■ **THEBURG:** You have so many players involved. It's like you have to have eight arms and get everybody to shake a hand and promise to you that this is going to go through. Can you take me through the process here?

■ **LYNCH:** Basically, we like to think of ourselves as the honest broker . . . We piqued the commonwealth's

interest in doing this. Then we had a serious job of convincing the commonwealth that this was an OK deal, because this is not the way electricity is normally purchased. So, part of that sales job, if you will, was to point out the value of a long-term agreement, and there is some value in predictability. And the way some of the geniuses crafted that—and our marching orders, by the way, when we went to the commonwealth to say, "Hey, we'd like you to do this," was to say, "There are public policy issues here with our capital city. We should, the state government, should be helpful here."

■ **THEBURG:** Which portions of the plan did you find most troublesome to put together and which were the least problematic?

■ **LYNCH:** I was going to be a smart aleck and say, "there was no part that was easy," and I don't think that was an exaggeration. I found it very, very difficult to deal with some of the entities and some of the people we've had to deal with . . . If you have lived in Harrisburg for any

amount of time, I think you sense the people part. You know, “those so-and-so’s outside the city are out to stick it to us. Why should we pay back the bond insurers? We didn’t do this. Somebody else did it—in the name of the city—but it wasn’t us.” There’s a strong sense that somebody else should somehow bail us out of this.

One of the things that I have found very difficult is by enacting Act 47 and the receivership provisions, the legislature has given the impression, if you choose to take it, that the state has somehow taken over this problem, and it’s no longer our problem. It’s somebody else’s. That is grossly erroneous. There is nobody who sees it that way except people who choose to. The only way for the city of Harrisburg to work its way out from under this problem is for the city of Harrisburg to take ownership of it.

■ **THEBURG:** Some people have been surprised at the creditor concessions in this agreement. Can you provide insight into how those negotiations went with the major creditors and how eventually you were able to reach agreement with them?

■ **LYNCH:** Yes, but before I do that, you’ll be disappointed, but we will not discuss concessions, and here’s why. That becomes emotional. It becomes personal. . . My belief is that each of those entities found something that was in it for themselves. Otherwise, they wouldn’t have agreed to it. . . What we did do was we tried to appeal to each entity’s self interest and demonstrate that this was far superior to bankruptcy.

Now, there are some who aren’t sure that’s correct. We believe that some were more interested in just maintaining the status quo. We believe there were some who were much more interested in getting the deal done, and I put the city in that category. The city simply will have trouble paying the bills even more than we have had. So, we need the income from parking, the parking lease and other things we discussed. We need the infusion of capital that we’ve discussed. None of which appears in bankruptcy, by the way, and none of which appears until after closing of these various deals.

So, I guess to answer your question in a sentence or two: the art in this was being able to find something in it for the various parties. And one of the more difficult parts was getting some of the creditors to work together. One of our, I guess, techniques was to say, “There’s x amount of money, and I don’t care how you guys divide that up.” And that seemed to work OK. It created some weird partnerships.

■ **THEBURG:** Reading the plan, a lot of it seems to hinge on the replacement or substitution of some fresh faces for elected officials, to remove things from the reach of the mayor and City Council.

■ **LYNCH:** Like?

■ **THEBURG:** The Harrisburg Authority separation, regaining control over the water/sewer and employees who are going to run that. Also, the creation of a task force to do the OPEB (Other Post-Employment Benefits) trust.

■ **LYNCH:** Let’s do water and sewer first. . .

When I first got here, the concept was that we would sell the water and sewer, or at least would monetize it. . . Or at least hire a private entity to come in and manage those assets. And we changed our mind. The reason we changed our mind was that we were beset by people from Washington—the EPA, the Department of Justice. . .

What we discovered was all of those Washington people were threatening to fine us if the city did not undertake a \$55 million required fix to the sewage treatment plant to make it comply with Chesapeake Bay and other issues. And your first reaction is to laugh right out loud and say, “The line for paying fines is over

there.” But then you realize it isn’t funny, and they’re very serious.

So, we made a conscious decision to work with those folks. . . So, we brought them in at the beginning, again, with some very good people who worked with us to represent the (Harrisburg) Authority and the city. And what emerged was a Washington, D.C.-style plan. Washington, D.C., is considered to be a turnaround poster child in the way they did the water and sewer system. It’s deemed to be the best. So, we unabashedly set out to copy that.

So, here’s the deal. The Authority should be an operating authority. The Harrisburg Authority should run the water and sewer business, and that’s it. . . So, we wanted to bring them back to their core business and give them the assets and the Authority the responsibility to do that business and take some of that away from the city because, if those employees work for the Authority, it brings the city closer to a balanced budget. If the Authority is in that business, they should provide that service better, more efficiently. Oh, and by the way, the Authority will then take on the responsibility for those pipes that have been in the ground beneath the city streets since 1898. So, there’s a lot of potential liability there that now becomes the Authority’s, and the Authority still has—or will have—the ability to borrow that the city does not to enter into some kind of a capital improvement periodic maintenance system that frankly needs to start today.

■ **THEBURG:** Now, on the task force?

■ **LYNCH:** We decided, as a negotiating position, that I would assume the role of judge, whatever. And I would be an advocate for a solution, not necessarily just the city’s advocate. Now, that annoyed some people in the city. . . but that seemed to work pretty well in discussions with the creditors. So, we said, from that exalted receiver position, I, with a lot of good advice, would determine a certain amount that was absolutely necessary for the future success of the city. Because, if we just sell off the incinerator, lease the parking, and don’t fix this \$8 to \$10 to \$13 million hole in the city’s budget, what do you got? And the answer is nothing.

So, we decided it would take \$40 million, plus or minus. . . So, just in round numbers, we said we wanted to put about \$10 million into a silo for economic development. And we wanted to put about \$10 million into another silo that was focused solely on infrastructure improvement. And we wanted to put some money into a trust fund that would begin to fund post-retirement benefits for people. . . That’s basically just seed money, appropriately invested, and the city needs to kick into that in the future. And, eventually, that will be self-sustaining as that population will diminish, of course, over time—but not for a long time. And we wanted to set some money aside for paying down the city’s bills. . . OK, what about who is going to administer those monies? The trust fund is easy. You hire a trustee and let some bank do it. The other stuff: I’ve come to decide it’s best to look at that as a grant. It’s a funding for grants to be used for specific things, but they’re grants that only the city can access. But, like any other grant, there are strings attached and people who have to be convinced, and that’s the point here. We want that money to be hard to use. We want you to have to demonstrate that the need is there, that it’s the best possible use. And we want that to be governed by a diverse group of people with various interests.

■ **THEBURG:** It does strike me as very historic plan compared to other cities. Part of it that seems historic, as well, is that you could look at this and say: the city’s own elected officials were not able to govern. They were not

able to come up with these ideas and administer them in a way that outside bodies found trustworthy.

■ **LYNCH:** I don’t know that that’s wrong, but we’ve gotten a fair amount of that from our friends down the street here in City Hall. I think the point here is, if you want to look at problems writ large, it’s easier for someone like me to come in who doesn’t have any baggage or not emotionally tied to it, to see the fixes.

So, from that perspective, an outsider, I believe, is helpful. From the perspective of how do we control this money, the point is that we want to make sure, doubly sure, that the concept is executed. None of this changes City Council or anybody else’s normal legislative role. . . And we think, if the plan is confirmed, the budget will be balanced through 2016. After that, there will be an opportunity to keep that going. Lurking along the side is this money in those various pots, which can be used for additional economic development. . .

■ **THEBURG:** What do you think are the takeaways for the people of Harrisburg with the parking aspect of the plan? What should they be most concerned about?

■ **LYNCH:** I might change that around to say what they should be most pleased about. What do you think parking brings in for the city? Last year, it brought in only \$250,000. Why? A lot of reasons that have to do with the past you’re so familiar with, a whole lot of bad deals. Bond service on the Harrisburg Parking Authority is about \$100 million in bonds out there.

So, what people in the city should take away from this: the plan restores that income to the city, that historic \$3½, \$4, \$5 million—it gets up to about \$6 million by 2016. Even if it weren’t for the incinerator debt, this would be a good deal for the city of Harrisburg. The parking assets are leased. They will eventually come back to the city. They’re managed by a nationwide leader in this business—Standard Parking—the biggest in the country. . . So, all of that will bring money back to the city. There’s lots of bits and pieces to this agreement, but the basics are that it returns the normal parking revenue to the city, in a way that hasn’t been there for years.

You will hear that they want to raise parking rates in the garages and stuff like that. What we want to do is bring some order to parking meters, parking garages. You can park at a meter for less than you can park in a garage. So, if you come in here from across the river and you’re going to spend the day, you park out front here all day long because it’s cheaper than the garage. . . So, what we’d like to do is force people to park in the garages. You can view that as a commuter tax if you want. . .

■ **GOLDFIELD:** First, [meters] are going to be upgraded to all electronic. Secondly, there are all kinds of ways throughout the country now where merchants can give a token or give a code so that, when a resident wants to drive to the hardware store or to the shoe store, they get the first 15 or 30 minutes free. So, it’s going to go from whatever it was to zero for people who live in the city. But I don’t think a lot of people who live in the city pay \$150 a month per space for parking. That’s people from the outside. Those fees going up means more money into the city because the city gets 20 percent of every dollar that comes in for off-street parking.

■ **THEBURG:** The plan has a section regarding civil claims against professionals (involved in various past financing schemes). [Do you think] there’s at least some basis for litigation?

■ **LYNCH:** Yes. I frankly don’t think there’s a lot of money in it. . . but I think that some type of statement should be made. **B**

at home, at last

Forced out of their country, a group of Nepali Bhutanese has found refuge in Harrisburg.

BY ANDREW DYRLI HERMELING



Like many cities, Harrisburg's population is dynamic and diverse. People of various ethnicities and nationalities continue to add intricacy to the cultural tapestry of Pennsylvania's capital. But for one group of recent immigrants, ethnically Nepali Bhutanese refugees, Harrisburg represents much more than better economic prospects. These people have come to our small city in search of something that has eluded them for more than 20 years—a home.

COMING TO AMERICA

For the sake of context, I connected with Laura Beltle, the assistant director of programs at Church World Services in Lancaster, to get a better sense of the political situation that created this refugee crisis. Beltle works to place refugees from various locations across the globe, including many from the camps housing the expelled Bhutanese.

She first made sure to explain what distinguished refugees from other immigrants.

"Refugees are people who have been forced out of their country of origin because they faced persecution or fear of persecution due to one of five reasons: race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership in a specific social group," says Beltle.

One such refugee, Dhan Saru, lives on Allison Hill. After I knocked on the door to his apartment, he invited me into his living room and introduced me to his wife Meena and his daughters, Anjana and Monita. As I sat on his couch, he began to tell me his story.

Dhan was born in Bhutan. For three generations, his people had lived peacefully in the south of the country. However, in the 1980s, the King of Bhutan and the Bhutanese ethnic majority, the Druk, began to grow concerned about the growing population of ethnic Nepalis.

"We had no human rights," says Dhan. "Women could not wear their hair long; they could not put tika [a spot of red pigment] on their forehead. In Nepali culture, we pray to Hindu gods, but the Bhutanese government would not allow it."

Beltle provided some historical context. Nepalis had immigrated to Bhutan in the 1800s, forming a distinct ethnic community known as Lhotsampas, or

"People of the South." They were granted citizenship in Bhutan in the 1950s, and many became more integrated into Bhutanese society. However, the Lhotsampas maintained their language, religion and customs. In the 1980s, the government in Bhutan instituted a program of Bhutanization and attempted to force the Lhotsampas to convert to Buddhism, speak Dzongkha, the official language of Bhutan, and wear Bhutanese-style clothing.

Dhan informed me of one aspect of Bhutanization that was even more radical. In fact, through his thick accent, it took me a few moments to fully understand what he said.

"They wanted Nepalis to marry Bhutanese people," says Dhan. I re-stated what he said, asking him if they were forced to intermarry with the Bhutanese. Dhan replies, "Forced. Pushed to marry Bhutanese and become Buddhist."

In the midst of an outcry and political organization by the Lhotsampas, the Bhutanese government stripped them of their citizenship. In December 1990, tens of thousands fled Bhutan back to their traditional homeland of Nepal.

Unfortunately for these refugees, the Nepali government was not any more hospitable.

"The Nepali government did not recognize the Lhotsampas as Nepalis either," says Beltle.

Denied citizenship again, countless Lhotsampas became a people without a home. The U.N. quickly set up refugee camps in eastern Nepal, seven in all. Dhan met his wife, Meena, in Nepal. Unlike Dhan, Meena is a Nepali citizen. However, even marriage did not grant Dhan admission into Nepal. Without any other options, Meena moved with Dhan into a refugee camp, Beldangi 1.

Not surprisingly, life in the camp was difficult. Dhan and Meena's children were born there. The children attended a school run by a non-governmental organization, where Dhan taught the Dzongkha language, a reminder that, despite the harsh treatment, many refugees still considered themselves Bhutanese. Dhan also created hand-painted signage for customers in Damak, a Nepali city in the region of the refugee camps. Meena made tablecloths and traditional men's hats, called topi.

For four years, Dhan and his family waited while their application for resettlement in the United States was processed.

NO RESOURCES

In 2008, the U.N. began the resettlement process. Neither Bhutan nor Nepal were taking the necessary strides to rectify the refugee crisis, so the U.N. turned to the United States for help. Cities across the country began receiving refugees.

"Resettlement is designed to be permanent," says Beltle. "They are granted refugee status for one year. At that point, they can apply for a green card and be granted permanent residency. Finally, after five years of residency, refugees can apply for citizenship."

However, prior to being granted a green card, refugees receive a special immigrant status.

"Most immigrants who come to the United States have to prove that they have connections and the resources to survive in order to be granted a visa. Refugees don't have any resources," says Beltle.

Instead, the United States will immediately grant refugees the right to work and gives them access to welfare services. Even without a green card, refugees receive a Social Security number. Furthermore, the United States grants funds to charitable organizations, like Church World Services or Catholic Charities, which facilitate refugee resettlement.

POINT PERSON

The resettlement process requires a lot of groundwork. Much of that work falls on the shoulders of volunteers.

Harrisburg resident Charity Roberts has dedicated her life to refugee resettlement. She began while a student at Messiah College. It was there that she met her first Nepali refugee. She then began working with Church World Services as an intern. Because CWS is based out of Lancaster, she became a point person for their placements in Harrisburg. She also teaches English as a Second Language for Catholic Charities.

Considering how convoluted American bureaucracy can be, such work is essential for refugee survival.

"I helped refugees navigate a lot of different issues," says Roberts. "I took them to the Social Security office and helped them make appointments. I made sure they knew who to contact in case of an emergency."

Many refugees do not speak English and, considering the challenge of education in the refugee camps, many are illiterate in their native language as well. Thus, coordinating appointments and making necessary connections to basic health services can be very difficult. It is easy to see how invaluable volunteers like Roberts are.

STILL A STRUGGLE

Dhan and his family were excited about arriving in Pennsylvania. After a first wave of refugees settled in a place, subsequent families often would go to cities where they already had family connections. Such was the case for Dhan and his family.

"Our family helped us find an apartment," says Dhan.

However, despite speaking English and having a network of support, Dhan still struggled when he arrived.

"In Nepal, I was an artist, and I had a job," says Dhan. "When I came to Harrisburg, I was jobless."

Eventually, both Dhan and Meena found work at a meat processing plant. There, they work the second shift. Although the work is not ideal, they are very thankful to be able to work together on the same shift.

Dhan and Meena are most thankful that their children get to attend school. Although they attended school in the camp, their classes contained as many as 50 students.

Monita, who attends Marshall School, is especially happy about the opportunity. At school, she has many other Nepali friends. She is so enthusiastic about her classes that she quickly scrolls through the pictures in her phone to show me a picture of her ESL teacher.

"I am glad they can be in school and get knowledge," says Dhan.

Despite Harrisburg's reputation for underperforming schools, Dhan and his family remind us that just having access to education is a privilege that many around the world do not have.

The Nepali refugee community has already begun to leave a mark on the city. New stores, such as Nepali Pasal, have opened to meet the needs of the community.

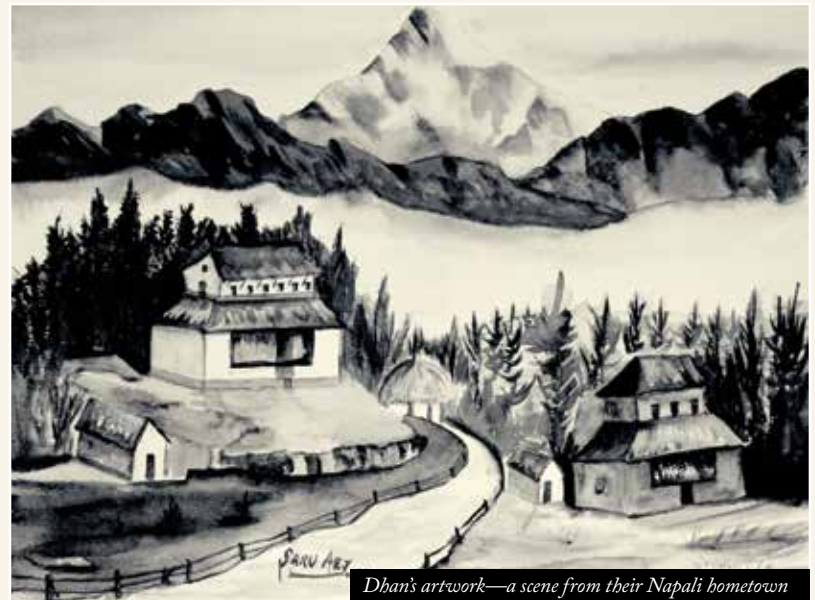
However, their experience in Harrisburg has not been wholly positive. Already, Dhan has been robbed. With a limited understanding of the appropriate procedures in such an occurrence, refugees can be easy targets for exploitation.

"It can be dangerous here," says Dhan, referring to the area of Allison Hill where he and many other Nepalis live.

HARRISBURG HOME

Despite countless difficulties, Nepali refugees already consider themselves lucky to be in a place like Harrisburg. Yet there is still so much more that the city can do to be welcoming to them.

"The best thing Harrisburg can do is understand the Nepali refugees' background," says Roberts. "People see the refugees walking along the river but don't know why they're there. One of the things the Nepali refugees suffer from is isolation. But once you have a connection with one



Dhan's artwork—a scene from their Nepali hometown



Dhan, Meena, & Monita

refugee, you become part of the whole Nepali community."

I asked if there are concrete things residents can do to connect with the community.

"Volunteering with an ESL class is an easy way to help," says Roberts. "Places like Catholic Charities are always looking for volunteers. Individual churches can volunteer to sponsor a family. Refugees arrive without any furniture or other essentials, so donations can be a huge help."

While I speak with Roberts, it becomes clear that her work with the Nepali community has benefited her as much as it has benefitted them.

As Roberts states: "There is a solid attitude about family life that we can learn from the Nepalis. The way they take care of one another. They have a lot to teach us about community."

In my short time interacting with the

Nepali community, I would definitely agree. I was graciously invited into a Nepali home. Before my interview was complete, Dhan pulled out a camera so that I might be included in a family photo.

Perhaps most importantly, "We, as Americans, can learn a lot about contentment from Nepalis," Roberts says.

Again, thinking back to my conversation with Dhan, I have little doubt that Roberts is right. Despite being mugged and living in an apartment that most Americans would describe as cramped, Dhan is shy about saying anything negative about Harrisburg. Dhan has waited 20 years to find a home. Halfway around the world, in a place he often struggles to understand, it is obvious that he feels that his family has finally found one. **B**



BUSTIN' MAKES THEM FEEL GOOD

*Got a ghost? These guys accept
calls from the beyond.*

BY STEPHANIE KALINA-METZGER

It's that time of year when the air turns brisk, the leaves begin their showy display and our thoughts turn to pumpkins and having a little fun during the upcoming Halloween season. While you're choosing your costume and planning your next scary prank, chances are the Harrisburg Area Paranormal Society (HAPS) is staking out an area that is rumored to be haunted, and they don't scare easily.

Founded in 2007 by York resident John Curley and Mechanicsburg resident Don Frank, HAPS is a professional paranormal research team that investigates and validates hauntings in Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia.

Frank said he became intrigued with ghost shows and the evidence-gathering process, so he decided to try it himself. "I purchased a recorder from Radio Shack and took it to the Gettysburg Battlefield and came back with my first EVP and, after that, I was hooked," he said.

For those unfamiliar with ghostly lingo, EVP stands for Electronic Voice Phenomena—electronic recordings that sound like human speech, which are picked up by the sensitivity of the equipment.

The first EVP that Frank captured from the Gettysburg site was a simple, "Yes," after he spoke into his tape recorder, inquiring if anyone was present, he said. He then recounts capturing another EVP at a Gettysburg site.

"I took a group with me to Sachs Bridge after hearing stories about activity there. My nephew was skeptical and said he didn't believe in spirits, so I asked, 'What do you think about that?' The EVP

came back as, 'You are funny, ha, ha, ha,'" said Frank.

Shortly after capturing that rather elaborate EVP, Frank decided to pair up with John Curley, who was also fascinated with the paranormal. The two decided to found HAPS. Since its inception, HAPS has done about 50 investigations, all free of charge to those having problems with things that go bump in the night.

Summoning HAPS is easier than summoning ghosts to perform on demand, so Curley and Frank usually ask residents to vacate the house to avoid sound contamination, and then they set up shop for seven or eight hours. Armed with infrared cameras, a parabolic dish capable of magnifying sounds up to 40 decibels, thermal imagers, DVR systems, electromagnetic field detectors, motion sensors and handheld digital recorders, HAPS goes to work, often capturing a treasure trove of information to prove to beleaguered homeowners they aren't imagining things.

"We had a house in Ephrata that was experiencing paranormal activity, and we caught a shadow figure on camera. It blocked out the dresser, moved into the closet and was gone. On our cameras, black appears as white and this figure was white. There was no way a car or headlights could have produced it. It was a solid piece of evidence," said Frank.

Shelby Sweigert, who lives in that Ephrata house, called HAPS to investigate, worrying that her mind was playing tricks on her.


"When we first moved in, things were quiet, then I got pregnant with my son and things started happening—I'd hear a woman singing, foot stomps

on the landing and voices coming through the baby monitor. Then I watched a television program called 'The Haunted' on an episode of Animal Planet where they mentioned HAPS, so I called John. He was flabbergasted with the evidence and assured me I wasn't crazy."

Sweigert said that Curley, after doing a bit of research on the house, discovered that it was the site of a funeral home that had burned down. All of this continues to make her uneasy, but she said she's not currently in a position to move, so she has learned to live with it. "Things go in waves. Right now, we're in a quiet time," she said, with a sigh of relief.

Frank and Curley don't drive out any of the spirits, but they do validate what people report seeing and hearing, and sometimes that is all the residents need to breathe a bit easier. "I feel like we're helping them," said Frank, who said he's still fascinated by everything he's witnessed. "It's amazing they can even communicate at all; our theory is that they are using sound waves," he said, referring to the spirits that reach out from beyond the grave.

Still skeptical? The group invites you to visit their website to read stories of evidence they've documented.

"There's more in this world than you and I see and hear every day. I've had too much happen in the last few years to think otherwise," said Frank. 

For more information, visit

www.harrisburgareaparanormalsociety.com



BLOODY GOOD TIME

It's a little twisted and a big mess, but BloodBath Bash has become a Halloween hit.

BY TREVOR PIERCE

What began as a fake crime scene with real police intervention has grown into one of downtown Harrisburg's goriest traditions. For the past three Octobers, hundreds of partygoers have taken part in VeTour Productions' BloodBath Bash, a Halloween party that has guests splattering themselves and each other in fake blood from head to toe.

"The BloodBath Bash is copious amounts of blood, booze and tunes all in one place," said Sean Kunkle, executive director of VeTour Productions, the promotional group behind many of Harrisburg's most ambitious social and music events. "We try to create another world, a detour from the norm. It's not the environment Harrisburg is used to."

The first BloodBath Bash was held in 2010 as a house party on Reily Street, hosted by Kunkle and his roommates, Jon Robinson and Adam Brunson. "We had been throwing smaller parties every month or so and decided we wanted to throw a Halloween party," said Kunkle. "Personally, I have always been opposed to dressing up. More than likely, the costume will hinder the drinking process, which is

unacceptable. So, I proposed that we just have everyone wear white and do a blood theme."

The group bought white sheets, water coolers and gallons of fake blood and began prepping the house with black lights and fog. Using the garage as a gateway to the party, guests dressed in white and received their splattering. "We hung a ton of sheets up in the garage and went nuts with blood: throwing it, spitting it and even flinging it with an old Civil War-style bayonet," said Kunkle. "Once they had some fake blood on them, we'd send them on their way, and, thus, the BloodBath was born."

The inaugural Bash was promoted in the manner of most VeTour Productions events, generating buzz for the concept through Facebook and word-of-mouth advertising. "VeTour Productions has always prided itself on our guerilla marketing style," said Kunkle. "The turnout was insane. The party started at 9 p.m., and, by 10, we had over 350 people in our house and yard."

The first BloodBath Bash was so successful at attracting guests that local police had the party shut down less than three hours after it began, prompting Kunkle and VeTour to

look for an official venue for the Bash's next iteration. "Not surprisingly, it was very hard to find a bar that would allow us to throw blood everywhere," said Kunkle. "We got a lot of confused looks and quick dismissals."

However, VeTour's marketing continued well into the next year, again through the use of promotion on social media. By offering guests the opportunity to take iconic photos, images of bloodstained partygoers flooded social media feeds for weeks following the party and became staples of many users' profiles. Eventually, the momentum was enough to attract consideration from bar owners, despite the party's inherently messy theme.

"I got to sit down with Josiah Ferris of Ceolta's Irish Pub and go over the particulars and the numbers from the previous year," recalled Kunkle. "With a little convincing, he eventually agreed to let us take over Ceolta's second floor, the Raftery Room. We knew we needed to step our game up and make this something that random people would swoon over, not just our acquaintances."

VeTour Productions adapted the house party's splatter area for a public space by using plastic sheeting to create a "kill room" inspired by the

television show "Dexter."

"I remember scrubbing the ceiling after that one, but we had a turnout similar to the house party only without the police involved," said Kunkle. "And with the success of the second BloodBath, we were given free reign to do whatever we wanted for the third."

In 2012, the Bash expanded to both floors of Ceolta's, adding a light show, blood-themed drink specials and a more sturdy and outdoor splatter booth, styled after Alfred Hitchcock's "Psycho."

"We had close to 400 at the last one and expect more this year," concluded Kunkle. "We wanted to keep the classic horror film theme going, so this year we are doing a "Birds" theme. Expect blood stains, ringing in your ears, new friends and many pictures because your memory may be a bit foggy." **B**

The 4th Annual BloodBath Bash will be held Oct. 19 at Ceolta's Irish Pub at 310 N. 2nd St., Harrisburg. Guests are advised to wear white clothes they are comfortable having "blood-splattered." For more information, visit Facebook.com/VeTourProductions or VeTourProductions.com.

MUSHROOM MAGIC

Come in from the cold, bring a skillet.

BY ROSEMARY RUGGIERI BAER

Fall is here. And from a cooking perspective, I am ready.

I fought with my Weber gas grill this summer and of course, I blame the grill. We had our share of overdone chicken breasts and boneless pork chops. I managed to turn beautiful halibut steaks into fish hash and set cedar planks on fire with the salmon already on them. Our grill cooks very fast and hot and now, at summer's end, everything seems to taste the same to me. It's time to come inside and celebrate fall.

Italian cooks are known for celebrating the seasons and focusing on whatever food is at its absolute best at the time. Fall in Italy is harvest time in the vineyards. But it is also the season for digging mushrooms, especially the prized porcini. Found in the damp, still-warm soil of the forest, porcini means "little pig" in Italian, so called because of its fat stem.

While cooks in southern Italy are still gathering the last ruby red tomatoes from the vine, those in the northern Piedmont region are having a love affair with mushrooms. I am always amazed how the Italians can take just one vegetable and find so many ways to serve it. Mushrooms, especially porcini, are sautéed and broiled, stuffed, cooked with meats, used in risottos and pastas and simmered with cream.

When I was young, my parents traveled to New York City for a little holiday and went to their favorite Italian restaurant. Afterwards, my mother told me that their waiter, Giovanni, came to their table and presented her with a basket of fresh porcini mushrooms. He said to her "Signora, these were flown in from Italy this morning." I no longer remember how they cooked them, but my mother had no choice but to order them and was, as the story goes, thrilled.

I have never found fresh porcini mushrooms here. Specialty stores sell the dried ones, and they are easy to reconstitute in hot boiling water. But other varieties of full-flavored, fresh mushrooms, like shiitakes, chanterelles and creminis, can now be found in supermarkets, and these make a fine substitute for expensive porcini.

The recipe that follows is from Lidia Bastianich (the famed Italian cook and restaurateur) and her "Pasta Calendar." It calls for not much more than pasta and mushrooms and is perfect for an October night. Because the ingredients are simple, use the best ones you can find, like real Parmesan Reggiano, good green olive oil and imported pasta. Lidia uses porcini, but there is no need to go foraging in the woods or pay a king's ransom for them. Use whatever kind you like.

PAPPARDELLE WITH MUSHROOMS

- *In a large skillet (try to use one that is NOT non-stick), sauté a pound of trimmed and sliced mushrooms and several crushed garlic cloves in several tablespoons of olive oil. Do this in two batches, adding more oil as you go to avoid crowding the mushrooms and having them "steam." Use moderately high heat so the mushrooms brown.*
- *Place the first batch of mushrooms on a plate and brown the remaining one. Discard the garlic when you are finished.*
- *Then place all the browned mushrooms back into the skillet along with 2 tablespoons of unsalted butter and a handful of chopped Italian parsley.*
- *Add $\frac{3}{4}$ cup chicken stock or canned broth (use low sodium if you can) and simmer for 1 minute. Adjust salt and pepper to your taste.*
- *Toss with a pound of pappardelle pasta (very wide ribbons). If you can't find them, wide fettuccini noodles will do fine.*
- *Sprinkle liberally with freshly grated Parmesan and serve.*

Lidia's recipe doesn't call for it, but a few sprinkles of Marsala wine, cognac or Vin Santo really give a nice kick to the sautéing mushrooms. A crisp green salad goes well with this pasta.

I suppose next summer I will make up with my Weber gas grill. But, for now, I am so glad to eat something that doesn't taste like teriyaki. **B**



Rosemary Ruggieri Baer, a first generation Italian-American, grew up in Harrisburg and has spent her life perfecting her mother's country cooking.



Fig. 10. *Clathrus cancellatus* (Gitterschwamm).
a Mit der Sporenmasse, b nach Ausfliessen derselben.



Fig. 4. *Boletus edulis* (Steinpilz).
a abge-schnitten



GIVE IT A TWIRL

Pastorante noodles around with Italian cuisine.

BY DANIELLE ROTH

Sri Kumarasingam is fixing Harrisburg's deficit, the deficit of freshly made, Italian pasta, that is. A passionate chef and lover of pasta, Sri entered the Harrisburg restaurant scene in June with Pastorante where—you guessed it—pasta is the main attraction.

Although he enjoys experimenting with all types of cooking—Thai, French, Italian—he thought Harrisburg lacked a restaurant that exclusively sold pasta, an idea that gave birth to Pastorante.

His fresh pasta is produced from his pasta machine, located center stage behind a glass pane that separates the kitchen from the dining area. “We make the pasta right up front so people can see it. It’s an open kitchen. A lot of people have not seen pasta being made, so that’s an attraction,” said Sri.

The contemporary and simple elegance of the space reflects European style, a continent that Sri used to call home. “With the tables and chairs outside, it feels like a European café,” he said.

His menu features exotic rarities to central Pennsylvania, including squid ink fettuccine with shrimp and pappardelle with oxtail ragu. The squid ink pasta noodles are black, looking like a cluster of little, lineless highways on a plate. It has a distinct seafood taste, and the perfectly seasoned shrimp complement and complete the dish.

“This one lady said this is the most disgusting-sounding thing she’s ever heard, but she tried it and said this is the best thing that she’s ever eaten,” said Sri.

The pappardelle with oxtail ragu is a plate of flat noodles, similar to fettuccine but wider, with a meaty sauce that has oxtails that were slow cooked for eight hours before being added to the sauce.

Sri plans on infusing different cultures into his menu, as well. His latest project is discovering a way to incorporate edamame, an immature soybean often found in

Japanese cooking, into a dish. Also, be on the lookout for lemon grass, beetroot and chocolate on the menu in the coming months. “If I eat something somewhere, I’ll be thinking, ‘How can I make this into a pasta?’” said Sri.

The classics, like macaroni and cheese and spaghetti and meatballs, are also represented, albeit with a delicious, fresh twist that distinguishes them from their boxed, grocery store cousins.

The dessert menu features staples like Key lime pie and chocolate lava cake, but a pasta-lover like Sri can’t help but experiment with pasta desserts, as well. A recent sweet was chocolate pasta topped with a crunchy peanut butter caramel sauce. Every chocolate-lover needs to give this dish a try.

After opening his first restaurant in the college town of Oxford, England, Sri is used to young people eating experimentally, but he is very receptive to the tastes and needs of an urban American audience of Midtown locals and suburban working commuters.

The Midtown location is within walking distance of downtown offices and is central to the residential community. Sri started offering a lunchtime menu during the summer to appeal to the commuting lunchtime crowd. Pastorante will be selling prepackaged noodles and sauces for those who stop in at lunchtime and want to have a quick meal for dinner, as well.

Residents and businesses of Midtown alike have welcomed Pastorante into their neighborhood. “It’s a good place to live. It’s good for business. The city is coming back up. This area is coming back up,” said Sri. **B**

Pastorante is located at 1012 N. 3rd St., Harrisburg. Call 717-232-7050 or check out the daily specials on their Facebook page, PastorantePA.



BEHOLD APPASSIMENTO!

Your ticket to a fruit bomb.

BY STEVE JULIANA

In the world of wine, there are many terms that, at first, sound strange and obscure but, once the meaning is known, make selecting a bottle easier, with greater knowledge of its contents.

In France, *sur lies* means the wine lies on the skins longer for more flavor and concentration. German bottles routinely have the word *spatlese* on the label to designate grapes that have been harvested later and are more mature. In Italy, the word *appassimento* is a designation to show to the buyer that the grapes have undergone a treatment of air-drying to increase their richness and sugar content.

Ground zero for the appassimento process is the Veneto region, which contains the ancient city of Venice. The name of this great wine is Valpolicella Classico Superiore Amarone. The method is as old as the history of Italian wine, dating back to the time of the Romans. Grapes were hand-selected and placed on straw mats to dry in the Mediterranean climate. The fruit was crushed after it had raisined to produce a heavy red unlike any other. Modern techniques ensure better uniformity in drying, but all selection and de-stemming is done by hand. This means that Amarone is not inexpensive—but what a wine!

The result is a wine that, at times, defies description. On the nose, the first impression is that of, “I smell the saddle, where is the horse?” On the palate, a rush of fruit and almonds fills the mouth and coats every taste bud with richness. The finish

is usually dry and dusty, which only makes another taste a nagging desire. This is a blockbuster—a fruit bomb that rewards the drinker as few red wines can. The menu should have dishes that are as rich and savory as this heavy quaff. It also mates well with cheeses, especially those of the hard Italian style.

While Amarone is a wonderful wine in its own right, it is possible to get many of its characteristics in a lighter and less expensive drink. The Italian process of *ripasso* is made by taking the leftover skins from the appassimento drying and pouring Valpolicella over them for a secondary fermentation.

This makes for a quaff that has added richness without going all-out. The result is a wine that matches up with food that does not have to be so dependent on heavy sauces and rich red meats. Check the label on the wine to find a real treat without breaking the bank. Valpolicella on its own is a wonderful red wine that is very popular in the Veneto and worldwide. There are many producers available, and it should be no problem to locate a variety for any occasion.

So, a popular red wine that one can find anywhere is transformed to a higher level of richness, achieving an entire hierarchy of uniqueness. It simply takes adding a little magic called appassimento. **B**

Keep sipping, Steve

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Happy National Hispanic Heritage Month! At the Latino Hispanic American Community Center (LHACC) Block Party on Sept. 14, TheBurg presented The Best of the Best Awards to honor local companies that are making strides in diversity and inclusion for the Latino Community.

TheBurg Latino will be published every other month in TheBurg. The next issue will be in November. Watch for the following featured articles:

- Financial and Banking Education
- The Latino Harrisburg American Community Center: Serving The Needs of the Latino Community of the Greater Harrisburg Area
- Coming Together for Health Care Reform: A Q&A, in partnership with Conrad Siegal Actuaries



¡Feliz Mes Nacional de la Hispanidad! En la Fiesta del 14 de Septiembre del Centro Hispano-Americano de la Comunidad, el periódico ElBurg presento los premios- Lo Mejor de lo Mejor-a las compañías locales que alcanzan logros en la diversidad e inclusión para la comunidad latina.

El Burg Latino será publicado cada mes alterno dentro de TheBurg. La próxima edición será en Noviembre. Este pendiente de los próximos artículos de interés.

- Educación Financiera y Bancaria
- El Centro Hispano-Americano de la Comunidad- Sirviendo a la comunidad latina de Harrisburg.
- Unidos para entender la nueva reforma de Salud.- Preguntas y respuestas en asociación con Conrad Siegal Actuaries.



Thank you to TheBurg Latino and the Latino Connection for recognizing HACC, Central Pennsylvania's Community College, at the awards ceremony for *Lo Mejor de Lo Mejor!*

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HACC recognizes its responsibility to promote the principles of inclusion and equal opportunity in employment and education. Therefore, it is the policy of HACC, in full accordance with the law, not to discriminate in recruitment, employment, student admissions, and student services on the basis of race, color, religion, age, political affiliation or belief, gender, national origin, ancestry, disability (physical or intellectual based challenges), place of birth, General Education Development Certification (GED), marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, veteran status, genetic history/information, or any other legally protected classification. Inquiries should be directed to the Office of the President, One HACC Drive, Harrisburg, PA 17110, telephone 717-736-4100.

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CULTIVATING THE FUTURE

LEAF project teaches Harrisburg-area teens agriculture, life skills.

BY MISSY SMITH

On a beautiful sunny summer morning, I took a scenic drive through Cumberland County to an historic family farm and homestead in Centerville. There to welcome me were Heidi Witmer and her team of hardworking young adults. When crew leader Audrey Scott greeted me by name, handing me some garden-grown flowers, I knew I was in for a special morning spent among a friendly group. I quickly learned that these teens have a serious thirst for learning and physically demanding work and an enthusiastic appetite for wholesome foods. This is the LEAF (Leadership, Education and Farming) Project.

When Witmer began organizing the six-week

sustainable agriculture summer work and leadership program for 14- to 18-year-old teens, she was met with some doubts. People joked that it would be a difficult feat finding youth willing to hang with the physical, time-consuming responsibilities of growing fresh food and maintaining a farm, she explains. While adults may not always equate teenagers with hard work, Witmer knew better.

“I think there was a perception of youth not wanting to work hard during summer vacation. The reality was the reverse,” she says.

When Witmer opened a two-week registration period, more than 50 teens applied for her 12 available paid positions. And, when she finalized her work crew,

she was met with great reception from her young farmers. “It was really exciting to hire them. They were so excited, raring to go,” laughs Witmer, who relays that some of the teens even reveled in celebratory cheers over the phone.

LEAF Project team members spent a good chunk of their summer on their host farm, owned by Bert Myers, who represents the fourth generation to cultivate his family’s land. Along with Witmer, Myers helped to coach the teens through their summer farming experiences. The young farmers not only grew and harvested food, but they delivered some of their produce to food-insecure youth in Harrisburg, learned how to cook with seasoned chefs and shared their



“IN A TIME WHEN OUR CHILDREN ARE GROWING UP WITH EXCESS CONSUMERISM AND HYPER-TECHNOLOGY, THIS GROUP OF TEENS IS A BREATH OF FRESH AIR.”

newly acquired healthy food wealth with their families and communities. Combining a paid summer job with agriculture education and leadership training, the LEAF Project allowed participants to be productive during summer break.

“It’s a good way to spend my summer, because I usually don’t have anything to do,” says Celeste Fenon, 16, adding, “I’ve always wanted to work on a farm and have that experience.”

On my visit to learn more, I met some impressive teens, who were at the ready to complete their farm tasks for the day. That morning, I watched the young farmers harvest cucumbers, lettuce and eggplant. When Fenon and her coworker, 18-year-old Avery Morrow, admitted they had never eaten eggplant, a surprised Witmer said, “Well, we’re going to have to have an eggplant week!”

The questions kept coming. “What does it taste like?” “How do you prepare it?” “What other veggies are eggplants similar to?” In just a few minutes, the teens learned more about eggplant than they had in their entire childhood.

Other teens were hard at work weeding, getting beds ready for planting, setting up an irrigation system and washing freshly picked produce. With a drive to learn and an eagerness to help, many of them reported back to Witmer after they completed a task, ready for their next assignments.

Witmer says that, although many of the teens did not enter the work-study program with gardening experience, they have been surprised by how capable they are at growing fresh food. Fourteen-year-old Micaha Knisely echoed this important outcome of the project. “I am learning to use abilities I have but didn’t know I had [that will] benefit me and other people,” Knisely says.

HANDS - ON GROWTH

This past summer, the LEAF Project teens learned how to make specialty food items like salami and healthy homemade soda, using syrup from fruit. They taught Farmers on the Square market-goers how to cook and about the differences between processed ingredients and locally grown whole foods. During the program, they kept writing journals, in which they documented their experiences, goals and accomplishments—a personal growth aspect of the LEAF Project that Witmer says was extremely valuable.

“I was reading some of their journals, and many of them were writing about how fun it is to be dirty, and how good it felt to work hard and be sweaty,” she reflects. “It is profound that this is a rare opportunity for them.”

This fall, LEAF will take part in a fall work party that Witmer says will include large-scale gleaning (collecting leftover crops) and food preservation. The crew will then donate its efforts to hunger relief programs. During the winter, Witmer hopes to start a Youth Council to the Food System Alliance, in which teenagers interested in sustainable agriculture and healthy food will engage with each other to help build our local food system.

Having enjoyed a successful pilot year, LEAF will expand its program next season to include two internship levels, which will allow this past summer’s participants to engage in a longer internship with more responsibility. Witmer also hopes to make room for a larger number of participants.

“We’ve been hearing a lot of requests to expand the scope of our program to draw in more youth. I certainly see the need for this, and it is LEAF’s early development challenge to find a way to increase our impact while we maintain a transformative impact for the youth interns and a culture of excellence and craftsmanship in everything we do,” explains Witmer. “My dream is to continue to invest significantly in a youth intern crew and equip and empower them to have a larger impact on the community.”

DEVELOPING TOMORROW’S LEADERS

Having grown up in a farming family, Witmer wanted to provide teens with an outlet for meaningful work to get them interested in and educated about how food is grown and raised.

“I believe in what a young person is capable of, and I wanted to provide the opportunity for people to see it,” she explains. “Over time, I believe that interaction with the food system stimulates personal change. In this region, we have access to locally raised food, and we have a remarkably robust food system. I would like to weave the youth into the web of that food system.”

Witmer also hoped to involve a segment of the youth population that she feels hasn’t yet been effectively reached in healthy eating initiatives: everyday teenagers. “I’ve noticed that there are so many opportunities for youth identified with huge needs, but there is very little out there for normative kids. Also, a lot of times, with childhood obesity in the public health arena, the focus is on the really young kids, which is great and absolutely necessary. But, I think a lot of great work happening would be made better if it was available to all kids of all backgrounds,” she says.

“I wanted to work with teenagers, to teach them how to make their own food choices. This will impact the individual [teens], and they will impact their families powerfully. I think a really effective way of looking at the family food culture is through the eyes of teenagers. Youth have such amazing things to say. What would it look like if they rewrote our food guide?”

Witmer’s dream to combine teaching youth with her passion for agriculture has proven a lot of adults wrong. There *are* plenty of teens willing to work hard if you provide them with an outlet. They *do* have a strong desire to help others. They *do* care about where their food comes from. Teens *are* excited about cooking and eating. And, through the LEAF Project, the members of this group have become environmental and healthy-eating ambassadors to their immediate families and Harrisburg communities.

In a time when our children are growing up with excess consumerism and hyper-technology, this group of teens is a breath of fresh air. Imagine a world with these exceptional teens at the wheel. It’s a future that I am personally more optimistic about having had the privilege of meeting them. **B**



A FULL-TIME SCHOOL

CASA Student: A new year, a new charter.

BY KEELY FICKAU



Keely Fickau

Editor's Note: This article is the first in an occasional series by students of the Capital Area School for the Arts Charter School.

On Aug. 26, students walked into the Capital Area School for the Arts Charter School (CASA) for their first day of school, eager new and old staff members awaiting them.

CASA, founded in 2001, survived for 12 years on donations and scholarship money from parents and arts patrons throughout the area, but the program's teachers and administrators had bigger plans in mind: to become a full-time school. Many CASA students attended half the day, either morning or afternoon, and they had to provide their own transportation to Strawberry Square, as well as pay tuition. Now the school is tuition-free, with busing provided through the various school districts.

"CASA brought together young artists from all over central Pennsylvania," said Cheryl Giles-Rudawski, former CASA principal who was instrumental in executing the charter school process. "Problems gradually started with this model because districts did not want to pay to send students to CASA so the financial burden started to fall on parents. This was not the intention, and many students started declining their acceptance because they could not pay. So, CASA decided to become a charter school so that tuition would not be an issue."

According to the CASA website, "A charter school is an independent (tuition-free) public school, custom-designed by local citizens."

In February, the Harrisburg School District board first voted to deny the charter application, but weeks later reversed its decision and accepted the application. Over the course of seven months, CASA board members and staff worked tirelessly to transform the program into a full-time school.

While six arts disciplines remain the core of CASA's curriculum (dance, film, music, theatre, visual arts and writing), new additions to the school include the academic classrooms and libraries, with classes held in nearby Temple University. A fitness area, which used to be next to a CASA classroom, was reconstructed into a cafeteria and a locker area.

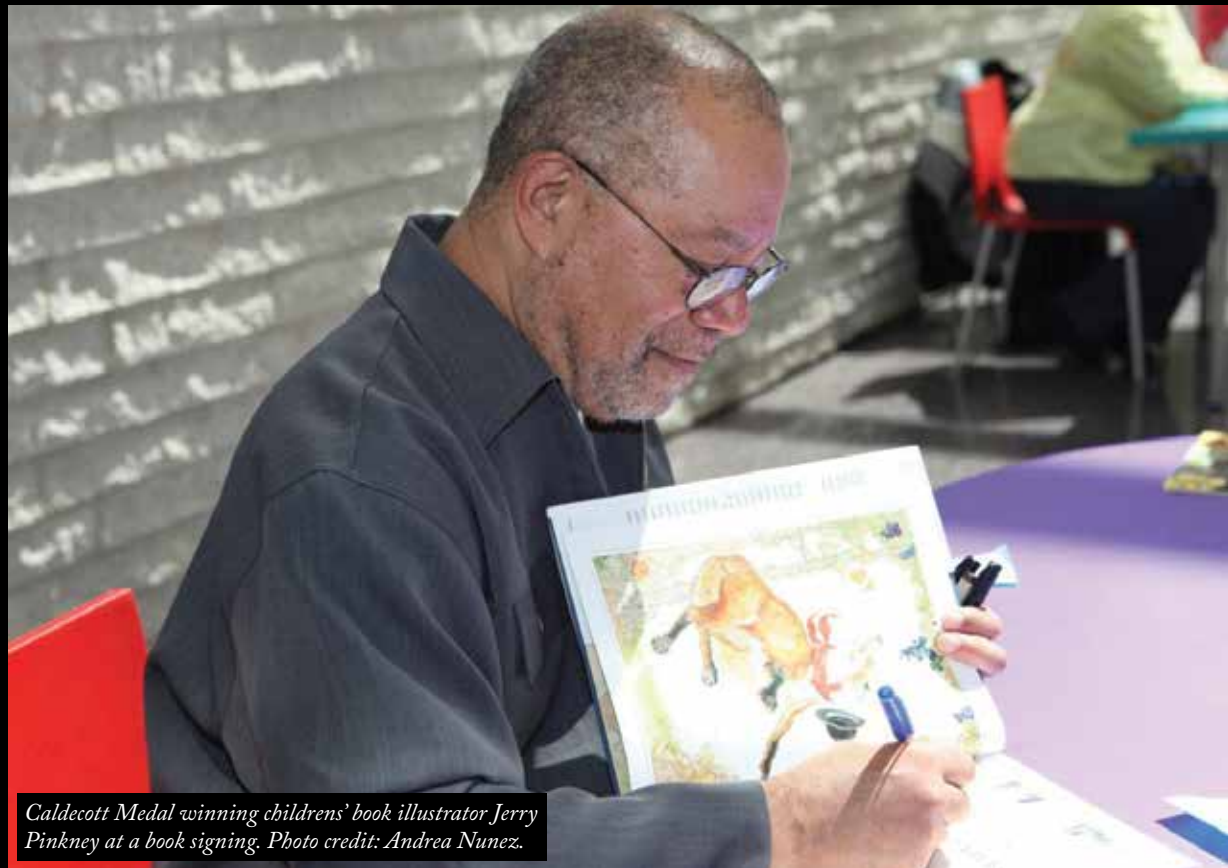
Enrollment continued up to the start of school with 145 students now attending the new charter school, compared with fewer than 100 students last year.

"We hope in the next 10 years that enrollment will keep growing," said Tina Baker, guidance counselor. Timothy Wendling serves as CASA's new principal. **B**

Keely Fickau is a senior at CASA, who hopes to attend NYU and study journalism.



Drops by Kathleen Mulcahy. Her work includes installation pieces, case glass and blown glass objects. Photo Credit: Jim Judkis.



Caldecott Medal winning childrens' book illustrator Jerry Pinkney at a book signing. Photo credit: Andrea Nunez.

GOVERNOR'S AWARDS FOR THE ARTS

Pennsylvania's artists, innovators and patrons will be celebrated when the Governor's Awards for the Arts returns to Harrisburg on Oct. 22. Youth performers and exhibits will be featured at 5:30 p.m. in the Strawberry Square arcade. The awards ceremony begins at 7 p.m. at Whitaker Center for Science and the Arts and is free and open to the public. This year's honorees are:

Jerry Pinkney: *Distinguished Arts Award*

Kathleen Mulcahy and Ron Desmett:
Artists of the Year

LIVE (Chad Taylor, Patrick Dahlheimer and Chad Gracey): *Arts Innovation Award*

Bill and Beverlee Lehr: *Patron Award*

The Harrisburg-Hershey region will showcase its unique cultural assets with pre- and post-event celebrations of local youth and professional artists. The awards ceremony is administered by the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts and events are coordinated by Hershey Harrisburg Regional Visitors Bureau, Jump Street and Citizens for the Arts in Pennsylvania. **B**



Chad Taylor, Patrick Dahlheimer and Chad Gracey, members of the multi-platinum rock band LIVE. Photo Credit: Debra LaCoppola.



Bill and Beverlee Lehr have demonstrated their commitment to the arts through their support at the local, state and national levels. Photo credit: Carl Socolow/Socolow Photography.



The Spirit of Duquesne by Kathleen Mulcahy and Ron Desmett, spouses and artistic partners who work collaboratively and individually. Photo credit: Jim Judkis.

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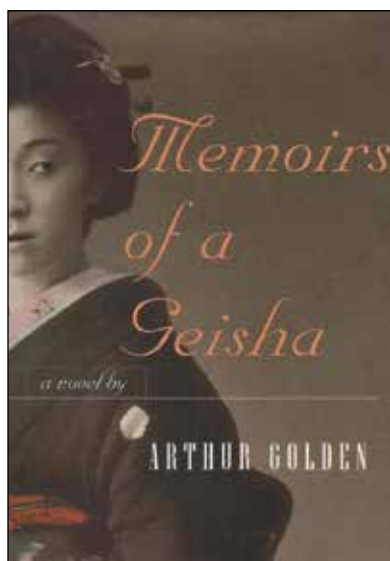
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SEEN AT THE SCHOLAR

Read this: An overview of what is being read by the staff of Midtown Scholar Bookstore.

BY AUBREY BOURGEOIS

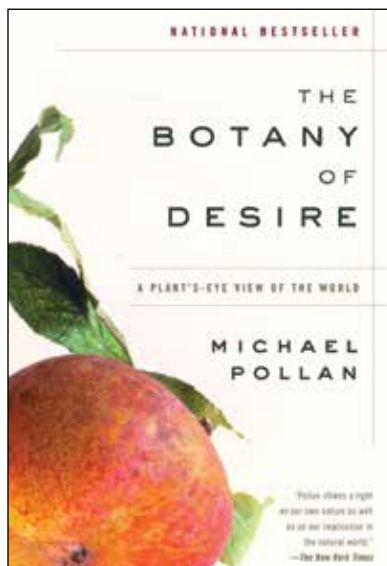


MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA

by Arthur Golden
428pp—Knopf

Good for fans of: Japanese culture, the film, narrative fiction

Why: For fans of the movie, the story of Chiyo Sakamoto is well known, but, as with many page-to-screen adaptations, there is more to the story than the eye has seen. This novel draws the reader into a world known to be historically secret. Set up as though it were a true memoir, it is easy to forget that this is a work of fiction. The intricately woven plot and characters pull you in while still, in their delicate Geisha way, leaving something to be imagined. This is more than a coming-of-age story, more than a romance or historical piece. What readers find when they open the cover relates more closely to a story told while sitting at an elderly grandmother's feet. This book will open your mind and heart to a woman you won't believe doesn't actually exist.



THE BOTANY OF DESIRE: A PLANT'S-EYE VIEW OF THE WORLD

by Michael Pollan
271pp—Random House Trade
Paperbacks

Good for fans of: botany, creative-nonfiction, "The Omnivore's Dilemma"

Why: Best-selling author Michael Pollan brings another fine dish to the table. Taking a close look at four plants that humans have chosen to carefully cultivate, he asks if, maybe, those plants are adapting for us. Taking into consideration the human inclination toward things that are sweet, beautiful, intoxicating or easily controlled, the book is broken up into the four plants that exhibit these characteristics: apples, tulips, marijuana and potatoes, respectively. Taking a look at these plants carefully, we see that the ways that humans have used or changed them for our own gain. But with the plants gaining so much as well, the question remains: Which of us is domesticating the other?

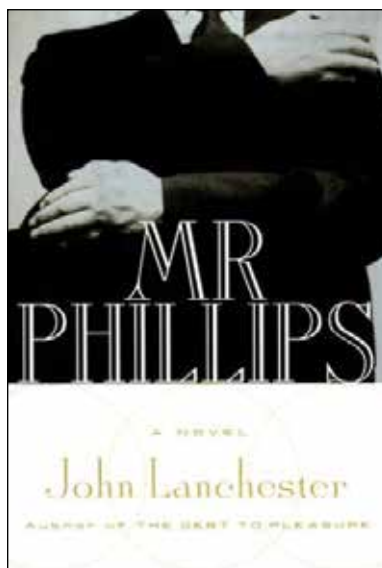
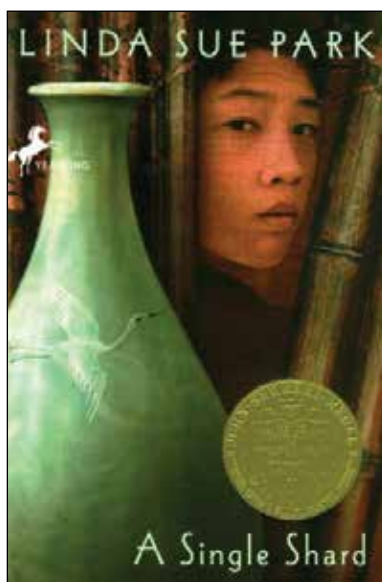
A SINGLE SHARD

by Linda Sue Park
148 pp—Yearling

Good for fans of: young adult novels, Newberry award winners, kids on summer break

Why: In the summer months, it can be quite difficult to get children to open a book, but this quick read might just be the answer. Set in 12th century Korea, this Newberry winner still relates with American

children in the 21st century. A tale of hard work, dedication and the importance of family stretches time and place to reach into the home of every reader. When he accidentally breaks a potter's wares, young Tree-ear tries everything he can to remedy the incident. With an interesting turn at the end that exemplifies kindness and the human need for companionship, this book is a welcome addition to any middle school library.



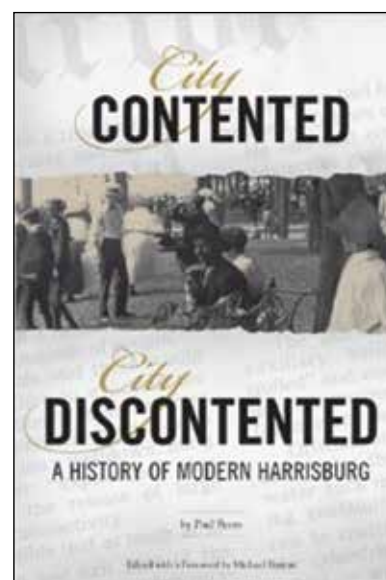
MR PHILLIPS

by John Lanchester
291pp—Marian Wood

Good for fans of: biographical fiction, James Thurber, signed editions

Why: A coming of age novel done in reverse, John Lanchester's Mr Phillips examines a life unraveled. When he is unexpectedly dismissed from his job, Mr Phillips finds even his own

reflection unidentifiable. Without the strength to even admit this truth to his wife, he dresses each morning and wanders the streets surrounding their London home. In a portrait similar to "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty" by James Thurber, Lanchester paints a man looking to escape reality. Splattered with memories from the man's past, rather than daydreams like Thurber's subject, the reader is given a truthful look at the story's protagonist. Though this is a work of fiction, it reads more similarly to a memoir. With two copies of this hardcover on the shelves, one signed by the author, customers are welcome to take this modern day wandering "everyman" home with them.



CITY CONTENTED, CITY DISCONTENTED

By Paul Beers
404pp—Midtown Scholar Press

Good for fans of: Harrisburg history, urban planning, newspapers

Lastly, with Election Day right around the corner, make sure to brush up on the history of Harrisburg with Midtown Scholar Press's own "City Contented, City Discontented: A History of Modern Harrisburg." The collected columns of Paul Beers, the late Patriot News columnist, give good backdrop to the issues facing our city today. Edited and transcribed by Penn State Harrisburg history professor Michael Barton, this book documents both the good times and the bad that have affected our city for the last century. **B**

B ridge Street in New Cumberland exudes “Main Street, U.S.A.” It mixes prime rib and Pilates, kayak rentals and ballet classes, people salons and dog salons. Drivers decelerate 30 feet before intersections, and sidewalks refuse to crack.

But turn down 4th Street, and things are less glossy. Bamboo blinds hang unevenly in the Martial Arts Academy building. A coin dealer uses metal detector clip art on his sign. And tattoo artist Frank McManus has mismatched window dressings. The left shop window contains an orchid plant and five bricks. The right window is empty, minus a comatose moth in the corner.

The door is locked for an early evening appointment. After a stint on Spike TV’s “Ink Master” in July, Frank is back in business. I study the policies on the pane, “No Kids, No Checks, No Attitude, No Refunds,” and stretch my neck to hear the needle buzz. A knock and elbow bump later—his surgical gloves rule out a handshake—I’m on the couch, listening to Jim Dzur, 37, describe the pain.

If it’s a line, it feels like an X-Acto knife. Shading feels more like a blowtorch.

“It’s like a really bad brush burn or a lot of bee stings,” adds Frank. “I hate getting tattooed.”

Frank, 29, has been tattooing professionally for six years, which makes him an infant in the industry. In 2002, he dropped out of Cedar Cliff High School months before graduation. “I was always a different kid. They weren’t doing anything to make me a better artist,” he says.

When the library wouldn’t sign his dropout papers because he owed dues, Frank roamed the halls for nearly two months until the principal offered to pay them. Frank insists that quitting school was one of the best decisions he’s ever made.

Jim lets out a sturdy sigh. “I know, buddy. I know it sucks,” says Frank as he finishes some shading around the ankle. Yoda will take another session to complete, but Jim is eager to discuss tattoo culture and the hippo on his belly before hitting the road.

After a smoke, Frank settles in to his “desk” chair. His light blue Vans shirt and checkerboard slip-ons brighten up the dark but cozy parlor. He keeps the Winston Gold Box handy.

True to tortured artist form, Frank says his art teachers hated him because he wouldn’t follow their rules. He sketched every day in school and then every day at his gas station job a few years later. That’s where a regular convinced Frank to hand over his portfolio to a couple of “tattoo buddies.” Shortly after, Frank became an apprentice at Permanent Impressions in Lemoyne. He spent two years there before opening Brass Monkey Studios in Harrisburg.

Frank describes the early learning process as “magical.” He lifts his pant leg to show me a skull tattoo he did on his thigh for practice, which he warns is terrible. He had to work upside down and couldn’t hold on to anything for the pain. There are still some unfinished lines.

However, now that he’s received some career recognition and feels satisfied with his style, Frank admits that tattooing is less enchanting. “Now that I know I’m in and I can do it, now it’s pressure.”

Frank beat out hundreds of applicants for a spot on the reality-competition series “Ink Master.” Though his experience was short-lived—he was the first to be eliminated for a scorpion tattoo and baboon cover-up on an inmate—he’s garnered a lot of local attention. “It was a little hard to take at first just ‘cause I’m not used to it,” he says. While Frank realizes that the fame is good for business, he doesn’t want it to change him. “If I, in any way, start thinking I’m cool, I might start tricking myself [into an ego]. I don’t like that.”

When he’s not rushing to complete a tattoo on camera, Frank usually spends 30 minutes on consultations and hours on research before picking up a pencil. If he’s

BACK TO THE INK

Following a brief shot of fame, Frank McManus has returned to his tattoo art.

BY SAMANTHA MOORE



Photo by Dani Fresh. www.danifresh.com

doing a Japanese phoenix with a fire and a skull, he might draw the fire 10 different times after studying various Japanese artists. Sketching sometimes takes up to 15 hours. That’s why, when he has time for simple walk-ins, they can be cathartic.

After four years in the city, Frank moved his work to New Cumberland in 2012. His business partner, Bryan Campbell, rents the space so Frank can focus on his art. “I was tired of owning a business,” says Frank. “Upkeep, bills, having a shop phone,” he explains.

Indeed there’s no shop phone in sight, and his mobile voicemail still sounds tired: “Please leave an intriguing message. If it’s boring, please text me.” Fortunately, Frank’s assistant schedules most of his appointments.

In New Cumberland, Frank says he does 40 percent more business than he did in Harrisburg. When I ask why, he cites inner-city stigma. People from Colonial Park, the West Shore and Hershey either didn’t want to deal with parking or were too concerned about crime, he says. “I don’t think it’s really anything Harrisburg specific. I think it’s city problems.”

Although he’s tattooed all kinds of people—lawyers, doctors, accountants, cops, drug dealers, ex-cons, bikers—he says he generally likes to keep the conservative elite at bay.

“They have their thing. They appreciate a master’s degree and a super big paycheck and a retirement, and I think that’s awesome. But go and like that. I won’t

bother you about what you like, and you don’t bother me about what I like.”

“Let’s just not try to play the ‘everybody’s going to get along’ game,” he pleads, “because we’re not. Maybe there’s a potential for us to reach some sort of consciousness, but right now, we don’t have it. Let’s be realistic about it at least.”

Self-described as “overly philosophical” and wary of the government, Frank tells me that visible tattoos communicate a worldview. The fact that he’s tattooed on his hands lets people know he doesn’t personally value white-collar ideals.

Frank grew up in a more conservative Presbyterian family. But when his grandparents died, he says his family fell out of the strict Sunday routine. These days, his mom, dad, little brother, half-sister and niece attend different churches or no church. Frank remembers sketching on Bibles to pass the time.

At the front of the shop, a messy stack of stencil transfer paper looks like its own kind of sacred text, with rose petal outlines peeking out. Parts of his one-room parlor are orderly—three skeleton paintings are perfectly positioned on the lavender wall—while other parts are chaotic like the papers. But chaos, he says, serves his process.

The only schedule Frank follows is his tattooing schedule. Other than that, sleep and food fall by the wayside. If he’s really inspired, he’ll stay up for 24 or 36 hours; sometimes he won’t eat for a day. Frank refuses to take sleeping pills or anti-depressants because his product wouldn’t be the same, he says. “The reason that I create artwork in the way that I do is because I don’t have a schedule. It’s cause my life’s f***d up.”

He challenges me to name the last rich kid who made great art. “They don’t have any need to. I need to because I feel like shit a lot of the time,” he laughs, tugging on his buoyant hair.

From the way Frank engages his clients, you wouldn’t know he’s distressed. He introduces his “buddy Hawk,” who lifts his shirt to show me two colorful sparrows for his two children. Frank lets Hawk ramble about his back surgery, shuffle around the shop and arrange the table with lots of pillows. Hawk strolls outside to wait until we’re finished, and Frank, smiling, fiddles with the creases in his jeans.

He whips his hands behind his head and rotates in his chair. “A lot of the time, I don’t feel like I’m making an active decision to create [a piece of art]. It just pours out,” he confesses. “So if I have to stay up for three days, I have to. That’s a true need.” **B**

THE HILLS ARE ALIVE

THE PERRY COUNTY HILLS,
THAT IS, WITH MUSIC.

BY
DON
HELIN



Last Bison

From Guthrie to Gershwin, Basie to Brahms, Perry County comes alive each year with a wealth of musical programs. Whether it's the Festival at Little Buffalo in early October, the Fetter House classical music series in the fall and early spring, or the internationally acclaimed Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering in late June, there is something for every ear.

THE FESTIVAL AT LITTLE BUFFALO

On Oct. 5, the Festival at Little Buffalo will celebrate its 30th anniversary with an array of great music, tasty food and a wide variety of interesting vendors. The festival runs from noon to dusk at Little Buffalo State Park and is free of charge, although donations are welcome.

Carol Vrcarich, the first executive director of the Perry County Council of the Arts, remembers the beginning. "It was the summer of 1983, and a number of us gathered around a kitchen table trying to figure out how to celebrate the arts in

Perry County. One of our committee members suggested a festival."

From those humble beginnings grew one of the most successful music festivals in central Pennsylvania. However, challenges abounded for the organizers. For the first 10 years, festival acts played on a somewhat rickety temporary stage.

"The final straw," Carol's husband Tom told me, "was when we hosted a clogging act, and I worried the stage would fall in. Fortunately, our group of volunteers, the Buffalos, went to work and, during one summer, built the Moore Pavilion." The pavilion became home to the festival, as well as a number of other musical events at Little Buffalo State Park.

Over the past 30 years, a number of national acts have graced the stage—Arlo Guthrie, Kathy Mattea, Rosanne Cash and Leon Redbone to name a few. "One of the most memorable festivals occurred the Saturday after 9-11," Tom remembers. "Richie Havens headlined the show and, when he got up on that stage and sang

patriotic songs, everyone rose to sing along. There wasn't a dry eye in the audience, including mine."

This year, musicians once again will play on the three stages; arts and crafts vendors will be in attendance; and there will be poetry readings, workshops, demonstrations and lots of great food. The performers, some new to the festival and some who have played previously, are always diverse and crowd-pleasers.

The Buffalo Kids area will be active again, including dance, music and magic. Parking is ample and convenient, so visit the website, pick out your favorite acts and come prepared to enjoy toe-tapping music, tasty food and items for sale.

CLASSICAL MUSIC MOMENTS

For more than 20 years, the Sunday Arts Hour has brought beautiful classical music to central Pennsylvania. This autumn, you have an opportunity again to join the tradition and savor an afternoon of music from some of central Pennsylvania's leading performers.



Photos by Frank Baker

The historic Fetter House in Landisburg, Pa., built in 1848 and the current site of the Arts Hour, was the family home of the late Lady Marjorie Fetter-Goossens. The Steinway grand piano in the parlor belonged to her husband, Sir Eugene Goossens, a composer, violin virtuoso and symphony conductor.

Sir Goossens' fabulous piano continues to delight music lovers, thanks to the generosity of Lady Goossens and the Perry County Historical Society.

Dick Gregg has been the driving force behind these programs. "Many of the musicians," he said, "come back time and again because they love the parlor setting and the wonderful Steinway piano."

When I asked him who was his favorite performer, he said, "That's really tough because there have been so many great ones, but John Eaken was our first performer, and his wonderful trio has played for us a number of times. They even played for my 50th wedding anniversary celebration."

Each year, there are four Sunday Arts Hour concerts—the first Sunday of October, November, February and March. The concerts this fall will be presented by pianist Steve Rudolph in October and Bucknell College Music Professor Barry Hannigan in November. Be sure to check the Perry County Council of the Arts website for times and locations since the concerts are now divided between the Fetter House in Landisburg and the Landis House in Newport.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

It may not take place until next June, but it is perhaps Perry County's most noted annual music event and is definitely worth the wait. In 2014, the Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering will be held June 25 to June 29 at Little Buffalo Campground, about five miles west of Newport.

This internationally acclaimed festival brings

together autoharp enthusiasts from around the world for five days of workshops, concerts and around-the-clock music-making. Now in its 23rd year, the festival features concerts and workshops by some of the folk world's best musicians.

Dr. George Orthey is the founder of this musical happening, as well as the premier maker of autoharps for the past 50 years. Orthey began building instruments in 1964, and this avocation became a full-time enterprise when he returned to Newport after 28 years of service with the U.S. Army Veterinary Corps.

Over the years, Orthey has built 1,500 autoharps and 1,639 mountain dulcimers, along with a number of other instruments. He currently has the wood cut out for eight more autoharps. "If my health hangs in there," he said, "I hope to build a hundred more autoharps, then we'll see." Knowing George, I believe he'll make that goal.

Orthey autoharps have been owned and played by some of the finest musicians in the world—June Carter Cash, Mike Seeger, Doc Watson, Patsy Stoneman and most of the Carter family, the first family of country music.

I asked him how he got to know June Carter and Johnny Cash. "After I had built a number of harps, a friend suggested I travel to Carter Fold, home to the Carter family, and set up a booth," he said. "While there, Janette Carter, June's first cousin, stopped by and liked what she saw. Her brother, Uncle Joe Carter, suggested I make three harps, one of those would be for June. I'm not a musician myself, so it's been a thrill for me to become friends with the Carter family and enjoy them and other terrific musicians playing my instruments."

If you're interested in learning to play the autoharp, you can register for a number of workshops at the festival. And, if you're in the market to buy an autoharp, there are normally at

least seven of the world's best-known autoharp luthiers on site.

For those of you who can't wait until next June to learn to play the autoharp or hear toe-tapping music played on the 'harp, the Mini-Mountain Laurel workshop and concert series is for you. This is a group of afternoon workshops and evening concerts with recognized autoharp masters beginning on Nov. 1 to 2 and continuing monthly thereafter. Check out ortheyautoharps.com for the exact times and locations.

MORE MUSIC

In addition to the musical events mentioned above, there are many other gatherings around the county, such as a coffee house series sponsored by the Perry County Council of the Arts, church recitals and concerts, a number of festivals at wineries and a community theater each spring. So what are you waiting for? Place these wonderful musical activities on your calendar and enjoy your own Perry County "Sound of Music." **B**

Don Helin published his first thriller, "Thy Kingdom Come," in 2009. His recently published thriller, "Devil's Den," has been selected as a finalist in the Indie Book Awards. Contact Don at his website, www.donhelin.com.

GOING THERE

Perry County Council of the Arts
www.perrycountyarts.org

Mountain Laurel Autoharp Gathering
www.mlag.org

The Little Buffalo Festival
www.littlebuffalofestival.blogspot.com

PLAYING NOW...

Change unfolds at a rapid clip at Midtown Cinema.

BY TREVOR PIERCE



Maybe it's been awhile since you last visited Midtown Cinema, Harrisburg's very own art-house movie theater.

That wouldn't surprise Adam Porter, the cinema's new director of operations. Since he took the helm a few months back, lots of folks, often people from the neighborhood, have popped their heads in for the first time in years.

"A lot of the local people have made a point to see what's new," said Porter. "We've been getting rave reviews for what we've started."

So then, what is new? Plenty, as it turns out.

Perhaps most significantly, Midtown Cinema is undergoing a general upgrade, along with a transition from 35mm film to digital projection. The adoption of digital will greatly expand the cinema's access to film libraries, allowing it to offer themed series throughout the year.

"We're going to start several series that people can buy packages for," explained Stuart Landon, the cinema's new director of community engagement. "We're hoping to acquire the rights to the films from American Film Institute's '100 Years... 100 Movies' list, we're looking at bringing a series of documentaries in, and lastly, a children's series of Saturday morning cartoons so we can get the younger crowd in here, as well as children of all ages."

The most dramatic transition will occur from Oct. 18 to 24.

"On top of transferring to digital, we're going to be upgrading our facilities. The screens, the curtains, the acoustics and the sound system all will be improved," said Landon. "We're looking at getting better lighting, as well. It'll be a really fun week for us with a ton of work to do, and our membership program will be kicking off at the same time."

Membership will provide customers with discounted tickets, as well as perks including

vouchers for free popcorn, gift passes and invitations to VIP events.

Midtown Cinema will keep at least one screen open at all times during the work, holding a mini-festival of B-movies.

"While we're moving to digital, we're going to have a whole week of double features at a low cost," said Landon. "We'd love for everyone to come out and help celebrate our future at the Midtown Cinema, as we show all these fabulous films from the past."

Porter and Landon have been running the show since June, when owner GreenWorks Development parted ways with Amy Trout, who ran the cinema for several years with husband Kevyn Knox.

"It was apparent that there needed to be a team instead of just one individual at the helm," said Porter. "I've known Stuart personally for a long time, and our combined skill sets should result in quite a big change here."

Porter's experience in creating environments suited to customers' needs has informed Midtown Cinema's renovation efforts. The team has already begun responding to customer requests through rescheduling the theater's show times.

"We have loyal patrons, and we're listening to what they ask for," said Landon. "Some have asked for earlier matinees, specifically on weekends, and it was difficult for others to get from work to a 5:15 showing. We're making the adjustments, and have moved our second showings to 6 or afterwards."

"We want to make it so folks can come to the Midtown Cinema for more than just the movie, using this as a community space," added Porter. "We want this to be a relaxing, fun and important place to be."

The cinema café has focused on becoming a destination in its own right, with free wi-fi and an extensive and unique in-house drink menu. "Our

fantastic barista Rachel Boone has developed about a dozen signature drinks that are ridiculously fun," said Landon.

One of Boone's most popular creations is The King, an Elvis-inspired blended combination of coffee, peanut butter, bananas and bacon. The café has also sourced products from several local eateries, including the Yellow Bird Café, Little Amps Coffee Roasters and Karen's Krunch.

Community integration also has played a large role in the Midtown Cinema's new programming schedule.

"We are really excited to be partnering with other local organizations to utilize our open nights," said Landon.

Recent events include an exclusive screening of Sara Bozich and GK Visual's new series, "What's on Tap with Sara Bozich," and the launch of the theater's "3rd in The Burg" series, which features a low-cost movie after-party for every 3rd in The Burg.

In the end, the "new" Midtown Cinema aims to be more community-focused, welcoming to patrons and pleasant to visit.

"Independent film is an important resource for the community. You get to hear the voices of filmmakers from all over the world," said Landon. "We still offer the same quality independent film. Our core value is that those voices can be heard right here in Midtown." **B**

Midtown Cinema is located at 250 Reilly St., Harrisburg. For more information, including show times, membership programs and special events, call 717-909-6566 or visit MidtownCinema.com or [Facebook.com/ReillyMidtownCinema](https://www.facebook.com/ReillyMidtownCinema).

Live in Concert at Messiah College



PHOTO BY FRANK STEWART

ABYSSINIAN: a gospel celebration featuring the *Jazz At Lincoln Center Orchestra* with Wynton Marsalis and *Chorale Le Chateau* conducted by Damien Sneed

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thepigmerchants.com

Presentation By:

Dr. Lee Barrett

Professor of System Theology
Lancaster Theological Seminary
lts.org

Other Participants

Local artists and anyone who cares about the intersection of faith, the arts and the creative process

Where:

Grace United Methodist Church
216 State St., Harrisburg, Pa.
717-238-6739; graceinharrisburg.org

When:

Friday, Oct. 18
7 p.m.
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Local Focus



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ECLECTIC AUTUMN

There's something for everyone this month.

BY DAN WEBSTER

A giant “glamour” shot of a Canadian and, no, we aren’t talking Bieber. A family of band members and a band of boys grace our Harrisburg haunts this October. Get the skinny on them below.

ROBERT RANDOLPH & THE FAMILY BAND, FEDLIVE, OCT. 3, DOORS AT 7:30 P.M.: The past few years have been a dedicated slog for Robert Randolph and his two parts rock ‘n’ roll, one part gospel and a twist of blues of a band. His new album, “Amped Up” (three years in the making), has all the elements of the past success he’s had with the energizing, steel-guitar sounds. While the first track, “Amped Up”, is a crowd-pleaser, the band takes on issues of economic justice (“Lickety Split”), returning vets (“Welcome Home”) and a long, lost friend (“Blacky Joe”), all while maintaining great spirit and the foundational undertones of gospel, a musical heritage Randolph grew up on.

JAY ARNER, THE MAKESPACE, OCT. 13, DOORS AT 7:30 P.M.: Jay Arner, a Vancouver-based artist, has released his self-entitled album with a giant headshot of himself on the cover, a bold move for a relatively obscure artist and a self-described “shy guy.” His songs harken back to new wave music due to his use of analogue synths and a flat, calm vocal sound. The songs have an Ambulance Ltd. (remember those one LP wonders?) vibe to them, albeit with less production. Call it Canadian summer at The MakeSpace and check this artist on the rise.

THE HACKENSAW BOYS, APPALACHIAN BREWING COMPANY, OCT. 25, DOORS AT 8 P.M.: This string band from Charlottesville has busked and brought game around the world with their old timey songs. After having just completed another European tour, they come to fall in America at just the right time, prepared to elicit yee-haws and boisterous hoedowns. Listen to favorites, “Keep it Simple” and “Can’t Catch Me” for a taste of their country music variety. **B**

Mentionables: Marco Benevento, Appalachian Brewing Company, Oct. 10, doors at 8 p.m. / March Fourth Marching Band, Appalachian Brewing Company, Oct. 11, doors at 8 p.m. / Cabinet, FedLive, Oct. 25, doors at 8 p.m.

10 | 5

ROBERT RANDOLPH & THE
FAMILY BAND, OCT. 3

FEDLIVE, 234 N. 2ND ST.,
HARRISBURG

STARTS AT 7:30 P.M.

10 | 10

MARCO BENEVENTO, OCT. 10

APPALACHIAN BREWING CO.
50 N. CAMERON ST.,
HARRISBURG

STARTS AT 8 P.M.

10 | 11

MARCH FOURTH
MARCHING BAND, OCT. 11

APPALACHIAN BREWING CO.
50 N. CAMERON ST.,
HARRISBURG

STARTS AT 8 P.M.

10 | 15

JAY ARNER, OCT. 13

THE MAKESPACE
1916 N. 3RD ST., HARRISBURG

STARTS AT 7:30 P.M.

10 | 25

THE HACKENSAW BOYS, OCT. 25

APPALACHIAN BREWING CO.
50 N. CAMERON ST.,
HARRISBURG

STARTS AT 8 P.M.



Robert Randolph & the Family Band (photo credit: jmimna.com)



COMMUNITY CORNER

Harrisburg Mayoral Debate

Oct. 3: Join community group Harrisburg Hope as it hosts a forum and debate among candidates running for city mayor. The event begins at 6 p.m. at the Cooper Student Center on HACC's main campus in Harrisburg. More information is at www.harrisburghope.com.

2013 Expo and Design Awards

Oct. 3: This year, the Central Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, alongside Harrisburg University of Science and Technology, will host the annual day-long conference and expo on the HU campus. The event will include vendor exhibitions, a social hour, speakers, education sessions and the design awards presentation. For information, visit www.aiacentralpa.org.

Benefit for the PA Hallowed Ground Project

Oct. 3: Visit Midtown Scholar Bookstore as the Spiritual Messengers play authentic gospel music to support the work of PA Hallowed Ground, a project to conserve, interpret and honor burial sites of Pennsylvania's United States Colored Troops (USCT). The benefit will begin at 7:30 p.m. Sponsorships are available at the \$25, \$50 and \$100 levels.

Blue & Gray Gala

Oct. 3: A food and beverage journey through the states will be the theme at this year's National Civil War Museum's Blue & Gray Gala. Throughout the museum galleries, there will be featured a food based on a state theme. The event begins at 6 p.m. and tickets are \$75 per person including all food and beverage. Visit www.nationalcivilwarmuseum.org.

Appalachian Audubon Birdseed and Feeder Sale

Oct. 4-5: Support the wild birds in your neighborhood through participating in the Appalachian Audubon Society's birdseed and feeder sale located at the Camp Hill Shopping Center. Sales will be held Oct. 4, 3 to 8 p.m., and Saturday, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Proceeds will support the society's education and conservation programs. For more information, visit www.appalachianaudubon.org.

20th Annual Wildlife Art Auction Exhibit

Oct. 5: Art connoisseurs are welcome to gather at the Ned Smith Center in Millersburg for a chance to own original artwork by some of Pennsylvania's great artists. The catalog of work is currently available online, and the auction will be held Oct. 5. For more information and the auction catalog visit www.nedsmithcenter.org.

Cornwall Manor Society Fall Festival

Oct. 5: Pancake breakfast, crafts, ice cream sundaes, silent auction and fall mums are only a few of the attractions at the Cornwall Manor's Fall Festival in Cornwall. There will also be pumpkin picking and scarecrow making, good food and walking tours. The festivities kick off at 8 a.m. and will conclude at 1 p.m. All proceeds benefit the programs of the Cornwall Manor Society. Visit www.cornwallmanor.org.

Fight for Air Walk

Oct. 5: Walk with the American Lung Association in the annual Fight for Air Walk. The walk will begin at John Rudy Park in York. The event will also include various activities and a picnic. Participants are encouraged to raise at least \$100 to support the association's advocacy and research programs. For more information, visit www.lunginfo.org/yorkwalk.

Cupcake Cup

Oct. 6: The Harrisburg Cupcake Cup is back for a fifth year with some of the area's most delicious small confections baked by both amateurs and professionals. The event, which benefits the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank, begins at 2 p.m. at the Abbey Bar inside Appalachian Brewing Co., 50 N. Cameron St., Harrisburg. Cost of admission is a \$3 donation or three non-perishable food items. Learn more at www.cupcakecup.org.

Organ Concert

Oct. 6: World-renowned Italian organist Elena Sartori will perform a free concert at Market Square Presbyterian Church, starting at 4 p.m. The program will include works by Bach, Alain, Franck and Mendelssohn. The church is located at 20 S. 2nd St., Harrisburg, with free parking in the Market Square Parking Garage adjacent to the church. Information is at www.marketsquarechurch.org.

Pennsylvania Indian Festival

Oct. 6: Get outside for a hands-on day of learning at the Centennial Barn in Fort Hunter Park. Explore the different ways Native Americans hunted and lived. Play their musical instruments, see their tools and create beadwork. The festival will run from noon to 4 p.m. \$5 per person, \$3 for children (5 and under are free). For more information, visit www.forthunter.org.

Downtown Daily Bread 30th Anniversary

Oct. 6: Starting at 5:30 p.m. at the Hilton Harrisburg, Downtown Daily Bread, a community organization providing support and meals for those in need, will celebrate its 30th anniversary. The evening will feature a special dinner with various guest speakers, a cash bar, silent action and entertainment. Entry is \$130 per person. For more information, go to www.downtowndailybread.org.

Historic Railroad Lecture

Oct. 8: The Harrisburg chapter of the National Railway Historical Society will host a lecture by Larry Eastwood, a prominent figure in NRHS, at Hoss's restaurant in Enola. The lecture will cover the railroad operation from Wilkes-Barre to Montreal spanning 1967 to 1990. The meeting and lecture will begin at 5 p.m. and is open to the public.

Power of the Purse

Oct. 9: Join the Foundation for Enhancing Communities as it celebrates women's role in philanthropy. The event will be held at the Blue Ridge Country Club in Harrisburg from 5 to 7 p.m. The evening will also include a silent auction, refreshments and purses for sale. The entrance fee is \$50 per person with most proceeds supporting an endowment fund for women and families in our area. Information is at www.tfec.org.

2013 Eastern Division National Fall Meet in Hershey

Oct. 9-12: Come see the largest flea market of its kind at the Antique Automobile Club of America in Hershey as over 1,000 show cars will be on display alongside an abundance of other activities. The market will be open 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. during scheduled days and all are admitted for free. For more information and listings of events, visit www.aacmuseum.org.

Unchained Fashion Show

Oct. 10: Unchained will present a fashion show to help fight female human trafficking throughout the world. The designs of Korto Momolu of "Project Runway" will be featured. Admission is \$20 (\$10 for students) with proceeds going to Not in My Backyard, an anti-trafficking organization. The event starts at 7 p.m. at the Life Center, 411 S. 40th St., Harrisburg. Visit www.unchainedfashionshow.com.

Family Fun Day

Oct. 12: The Ned Smith Center will hold its annual Family Fun Day, designed to increase awareness of the natural world with various activities for children and families. Activities include live animal presentations, face painting and a pumpkin patch. Admission is \$5 for ages 2 or older or a Family Four Pack for \$15. For tickets and more information, visit www.nedsmithcenter.org.

Andrew Linker Lecture

Oct. 13: Listen in as Andrew Linker, author of "One Patch of Grass," speaks about the history of baseball on City Island at the John Harris-Simon Cameron Mansion, 2:30 p.m. Linker is an award-winning writer who has spent more than 30 years covering sports. Linker also will sign books. Visit www.dauphincountyhistory.org.

White Cane Awareness

Oct. 15: To recognize Blind Awareness Month, Pennsylvania Association for the Blind and Vision Resources of Central Pennsylvania will hold White Cane Awareness Day at the Pennsylvania Capitol steps, 3rd and State streets, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. VROCP employees, clients and volunteers will greet guests, answer questions and provide information and hand-outs to support this public awareness event. More information is at www.vrocp.org.

CPGLCC Business Networking Mixer

Oct. 17: Bring your business cards and professional attire to the Central Pennsylvania Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce Business Mixer at Alder Health in Lancaster. The mixer will begin at 6 p.m. and conclude at 8 p.m. Registration is \$10. For more information and registration, visit www.cpglcc.org.

Mille for MS Charity Road Rally

Oct. 18-19: Drivers wanted! The Mille for MS returns this year, allowing car enthusiasts to live out their automotive fantasy, with a local appearance by the Porsche Driving School. The weekend event is open to all drivers and cars from past to present. On Friday evening, there will be a reception, silent auction and display of participating cars, followed by a daylong course of driving on Saturday. Last year's event exceeded expectation by raising \$25,000 for the Central PA MS Society. For more information, visit www.milleforMS.com.

Taste of Tango

Oct. 19: Penn State Hershey Dermatology will host "Taste of Tango" beginning at 7 p.m. at the Antique Automobile Club of America Museum in Hershey. Guests are invited to explore the collection of antique cars, feast on a selection of chocolate desserts and dance the night away. Tickets cost \$60 per person and can be reserved by calling 717-531-6049. Proceeds benefit the education and research endowment funds for Penn State Hershey Dermatology.

COMMUNITY CORNER CONTINUED...

Pride of the Susquehanna 25th Anniversary Gala

Oct. 23: Take a cruise on Susquehanna's one and only riverboat to celebrate 25 years of paddling. The evening will begin at 5:30 p.m. and conclude at 9 p.m. Enjoy food, music, a silent auction and the beautiful scenery of the Susquehanna River. Cost is \$50 per person. For more information, visit harrisburgriverboat.com.

Dress for Success "Bella Notte"

Oct. 25: Join the nonprofit that has helped more than 7,000 low-income women with career training and professional attire, Dress for Success South Central PA, as it celebrates its seventh annual fundraising gala, "Bella Notte," at the Harrisburg Hilton Hotel Grand Ballroom, 5:30 to 11 p.m. The event will include silent and live auctions, dinner, live music and casino games. Reservations of \$100 can be made at www.dressforsuccess.org/southcentralpa.

Trunk or Treat

Oct. 26: The Antique Automobile Museum of America invites you for Halloween fun. The museum will offer a special \$5 admission for all from noon to 3 p.m. Halloween-themed activities will be held across the museum, including craft tables and candy hunts, alongside classic automobiles. For more information, visit www.aacamuseum.org.

Oratorio, Sacred & Old Time Gospel

Oct. 27: Capitol Opera Harrisburg and The Music Ministry of Holy Name of Jesus Catholic Church present this one-time-only concert of sacred favorites. The concert will be held at Holy Name of Jesus Catholic Church beginning at 3 p.m. Donations will be accepted at the door.

Essence of Joy

Oct. 27: State Street Academy of Music will kick off its 9th annual Sundays on the Street Concert Season with "Essence of Joy" this month at St. Lawrence Chapel. The choral ensemble will consist of the Penn State University School of Music. Donations of \$10 per person are encouraged and all proceeds go to benefit the Academy, located at 110 State St., Harrisburg. The concert will begin at 4 p.m.

MUSEUM & ART SPACES

Antique Auto Museum at Hershey

161 Museum Dr., Hershey
717-566-7100; aacamuseum.org

"Beautiful Buicks—Buick 110th Anniversary," an exhibit displaying a variety of Buick years, makes and models in honor of the 110th anniversary of the car manufacturer, through Oct. 13.

"Pop Culture & Popular Cars," a trip down memory lane as popular cars of the 1950s-1970s are recreated and celebrated alongside the popular culture of the time, through Oct. 13.

"British Motorcycles in America," a retrospective of classic British bikes, 1940s-1970s, through Oct. 17.

"Lehigh Valley SACC—Shelby Car Show," the Shelby American Automobile Club displays Shelby cars on the grounds surrounding the AACA Museum, Oct. 20, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

Art Association of Harrisburg

21 N. Front St., Harrisburg
717-236-1432; artassocofhbg.com

"Literary Illusions," the fall membership exhibition, through Oct. 10.

"Susquehanna River Exhibition," an exhibition of work by four plein air artists depicting the Susquehanna River, Oct. 18- Nov. 21; reception, Oct. 18, 5-8 p.m.

The Cornerstone Coffeehouse

2133 Market St., Camp Hill
717-737-5026;
thecornerstonecoffeehouse.com

Artwork by Sarah Greenlaw.

Fenetre Gallery

HACC Midtown 2, 2nd Floor
N. 3rd and Reilly Streets, Harrisburg

"Monologues: From the Family Series," photographs by Geoffrey Scott, through Oct. 9.

"My Family and Other Animals," paintings by Cynthia Nixon; reception, Oct. 18, 6-8 p.m.

Gallery@Second

608 N. 2nd St., Harrisburg
galleryatsecond.com

Works by Debra Tritt-Kreiger and Linda Benton McCloskey, through Oct. 12.

Works by Randy McCurdy and Jo Ann Neal Oct. 17 – Dec. 7; reception Oct. 18, 6-9 p.m.

Metropolis Collective

17 W. Main St., Mechanicsburg
717-458-8245
metropoliscollective.com

"Whimsy," an all-woman show featuring selected works by more than a dozen artists, through Oct. 26.

National Civil War Museum

One Lincoln Circle, Harrisburg
717-260-1861;
nationalcivilwarmuseum.org

"1863," an exhibit highlighting the third year of the Civil War, through Dec. 31.

"In the Service of Our Nation: Conscription during the Civil War," an exhibit examining the reasoning that led to conscription acts during the Civil War, through June 2014.

Ned Smith Center for Nature and Art

176 Water Company Rd., Millersburg
717-692-3699; nedsmithcenter.org

"Only Owls," an exhibit of artwork giving a glimpse into the world of owls using a variety of stylistic approaches by more than 30 artists, Oct. 12-March 15.

Rose Lehrman Arts Center

One HACC Dr., Harrisburg
hacc.edu/RoseLehrmanArtsCenter

"Rock Flour," ceramics by Denise Suska Green, through Oct. 2.

"At Home and Away," photographs by Paul Chaplin, Gary Dwight, Sean Simmers and John Whitehead; reception and lecture, Oct. 31, 5:30-7 p.m.

The State Museum of Pennsylvania

300 North St., Harrisburg
717-787-4980; statemuseumpa.org

"Latino-Hispanic Art Display," an exhibit of works by several of Pennsylvania's prominent Latino artists, in recognition of Hispanic Heritage Month, through Oct. 20.

"Pennsylvania Watercolor Society's 33rd Annual International Juried Exhibition," an exhibit of watercolor paintings from across the globe, through Feb. 3.

Susquehanna Art Museum

100 North St., Harrisburg
sqart.org (at the State Museum)

"Construction/Destruction," a display of artwork capturing the idea of the past constructing our present community, through Dec. 1.

Wildwood Park

100 Wildwood Way, Harrisburg
717-221-0292; wildwoodlake.org

"Art in the Wild," an exhibit of outdoor environmental art sites along Wildwood Park's trails and water pools, through October.

Whitaker Center/The Curved Wall

222 Market St., Harrisburg
717-214-ARTS; whitakercenter.org

"Art Brûlée," a showcase of work by the unorthodox pyrographic artist Walker Babington, through Oct. 31.

Yellow Wall Gallery/ Midtown Scholar

1302 N. 3rd St., Harrisburg
717-236-1680; midtownscholar.com

Works in fabric and paper by Beth Aten, through Oct. 12.

"Opening Night 1955," photography of the construction and grand opening of The Boston Store, Oct. 15- Nov. 17; reception, Oct. 18, 6-10 p.m.

READ, MAKE, LEARN

The LGBT Center of Central PA

1306 N. 3rd St., Harrisburg
717-920-9534
centralpalgbtcenter.org

Oct. 3: Women's Group, 7-9 p.m.
Oct. 10, 24: Aging With Pride—Lunchtime Discussion Group, noon- 2 p.m.
Oct. 11: Movies of Substance & Thought (Most), 7 p.m.
Oct. 25: Open Mic Night, 7 p.m.

The MakeSpace

1916 N. 3rd St., Harrisburg
hbgmakespace.com

Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30: Yoga, 7:30-8:30 a.m.
Oct. 5: Collagery, 1-2 p.m.
Oct. 10: Untitled (Stories), 8-9 p.m.

Midtown Scholar Bookstore-Café

1302 N. 3rd St., Harrisburg
717-236-1680; midtownscholar.com

Oct. 1: Sci-fi Writers Group, 7 p.m.
Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30: Midtown Chess Club, 11 a.m.
Oct. 3, 17, 24, 31: Almost Uptown Poetry Cartel, 7 p.m.
Oct. 3: Coffee with Alinsky, presented by Nathan Sooy, 7 p.m.
Oct. 3: Spiritual Messengers fundraiser, 7:30 p.m.
Oct. 4, 11, 18, 25: Nathaniel Gadsden's Writer's Workshop and Jump Street, Inc. present Poetry Night, 7 p.m.
Oct. 5: American Diversity Community Center breakfast fundraiser, 8:30 a.m.
Oct. 6, 13, 20, 27: TED Talks, 1 p.m.
Oct. 7: Swing Dance, 6:30 p.m.
Oct. 8: Harrisburg Social Media Club, 5:30 p.m.
Oct. 8: Young Dauphin County Democrats meeting, 7 p.m.

Oct. 9: Friends of Midtown, Events meeting, 6 p.m.
 Oct. 9: Economic Development Community Engagement Session, 6 p.m.
 Oct. 14: Seven Candles Event, 7 p.m.
 Oct. 15: Capital Area Modern Quilt Guild meeting, 6:45 p.m.
 Oct. 16: Sci-fi/Fantasy Book Club, 7 p.m.
 Oct. 17: Banned Books Book Club, 7 p.m.
 Oct. 18: Coffee Education w/café staff, noon.
 Oct. 18: Tea-tasting w/café staff, 2 p.m.
 Oct. 18: TMI improv, 6 p.m.
 Oct. 18: Comedy Night at the Scholar, 8 p.m.
 Oct. 19: Conversations w/Bhante Sujatha, “Dealing with Anger,” 10 a.m.
 Oct. 19: Chinese Exclusion Act book talk, 4 p.m.
 Oct. 19: Poison Pen Book Club, 5 p.m.
 Oct. 20: Philosophy Salon, Open Discussion, 12:30 p.m.
 Oct. 20: LGBT Book Club, 5 p.m.
 Oct. 20: Sum of One board meeting, 5 p.m.
 Oct. 23: Bike the Burg, 7 p.m.
 Oct. 26: Gene Albano book-signing, 3 p.m.
 Oct. 26: Darnell Weathersby book talk, 5 p.m.
 Oct. 27: Harrisburg Young Professionals Book Club, 2 p.m.
 Oct. 28: Feminism Group Book Club, 7 p.m.

Pride of the Susquehanna Riverboat

City Island, Harrisburg
 717-234-6500
 HarrisbirgRiverboat.com

Oct. 6, 13, 20: Fall Foliage Cruises, 5-7 p.m.
 Oct. 7: Wine and Cheese Cruise - Ruffino Winery
 Oct. 19: Blues Cruise w/Acoustic Stew, 7:30-11 p.m.
 Oct. 22: Family Night Cruise, 6-8 p.m.
 Oct. 27: Crack'in Crabs Cruise, 6-8 p.m.

LIVE MUSIC AROUND HARRISBURG

Appalachian Brewing Co./Abbey Bar

50 N. Cameron St., Harrisburg
 717-221-1083; abcbrew.com

Oct. 10: Marco Benevento
 Oct. 11: March Fourth Marching Band
 Oct. 12: Rocket Brigade Album Release Party
 Oct. 18: SFMS Presents: Celtic Fiddle Fest
 Oct. 25: The Hackensaw Boys

Central PA Friends of Jazz

717-540-1010; www.friendssofjazz.org
 Oct. 13: M.J.s (Annville)
 Oct. 13: Christian Howes “Southern Exposure”(Allen Theatre Annville)

Char’s Tracy Mansion

1829 N Front St., Harrisburg
 717-213-4002; charsrestaurant.com
 Oct. 9, 23: Richie Raggs

The Cornerstone Coffeehouse

2133 Market St., Camp Hill
 717-737-5026
 Oct. 4: Love Crushed Velvet, Unplugged
 Oct. 5: Kayla Jackson
 Oct. 6: David Carr
 Oct. 11: Betsy Barnicle
 Oct. 12: “An Evening of Bruce Springsteen,” led by Doug Morris
 Oct. 13: Kevin Kline
 Oct. 18: Band of Seasons
 Oct. 19: Cosette Gobat
 Oct. 20: Paul Zavinsky
 Oct. 25: Antonio Andrade
 Oct. 26: Rhythm on Main
 Oct. 27: We 3

Fed Live

234 N 2nd St., Harrisburg
 717-525-8077; fedlive.net

Oct. 3: Robert Randolph & The Family Band
 Oct. 25: Cabinet

Hershey Theatre

15 E. Caracas Ave., Hershey
 717-534-3405; hersheytheatre.com

Oct. 8: Celtic Thunder
 Oct. 18: 2Cellos
 Oct. 25: Hershey Symphony Orchestra Presents Halloween Hoots & Horros

HMAC/Stage on Herr

1110 N. 3rd St. 268 Herr St., Harrisburg
 717-441-7506; harrisburgarts.com

Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30: Open Mic Night w/ Mike Banks
 Oct. 3: Nate Myers
 Oct. 4: First Friday w/Aortic Valve
 Oct. 5: The Passionettes w/DiDi Deleuxe and the Dirty Devils
 Oct. 7, 14, 21, 28: Karaoke w/Giovanni
 Oct. 8: Full Service?
 Oct. 10: Strangest of Places
 Oct. 11: s of p
 Oct. 12: This Way to the Egress and Bent Creek Band
 Oct. 17: Mojo Flamenco
 Oct. 18: Mojo Flamenco, The Haircut
 Oct. 19: Trailer Park Cowboys and Smileyfoot
 Oct. 20: The Magic of Steve Hyde and Miss Ashlyn Mae
 Oct. 24: Herb and Hanson
 Oct. 25: Dick and The Deer Gutters w/The Goat Ropin’ Bastards
 Oct. 26: The Passionettes
 Oct. 27: Masque of the Red Death Soiree
 Oct. 31: Blue Moon Gala Party w/Buzzchopper

The MakeSpace

1916 N. 3rd St., Harrisburg
 hbgmakespace.com

Oct. 3: Good Graeff, Chris Hacker, Jesse Mills
 Oct. 29: Rough and Tumble

Midtown Scholar Bookstore-Café

1302 N. 3rd St., Harrisburg
 717-236-1680; midtownscholar.com

Oct. 4: Jeff Miller
 Oct. 5: Good News Café
 Oct. 6: James Keelaghan
 Oct. 10: Denison Witmer
 Oct. 19: Kevin Neidig and Sara Beth
 Oct. 25: Cranston Dean

MoMo’s BBQ & Grille

307 Market St., Harrisburg
 717-230-1030
 momosbbqandgrill.com

Oct. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29: Rhyne McCormick
 Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 30: Open Mic w/ Chuck Britton
 Oct. 4: Octavia Harp
 Oct. 10: Eric Bohn
 Oct. 11: Bob Noble, Voodoo Band
 Oct. 17: Autumn Brew
 Oct. 18: Nate Myers
 Oct. 19: Frank and Lauren
 Oct. 25: Sterling Koch

The Tomato Pie Café

3950 TecPort Dr., Harrisburg;
 717-836-7051; tomatopiecafe.net

Oct. 5: Paul Zavinsky
 Oct. 12: Julie Moffitt
 Oct. 26: Joe Cooney

St. Thomas Roasters

5951 Linglestown Rd., Linglestown
 717-526-4171; stthomasroasters.com

Oct. 4: Rhodes Butt
 Oct. 5: Dan Zukowski
 Oct. 11: Billy Reigns
 Oct. 12: Channalia
 Oct. 18: CotoLo
 Oct. 19: Just Dave
 Oct. 25: Dan & Rob
 Oct. 26: Craig Bonner

The Suba Tapas Bar/Mangia Qui

272 North St., Harrisburg
 717-233-7358; mangiaqui.com

Oct. 4: Nate Myers & The Aces
 Oct. 5: Jake Lewis and The Clergy
 Oct. 11: Jeff Miller
 Oct. 12: The Rusty Doves
 Oct. 18: Mark Santana
 Oct. 25: Kelly Delaveris
 Oct. 26: Adela & Jude

Whitaker Center

222 Market St., Harrisburg
 717-214-ARTS; whitakercenter.org

Oct. 5: Arturo Sandoval
 Oct. 10: Bo Bice
 Oct. 11: Aimee Mann
 Oct. 18: Daily & Vincent
 Oct. 24: An Acoustic Evening With Lyle Lovett & John Hiatt
 Oct. 25: The Piano Guys

THE STAGE DOOR

2nd Street Comedy Club

236 N. 2nd St., Harrisburg
 717-681-8012
 secondstreetcomedyclub.com

Oct. 4, 5: Sean Kent
 Oct. 11, 12: Rich Vos w/Matt Bergman
 Oct. 18, 19: Judah Friedlander w/Saurin Choski
 Oct. 25: Mike Burton w/Matt Stanton

Christian Performing Arts Center

1000 S. Eisenhower Blvd., Middletown
 717-939-9333; hbg-cpac.org

Oct. 25-27: “Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat”

Harrisburg Shakespeare Company

3rd Floor, Strawberry Square, Harrisburg
 717-238-4111; gamutplays.org

Oct. 19: “Spooktacular Tales,”

Hershey Area Playhouse

Sand Hill Road at Cherry Drive, Hershey
 717-838-8164
 hersheyareaplayhouse.com

Oct. 10-13, 17-20: “The Ghost Train”

Hershey Theatre

15 E. Carcas Ave., Hershey
 717-534-3405; hersheytheatre.com

Oct. 26: “The Rocky Horror Picture Show”
 Oct. 29- Nov. 3: “Ghost The Musical”

Little Theatre of Mechanicsburg

915 S. York St., Mechanicsburg
 717-766-0535; ltmonline.net

Oct. 18-19, 25-27: “The Game’s Afoot,” by Ken Ludwig

Open Stage of Harrisburg

223 Walnut St., Harrisburg
 717-232-OPEN; openstagehbg.com

Oct. 4-26: “Gidion’s Knot,”

Oyster Mill Playhouse

1001 Oyster Mill Road, Camp Hill
 717-737-6768; oystermill.com

Sept. 20-Oct. 6: “The Hollow”

Popcorn Hat Players at the Gamut

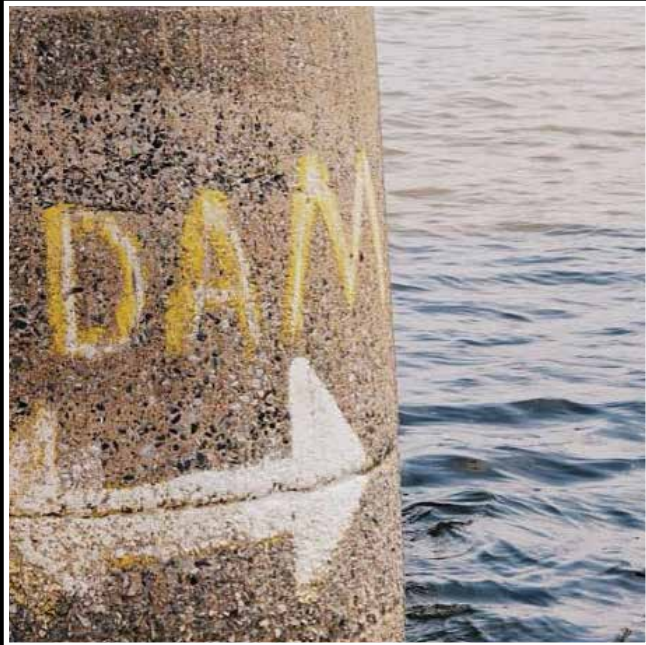
Strawberry Square, Harrisburg
 717-238-4111; gamutplays.org

Sept. 18-Oct. 12: “Little Red Riding Hood”

Theatre Harrisburg

513 Hurlock St., Harrisburg
 717-232-5501
 theatreharrisburg.com

Oct. 31-Nov. 17: “The Rocky Horror Show” (at Whitaker Center)



FEATURED PROFILE |  @JENNGROVE

JENNIFER GROVE

Jennifer Grove is a Pennsylvania native currently living in Uptown. In her spare time she is an amateur photographer, baker and singer. She is also employed by a national organization that works to prevent sexual violence. When not travelling, Jennifer enjoys chilling out, max'in and relax'in all cool at Midtown Scholar, except during 3rd in The Burg where you'll find her at MashUp Food Truck Fest.

WHO ARE SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE PHOTOGRAPHERS?

Ansel Adams and my friend, Erin Taylor (@eltaylo)



WHAT ARE YOU INSPIRED BY?

I am inspired by nature. I immerse myself in it as much as possible.



CAT PERSON OR DOG PERSON?

Cat person. My cat, Charlie, would be deeply offended if I said otherwise.





 DAVID HAMMER
 DHAMMER553





 LOUIE MARVEN
 LOUIEMARVEN





 CLINT BOLDUC
 KINGDOMCOMEDSIGN





 JOHN STAIR
 JOHNASTAIR





 ASHLEY FISHER
 AFISH3380





 LAURA VRABEL
 FRATTWINLAURA





 PAMELA CHEN
 PAMELA_CHEN





 JENNIFER GROVE
 JENNGROVE





 ROBERT GETTY
 RGETTY3





 REBEKAH WILCOX
 NEVERENDINGJOY





 JEFF WATERS
 JEFFWATERSJR





 DANI FRESH
 DANIFREAKINFRESH





 SARA LOVE
 LOVEINTHEBURG




 HEATHER ZELLERS
 LADYMIKE



 LARRY BINDA
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Anna Vazquez, Rosa Perez & Jailene Santiago

LHACC BLOCK PARTY

Music, food, dancing and lots of fun were all part of the Latino Hispanic American Community Center's annual block party on Allison Hill in Harrisburg. At the event, TheBurg was proud to honor five companies that go the extra mile to support the Latino community in our area. Recipients of TheBurg's "Lo Mejor de lo Mejor" (Best of the Best) awards were PinnacleHealth, Capital BlueCross, Giant Food, Hershey's and HACC.



Raquel Gomez



Carmen Bonilla, Roselyn Almodovar, & Ana Angeles



George Fernandez & Ruth Cruz

///////////////// SOCIALBURG / ON THE SCENE ///////////////////



Alan Wybeck & Anela Bence-Selkowitz



Elide Hower



Joanne Landis



Gary & Joan Marr

GALLERY WALK

Fantastic late-summer weather helped attract large crowds to the 28 venues that participated in Gallery Walk last month in Harrisburg. Traditional and non-traditional art spaces opened their doors to visitors, who saw a wide variety of art displayed and watched new works being created. The Art Association of Harrisburg's annual event celebrated its 25th anniversary.



Jess Flynn, Jen Merrill, & Haley Harned



Early into the nearly 200-mile running relay, Jane Gordon was shrouded in a fog so thick that she could barely see the person in front of her, let alone the footpath below.

The 26-year-old Camp Hill resident was in the state of Oregon, deep in the forest, descending upon a mountain both beautiful and mysterious. Gordon had no idea what to expect, until the fog disappeared and she was left staring at a natural treasure.

"You would come out of this smoke and look to your right only to see this huge valley," said Gordon, who was part of a 12-person team that traveled to Oregon for the Hood to Coast Relay on Aug. 23 to 24.

"I asked myself, 'How did I get here?' It was the best views and most amazing scenery," she said. "It kept your mind off of the reality—that I had to run 16 miles in the next 24 hours."

Gordon joined 11 others, most from the Harrisburg area, in Oregon for the relay, widely viewed as one of the most revered of its kind in the nation. Just 1,050 teams are admitted into the event each year, with a one-day lottery deciding the fate of teams across the country.

The 31st annual Hood to Coast Relay was a 198-mile journey that took competitors from the peak of Mount Hood to the tiny town of Seaside, a finish line that allowed runners to sink their toes into the soft sand adjacent to the Pacific Ocean.

"It's like one of those things where, when you're doing it, it's terrible," said Bryan Goldsmith, 23, of Harrisburg. "But, when you finish, the memories are some of the best."

The Coastbusters' team, which was led by Candace Masson, a Mechanicsburg resident, bypassed the lottery by partnering with the American Cancer Society to raise over \$18,000.

The team featured Masson, co-captains Gordon and Mike Cohen, Martin Goldman, Bryan Goldsmith, Natalie Phillips, Brad Heivly, Leah Stefanski, Hannah Walsh, Jessica Keister, Amy Thornton and Caitlin Prunty.

Masson's team raised more than \$19,400 in a little over a year. As a result, the team has automatic entry into the 2014 race if they choose to do it again, she said.

For Gordon, who was a seasoned runner beforehand, the experience was something that she couldn't predict.

"I think, going into it, we were nervous based on how daunting of a task it was," she said. "So, we didn't have time to anticipate everything that was going on. And even leading up to the relay, it was really exciting."

Not just for her, but for 26-year-old Brad Heivly, an auditor in Harrisburg who hadn't run a legitimate race before in his life.

"The race itself was constant high energy, constantly running and picking someone up and dropping them off, and it continued for 30 hours. In 30 hours, I had about 13 minutes of sleep."

HARRISBURG TO HOOD TO COAST

Local team runs, climbs, endures in famously grueling relay race.

BY CORY MULL



His hardest run took place midway through the event, when he was tasked with finishing a 7.5-mile leg. It was the farthest he had ever run at one time. And it was pitch black, maybe 50 degrees, he said, and was a continual uphill. But, at the top, he was met with a pretty nice view.

"By the time I was up there, it was sunrise," he said. "I was on the crest of whatever peak we were on, surrounded by tall trees. Basically, you felt like you were deep in nature."

Technical details may have seemed mundane, but they proved to be some of the most important aspects. To meet the demands of an exhausting race, the team stockpiled essential food like granola bars, protein bars and crackers along with Gatorade, soda and water.

And since the race took place over nightfall, runners were required to pace with headlamps and fluorescent vests to account for traffic.

Otherwise, the most important resource was the transportation. The team employed two vans, with two men and four women in each one. That meant, Heivly quipped, "The guys drove everywhere, and, as a result, the ladies were well rested."

Sleep was hard to come by. Most legs consisted of four to seven miles, with routes taking anywhere from 40 to 75 minutes to complete.

"You're sardines in a Dodge minivan," said Goldsmith, who was probably the most accomplished runner on the trip, having completed another 200-mile relay from Miami to Key West previously. "The van is constantly at the next checkpoint, everyone is coming in and out, we were lost half the time, so there's not really a moment where you can get sleep."

Goldsmith and the others were able to fight off cramps and stiffness along the way, though.

"The big thing is the mental aspect to it," he said. "I would say to myself, 'Well OK, it's 2 a.m. and you're exhausted, but you have to do it anyway.'"

But the reality on the trip, Gordon said, is that you don't really complain. You know you won't get much sleep. You realize that it's going to be hard, and it's surely going to hurt. But that's part of the allure.

"I think the part that made it feel real for me was, when we were having down time, we saw some of the teams that were in the 'Hood to Coast' movie," said Gordon, referring to a 2010 documentary on a previous relay. "We had been training for almost a year, and I realized that I was finally here."

He added: "It wasn't the running part that was most rewarding, but the experience and being part of the biggest relay and knowing that we'd done so much work for the American Cancer Society." **B**

CLEAN SHOT

A well-maintained gun is a safe gun.

BY KERMIT G. HENNING

Whether you are a target shooter, a benchrest shooter, a varmint hunter, a general all-around hunter or merely own a gun for home or personal protection, nothing affects the accuracy of your firearm more than a clean barrel. A clean, well-maintained barrel leads to tighter groups and more confidence for you as a shooter, no matter what your target may be.

Any mechanical device, including firearms, demands regular and proper maintenance. For guns, a good cleaning and lubrication after each use ensures peak performance, but it does not mean that your firearm must be totally disassembled to clean it. Unless there are special circumstances like extremely dirty shooting conditions or exposure to bad weather, any firearm can get a good fundamental cleaning in five easy steps.

The first step may seem so obvious but is the most important one in the entire process. Make sure your gun is unloaded! Take out all the clips or magazines, remove the bolt from your rifle or lock open the action of a semi-automatic rifle, shotgun or pistol. Brush these parts with solvent until like-new clean and dry off completely. Bolts should be lightly lubricated with a fine gun oil.

While you are at it, examine the ammunition coming out of your gun. If you are a waterfowler, for example, everything you carry with you is at one time or another exposed to dirt, water and the worst shooting conditions imaginable. Putting dirty shells in a dirty gun makes for poor performance, as well as unsafe practices.

The next step is to brush the barrel with solvent. For guns that have been properly maintained and regularly cleaned, a nylon brush may suffice. For barrels that may have a buildup of carbon, powder, lead and copper, totally fouling the barrel, a stiffer bronze brush is ideal. Start from the breech end and work to the muzzle. This keeps the dirt from being washed back into the action. Repeat as needed, depending on how dirty the barrel is. Let the solvent sit in the barrel for 10 to 15 minutes to allow it to work, to soften and dissolve any fouling.

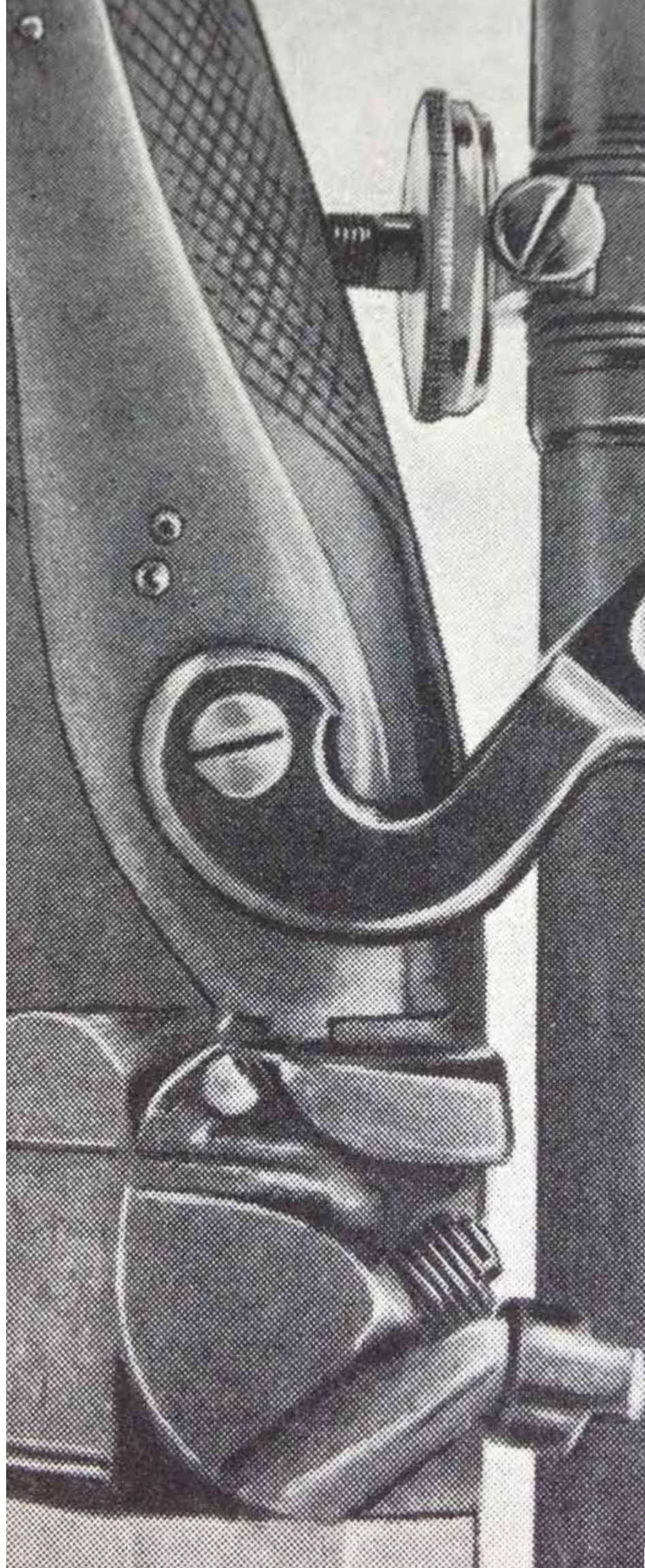
Now, run the brush through the barrel again and again, as often as necessary to remove all the softened gunk. Once you have removed the bulk of the dirt, run a cloth patch down the barrel to push out any excess carbon. Remove the dirty patch and replace it with a clean one for every pass through the barrel—again, working from breech to muzzle. Run a clean patch through the barrel as many times as it takes to clean out the residue. I repeat this process until the patch comes out clean.

Depending on how many rounds were shot through the gun since it was last cleaned, you may need to run through these steps another time. Six or seven shots through a deer rifle in a season is far different than 500 or so through an AR rifle or a semi-automatic handgun used in police training.

The final step to a clean gun is a very light lubrication. Too much oil is definitely bad; guns do not operate well swimming in heavy gun oil. In colder weather, especially, the oil can harden, clogging actions and affecting performance. Using a soft, clean, cotton cloth, wipe down all metal parts with genuine gun oil. Run another lightly oiled patch through the barrel.

Now, your gun is properly cleaned, ready for storage and your next time afield, or to the range.

When storing guns, do not store them in any kind of sealed case. Moisture can build up in these cases, causing rust to develop. Long guns should be stored standing up in a locked, secure place. For safety's sake, keep the ammunition in a separate place from the guns. Check the guns occasionally to make sure no surface rust has developed. If you continue to maintain your guns after each use, they will be ready when you need them. **B**



WARTS AND ALL

Though ugly, most childhood warts are not cause for serious concern.

BY DR. DEEPA SEKHAR



If you touch a frog...

Don't worry, you will not get warts, despite the classic myth that the bumps on a frog are contagious! The common skin wart, which resembles a cauliflower or solid blister, is actually caused by a virus. Human papillomavirus (HPV) causes warts by invading small cuts or scratches on the fingers, hands and feet. It can take up to six months after exposure to HPV for a wart to appear.

Kids and young people tend to get warts more often than adults. In particular, kids with eczema who frequently scratch and leave breaks in their skin, nail biters and kids who pick their hangnails seem to get warts more often. Touching a wart does not mean you will automatically get one, too, but warts are spread by close contact. Skin softened by water tends to be more vulnerable to infection, as HPV likes warm, moist environments. Kids typically pick up HPV by touching something a person with a wart has used, like a towel or shower floor.

Skin warts can occur in different places. Common skin warts are typically seen on fingers, hands, knees and elbows. Plantar warts are found on the soles of the feet. Flat warts are smoother than other warts, with flat tops and a pink, light brown or yellow color. Kids typically get them on their faces, hands and knees. Some warts are sexually transmitted. A child with warts on the genitals or rectum should see a doctor.

For most people, a wart is just mildly bothersome. Treatment is not always necessary, and in two-thirds of cases, skin warts resolve on their own within two years. During this time period, the wart may continue to enlarge and new warts may appear. I typically see children in the office when the warts are cosmetically bothersome or painful.

Several different treatments are available for warts, depending on the size and location. Most of these treatments work by destruction of the infected skin, so they must be applied carefully to avoid irritating healthy skin. Salicylic acid preparations are available over the counter and by prescription, depending on their strength. They can be applied directly to the wart. They come as liquids that can be "painted" on and as pre-medicated patches applied like Band-Aids. Cryotherapy involves freezing the wart. Over-the-counter kits are available for this. Many doctors' offices use liquid nitrogen to freeze warts, though young children may not tolerate this as well. Duct tape applied to warts has also been shown to speed resolution, and, in some cases, I will recommend this along with one of the other treatments. Laser treatments and prescription creams are available for certain recalcitrant warts.

In between treatments, the dead skin from the wart should be filed off with a nail file or pumice stone. It is important to understand that multiple treatments may be required to remove a wart completely. Even when the wart falls off, the skin underneath may still contain virus particles, allowing the wart to recur.

You should speak to your child's doctor before attempting over-the-counter wart remedies on an infant or young child. Again, your child's doctor should be seen for warts on the genitals or rectum. Warts on the face, where scarring is more of a concern, should be seen by a physician prior to treatment. Warts that become painful, red and swollen and bleed should also be evaluated by a medical provider.

You can reduce the chance your child will develop warts by encouraging good hand washing and maintaining a treatment regimen in children with eczema. Flip-flops or water shoes should be worn at public pools and locker rooms to reduce exposure as well. Though bothersome, most warts are harmless and will resolve in time. If you kiss that frog, who knows? You might just get a prince! **E**

Illustration by Abigale Wenrich

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“NOT PERFECT”

Lawrance Binda on why City Council stopped resisting the receiver and ended up supporting the Harrisburg Strong plan.

Arguably, Councilman Brad Koplinski best summarized why this night happened at all, why, over time, the council majority turned from pro- to anti-bankruptcy, from anti- to pro-receiver. The receivers, both David Unkovic and William Lynch, acted responsibly, he said. They tried to understand the city’s dilemma, getting creative in their solutions, asking council members’ opinions, keeping them informed and gaining their trust.

Because of this, “we have a much better and fairer plan” than previous plans, he said, with “shared pain,” creditor concessions and a reasonable chance for Harrisburg to regain its health both financially and as a community.

Months ago, Koplinski indicated to me that the tide had turned, that, after being briefed by Lynch, council members had begun to like what they heard. They’d come to think that the receiver’s team was an honest broker with far greater knowledge, expertise and resources than the city could ever have mustered without the state’s intervention. Bankruptcy, always over-sold as gain for no pain, had lost its tempting allure.

That’s why no last-minute slide shows or even speakers charging racism could sway the council. Most members had been in the fight for years. They had battled through it, made some good decisions and some bad ones, had even thought at one point they could end up in jail for contempt of court. And, now, after all this time, they had something they could live with.

“This plan, while not perfect, is going to allow the people of the city of Harrisburg to sleep at night and know that the city will have a brighter future,” Koplinski said.

So, not perfect. But, to council members, finally good enough.

“CONSTANT COMMENT”

Paul Barker on the claim that City Council did not provide enough opportunity for resident input before approving the Harrisburg Strong plan.

One of the most frequent observations last night, on behalf of the recovery plan, is that it’s not perfect, but that it may be the best offer Harrisburg will get. It should be added that, in a modern democracy, policy is not only apt to be imperfect, but also to be imperfectly understood. (How many of us, either for or against the Affordable Care Act, can actually explain what’s in it?)

The claim that the plan has somehow proceeded “without public input” founders on the fact that its provisions, in the form of term sheets, executive summaries, proposed budgets, and council legislation, have been publicly available in far greater detail than the average citizen could possibly want or have time to review. We have placed our fate in the hands of others, directly, by way of elections, and indirectly, by way of the professionals they’ve retained to assist them.

Last night, after two years of rejecting inadequate plans, and consulting with the best experts available on how to solve a historically wicked problem, City Council offered its informed assessment that the Strong Plan might just succeed. It strains good judgment to conclude that, through all this, democracy has somehow been subverted. For the residents of Harrisburg, long in the dark about what would become of their city, might it be that democracy has started to work?

“DEAR PRUDENCE”

Paul Barker on the state Senate Local Government Committee’s hearing to ban controversial, often-risky financial instruments called “swaps” in municipal finance.

The immediate weakness of the swap-ban bills, judging by much of Monday’s testimony, is that they legislate caution where many would argue caution is already observed. Linderman, with the Great Valley School District, noted that his team has “always proceeded very slowly.” Winkler said that, though swaps come with risk, “we are highly conservative and prudent in using them.”

The trouble with this line is that it addresses the wrong question. The goal is not to ensure care after calamity: it’s to ensure care when calamity is far from everyone’s mind. This legislation would turn temporary prudence into lasting policy.

In so doing, it would mimic existing state law regarding municipal investments, which already prevents the staking of public money on highly speculative risks. The same logic—that stability and transparency are preferable to experimentation, however lucrative it might be—should apply here. Public money is public money, whether it’s spent on debt service or investments. The gains of such an approach may be less spectacular. But the losses will be, too.

BEST OF THE BURG BLOG

Some highlights from our blog posts over the past month. Read the full posts at:

WWW.THEBURGNEWS.COM

“THE GUNS OF SEPTEMBER”

Lawrance Binda on the beginning of the six-month-long waterfowl season on the Susquehanna River in Harrisburg.

“Pop. Pop. Pop.”

It had been six months since I’d heard that sound. Last February, if I recall. It was then that the guns were put away for the season, a time that most of us who live along the Susquehanna River welcome as surely as late winter’s first not-so-cold day.

Indeed, it is pleasant to be able to sleep past dawn on a Saturday without being startled awake by the pops and booms of shotguns being fired at passing flocks of geese and ducks. Six months had passed so quietly that I had forgotten all about the annual rush of hunters to Harrisburg’s waters and islands.

Only on Saturday, during a late-afternoon walk in Riverfront Park, did I realize it had begun again. It was a spectacular September day, the river full of small craft, their occupants not hunting, but having fun—drinking, eating, socializing—while anchored in mid-river, when the shooting began. I wondered if they all were aware what was happening and, if they were, if they still were startled as I was.

“BACK TAXES”

Paul Barker on City Council’s consideration of extending the increase in the city’s earned income tax rate as part of the Harrisburg Strong plan.

Since the recovery plan was made public, many have rather cynically remarked that tax hikes, once passed, are never repealed. That’s true, and the idea that this one will actually expire at the end of 2016, as it’s supposed to under the ordinance, is probably fantasy.

But it’s nothing compared to the much worse fantasy that was peddled for years under [former Mayor] Reed: that the city could somehow provide more and better services while its revenues stagnated. “Each of Reed’s deals,” the receiver recently said in an interview, “if you peel it back, was to fix a \$5, \$6, \$7 million hole in the general fund.”

By 2008, when Reed promised a tax cut, people saw it for what it was. At the end of his speech, he remarked, sourly, that throughout almost everything he’d said, two members of the public at the back had been shaking their heads. “You just rejected out of hand—you don’t want to hear anything,” he said. “God help us if that’s how we’re thinking about the future of Harrisburg.”

He was right, at least, that the city’s prospects depended on a change in thought. The recovery plan seeks to replace wishful thinking with long-overdue accounting. Citizens enjoyed a cheap ride for years—and voted, against their better judgment, to keep it going. Painful as it may be, it’s time to pony up.



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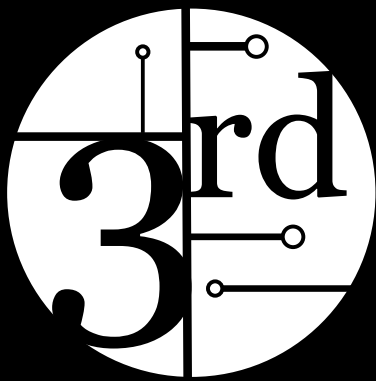
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