

The
Broadmead Journal
of Poetry and Prose

SPRING 2025



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of Poetry and Prose

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Spring 2025

A Writer's Magazine

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Mother Nature Lily Kuou

After a short nap, I am still restless,
I make a cup of "Lady Flowers" tea.
In my bedroom, the silence is endless.
I go to the porch to watch the restless sea.

I sit on a red-padded, white summer chair,
My hat protecting from the blazing sun.
I sip my Chinese tea without a care,
The cool wind caressing, as if in fun.

Nature's big, strong arms are always kind,
She asks the flowers to dance in chorus,
To lift my body and to calm my mind.
The birds perform quaint music for us.

Now I know I can overcome my lethargy
And fill my life with strength and joy and energy

My life Lily Kuou

I have climbed up to the clear mountain,
I have walked down to the dark valley.
I have tasted the sweetness of life.
I have swallowed the bitterness of life.
I have struggled with my blindness,
I cared for my husband's long-term illness.
Difficulties opened the opportunities,
to explore different experiences.
Soon I shall return to the earth, knowing the true meaning
of my life.

oval office 28FEB25.....Maggie Babb

a man no suit no
tie walks in only it's
not oval any longer it's
damaged collapsed sickle shaped
around the edges clump red cells
red men ragged mutated hard brittle dying
behind the disordered resolute desk sits
a massive Eurasian Brown Bear what
was sown is about to be reaped

His Holey-Holy Shirt Susan Saunders

A Valentine for my Dad
Edward Van Cleve Nicol
(My father was 92 when I wrote this little ditty as an apology)

How comfy is his holey shirt.
The stains it boasts are food, not dirt.
He only wears it round the house.
Why should his daughter kvetch and grouse?

He had her heart before her hubby.
She's loved him well through thin and tubby.
She saw his lack of fashion splendor,
Not as comfort, but as surrender.

Still their love is strong and fine.
Neither stains nor holes can dent it.
He'll always be her Valentine.
She has said it. And she meant it!

Radical Golden Shovel Maggie Babb

Radical Acceptance is the willingness to experience ourselves and our life as it is.

Tara Brach
these turbulent times demand radical
shifts in our practice of acceptance
of our daily reality especially when it is
a profound break away from the way
we expect. How can we find the willingness
to meet moment to moment disturbances to
open our minds to experience
the deep wisdom that waits inside ourselves
to meet, allow, and calm the turbulence and
provide space to view the reality of our
situation and so remind us that life
is interconnected and constantly changing as
there is no separation no matter how it
looks on the surface, perfect it is

Ode to the Sharp Shinned Maggie Babb

suddenly winging heart stopping speed dropping
from tulip poplar crown down

ten feet twenty feet airfoil pivots dinosaur
descendent playing with

burly gusts scribing ovals in the frosty air faster
than eyes can follow perfect

intricate infrastructure rotating pumping glide
climbing overhead

across the winter meadow where recent icefall
weighs down the little

bluestem, wild rye, switchgrass then with precision
control you dip briefly

and propel swooping up again showing off your
powerful windproof

weatherproof interlocking weave of pinions you
can glide fly flee unlike

the earthbound humans who must stay here below
to slog through wet snow

DAWN BREAKS. Dorian Borsella

Late morning she guesses, sun brightening bedroom
While from the first floor a voice floats up the stairs
Mummie croaking on phone, that voice of poor-me
“She hasn’t worked for going on a year”

Dawn pulls the pink comforter over her head
‘Croak! Silly word. You can croak anywhere
If you croak on the phone you can’t say I’ll call back
I never worked, I was broke from the day
I was yanked from your womb, Mother Dearest
And now you’re afraid I won’t be employed’

That vile phial of pills ,psychiatric heavy hitters—
Throw them away or swallow them all
“Not nearly a year, Mummie, you make it worse”

April 16 she remembers the day
The warbling ambulance stopped at the door
Packed her away

Better it had been a hearse.

Essentials Doug Fambrough

Around us
Sunlight blotches filtered through the canopy
Dance upon the stones
To rhythms of a cooling breeze.

We shade our eyes and squint
Through pines into the western sky,
Behold the glint of light on needles:
Light encircling the sun,
A precious, transient sign.

Blue windows in the canopy
Provide us views of sunlit clouds
Sliding to the east,
Each fluffed up in silent majesty.

A hawk cries from above our dome of spring and forest greens,
And hidden wren and vireo voice their rolling songs
From nowhere and from everywhere,
Their offerings to the musical surround.

Beside us water playing over rocks
Sings a soft, wet babble of song.
We listen to water sounds
And know the sound of quietude.

Along the stream
Erigeron, Sonecio and Iris
Urged by the flow and ripples, nod to us:
“See our whimsy. See our dignity.”

And we three, relaxing in our chairs,
Attend to our small universe
And know the joy and wonder
Given us whenever we accept.

Then we again attend to one another,
Read the truths found in soft eyes and gentle gestures,
Celebrate the love we share
Of friends and all Creation.

Harold and the Anaconda by Anne Fogg

Harold met an anaconda,
a creature that he wasn't fond of.
But as a proper, well-bred Brit
he refused to throw a fit.
Instead he brought forth his umbrella
and pointed it right at the fellow.
"Friend," he said, "you're in my way.
Old chap, please move aside, I pray. "
The anaconda merely smiled.
He didn't move. He wasn't riled.
He opened wide his hingeless jaw
displaying an extensive maw.
"Don't be alarmed sir," he replied.
"I've recently been satisfied
by monkeys and a myna bird
and for desert some lemon curd.
There's no more room in my intestine
and considering that my digestion
will take a week, or maybe two,
it won't be dangerous for you
to venture into my vicinity.
You may come close with
equanimity."
But the snake, a lying sinner,
wanted Harold for his dinner.
Harold foolishly believed
the information he'd received.
He gazed into the serpent's eyes
and nearly became hypnotized,
but luckily he looked away
and thus avoided being prey.
So when the snake lunged out to eat
hi
Harold at once began to beat him.

(An umbrella has more uses
than keeping off the heaven's juices.)
Harold delivered well-aimed blows.
He struck the serpent on his nose.
The anaconda moaned with pain.
"Aren't umbrellas used for rain?"
"Indeed sir, you are quite correct.
An umbrella will protect
when rain is falling from the sky
and shade you when it's hot and dry.
But also it's a useful tool
as a weapon in a duel."
"I see! I get it! Please refrain!
Don't strike me on the nose again!"
"Very well, then off you go!
Now hurry up or I'll bestow
a few more whacks upon your head!"
With that, the anaconda fled,
slithering off extremely quickly
as he was feeling rather sickly.
Umbrellas are a fearsome weapon
especially if you should step on
a deadly serpent, crocodile,
or others dangerous and vile.
Resounding whacks are efficacious
when a creature gets pugnacious .
So follow Harold's fine example.
If through jungles you must trample
or anywhere that danger lies
on the ground or in the skies,
umbrellas are your best protection.

If you don't have one, go and get one.
Macy's has a fine selection

Darkness. Hillary Barry

In the deep
of the night
I find the moon
nestled and shining
in the black branches
of winter trees
I carry its lovely light
with me, like a song
into the day.

War Stories. Hillary Barry

Innocents walk roads
of shattered dreams.
Fragments of houses,
empty schools and broken swings
are still,
rubble on the ground.
Families discarded,
like hope,
left to die.

Reverie. Hillary Barry

Beneath an empty sky
pines veiled in mist
gray tangled branches
a few curled leaves
cling to the memory of fall
a young maple
and I no longer young
wait for snow
wait for peace.

Spring Song For Ava On Her Thirteenth Birthday. Hillary Barry

The sun is brightly shining,
cherry blossoms,
lightly breezing
in the morning light.
Bluebirds are singing
winging in the violet sky,
all the buds are greening
budding in the trees.
Daffodils are golding
remembering on the hill,
everyone is loving
the wonder of this day.

The Darkest Season. . . .Hillary Barry

With the newborn day
first snow is falling,
sunrise and snowflakes
cover the ridge
little coral lights
twinkling in the branches
of copper beeches.
Tiny crystal drops
lighter than rain
dust my house
and faded autumn flowers.
Little white stars
dress the dark green pine
decorated with song birds.
All the world is quieting.

Spring Memory. . . .Hillary Barry

I looked across the village green:
one blue bird perched
on Anne-Allen's weathered
birdhouse
another standing
on the arm of an old gray bench
close to the Willow Oak,
its branches holding
bouquets of autumn's acorns
and springtime buds.
She is here
in the soft green loveliness
of early spring.

Inspired by the Lady in Gold Painting (Klimt). . . . Leslie Glickman



Is it her face, her form, her costume?

The position of her hands, the right one crossed over left.

There are “eyes,” lots of black eyes standing out from her gown.

A wide gold choker encases her neck.

Bare shoulders adorned with bejeweled straps.

Bouffant hair...black as her eyes.

This is indeed a woman of substance, of great means.

The envy of her peers, the worship of her lovers.

Why so melancholy, so sad we ask?

Tormented?...tortured?... or other?

In Time She'll Move

Libby Champney

Morning on the back porch.
A squirrel, tail twitching, hugs the
feeder,
a scarlet cardinal watches from a
spruce branch,
a shaft of sunlight burnishes the fur
of the old orange cat,
curled and oblivious in the corner.

On the top step amidst the sunflower
hulls
hunches a peculiar figure in white
linen.
She's staring at the ground, a pained
expression
on her bloodless face.

"You know, you died,"
I say gently.
"You should go."
You're dead."
Imperceptibly, she shakes her head.

In time she'll move
out of time,
but not yet.
For now, the cloudless sky
gives no rain.

Chocolate Libby

Champney

Speak it: chocolate
the ch, the soft click of the c, the
liquid l —
or say cacao, cacao, cacao —
Notice how it fills the mouth and ears,
how it moans with pleasure.

Be reverent as you place it on your
tongue.
Let the thick dark unfold and spread
its bitter sweetness, sharp and
melting.

A drum throbs in the jungle,
summons priest, supplicant, slave.
Take it straight.
Think of antioxidants.
Reach for one more.

How to Fall Asleep Libby Champney

Let the consciousness flow out
into the dark room,
like the fingers of a delta.

Breathe deeply.

Above all, do not let the mind alert.
Stop thought before it starts to wrap around itself,
pulling you back, tangling, tightening you awake.

Breathe deeply then.
Let it go.
Float on out.

It's your mind.
It won't keep still,
but swoops and flutters round the room,
screeching, hopping just out of reach,
chattering under its breath.

Catch it.
Cage it.
Cover it with a cloth --
And again, let yourself descend into the dark below.

Go on.
Lie down.

And if, when lying there breathing,
you hear a voice
say something absurd,
welcome it with silent joy —
no words of recognition, no analysis.
Let the waking mind spread its wings, glide without a sound into the dark,
and settle in with dreaming mind —
which asks for nothing but your inattention.

My Mother's Kitchen Mari Quint

The sturdy pine trestle table
and its high-backed bench
were painted white.
I sat there to do my homework
because I had no desk.

At the end of summer
we covered it with newspapers
and I would stand and
slowly turn while
Mother marked and pinned
the endless hems of dirndl skirts.

It was Mother's kitchen
and she cooked alone,
sitting at the table
with handfuls of fragrant herbs,
a cutting board and scissors
creating tablespoons of
tiny fragments to adorn
potatoes or season stews.
Standing at the stove she slowly
stirred onions into sweetness.

With a metal stopper
she poured cream from the tops

of bulbous glass bottles
of unhomogenized milk
and beat it into war-time butter.

Sometimes we came home to
find her shaping crescents
of her mother's almond
cookie dough, later
dusted confectionary white.

She told us of the large round table
in her mother's kitchen, helping
roll dough and cut noodles.
although she never made them
for us. She "cooked by ear,"
reading cookbooks for ideas,
inventing her own recipes.

She cooked alone.
She taught me though—
observing at the door—
to chop carefully, stir slowly,
taste, adjust, taste again,
read cookbooks for ideas
and cook by ear.

REUNION Doug Fambrough

Somewhere there's a picture of you pressed between the pages
Of a book I never finished reading.
Somewhere there's a letter fragment penciled on some paper
I struggled for a long time with completing.

Sincere intentions stowed away like boxes in an attic
To be dealt with nearer to life's end.
Today I can't be rummaging in boxes in the attic.
I have more pressing matters to attend.

Yet what could be more urgent now than reaching out to you,
Our lives brought close the way they used to be,
Coming back together like a meeting of the waters
Flowing toward a universal sea.

THE LOSS OF A FRIEND Dorian Borsella

Something wrong
No strident voice no yapping dog
Door pulled open by grim faced daughter

Mid afternoon never before found you in bed
Pillow-propped, paper white face, gray hair
Tangled.. Body covered by floral shroud spread
Knuckles clutched for what? For dear life?
The voice still strong made liar by pill bottles
Huddled on nightstand a retreating
Defeated army

I lean against a door forever closing
To conversations silly or intense
Laughter anger insights
And secrets which friends share.

THE STRAND, LONDON Dorian Borsella

Half-six. Already dark fall
People parade this string of Strand
Theatre land. Aldwych to. Charring Cross
Curb-crawling buses, Black cabs
Night promises a frost

The second shift stands ready
Rags blankets bags tossed
Safeguard their pitch in recessed
entryways
Await the closing of the shops

By the time the final curtain drops
At the Vaudeville the Lyceum
The doorway dossers mainly are adoze
Not grizzled lifetime tramps
But boys gone lost
A voice calling from the darkness
Can you spare some CHANGE please



January Storm Paula Scheye

Hoping for a blizzard
we settled for a squall
sheltered in a globe
snow like sand
sifting through an hourglass
measuring time
not in minutes
but in inches and moments
the sigh of snow against the window
as the lane whitens
the rocks on the hill
turn to alabaster
the trees fling out their arms
and catch the flakes

Shake the globe
and snow seeps
through a roof
blown open, piles
up on the broken
plates on the table
Time frozen into one
endless moment of pain
snow shrouds the broken
town, the refugees, the maimed
and turns the slain to alabaster

Lemmings.Paula Scheye

I have to go, my father says. It's midnight.
He says this to his wife of fifty years, urgent,
insistent, not knowing where he needs to go
or why, anymore than lemmings. He doesn't know
shit from shinola, a neurologist claimed. Hanging up the phone
I believe there are days he knows my voice, my name.

The light is fading, color slips from the grass,
the black-eyed susans pale in the twilight.
For years I held that goldfish--faint blurs
of color under ice—hoarded the tiger lily's orange till spring.
Now I know they die and float side-up
as white as nameless fish that edge the tide.

Fishermen out at dawn litter the beach
with heads, eyes still bright
with surprise, it seems, to be caught
up so suddenly and severed from their tails.
Before the men have cleaned their knives and carried
their buckets over the dunes, gulls peck the sockets clean.

My last visit south, I walked the beach alone
before my parents woke. Motels, apartments have changed
the stretch of beach we claim as ours. I carry my own
sign-posts-- here a Volkswagen filled with water
at high tide, here we wrapped a pelican's head
in towels and pulled three hooks from its claw.

It rose up, huge, and settled on the sea again.
Here, perhaps, my father stood for hours watching
newly hatched turtles grope toward the tide.
The air was thick with pelicans and terns,
the beach strewn with shells for days.
October 7, 1978. He marked it on a calendar.

I remember spring of eighty-five, the storm that buckled
the pier. Thirty thousand just to study the damage.
They'll probably tear it down. One last time
I stood under it, the cool dark tunnel
opening out to the sea, the wind off the sea
rushing in, cold and strong. I lean into it like an embrace.

Haikus for late winter 2025. . . . Paula Scheye

I got a surprise
birthday present. A stranger
gave me his Covid

Ukraine used to be
a country. Now it's road kill
ravaged by vultures.

The world is askew
but the snowdrops still know how
to break through cold earth

Gulls. . . .Paula Scheye

A fall from love. Much slower than a fall
from grace. Much less spectacular.
The dailiness that wears love thin
comes over me in a grocery line, heel
banged from behind by someone's cart.
At home, waiting for me with secret
lives of their own-- the dishes, dirty clothes.
Right now the dust is gathering under the bed.

We took off for the ocean once to see
what we had left to say to one another.
Things had gotten the better of us
once more. In the motel lobby a green
and blue parrot more or less greeted guests,
staring at the faces pleading for a word,
his hello thick-tongued, almost stupid,
offered to the elevator's closing doors.

It's here I do my only magic trick.
In my nightgown, on the balcony,
into the empty sky, I throw one piece of bread.
Before it hits the ground a gull appears.
Keep this up, they multiply, swoop
and circle my head, wings backstroking the air
so close I see bars of light
between their tail feathers.

It takes them a while to believe the bread
is gone. They stall midair in front of me
begging, their cries like rusty hinges.
Right then I can believe they love me
returning even though my hands are empty.

- "Why do seagulls fly over the ocean?" "Because if they flew over the bay, we'd call them bagels."
 - "I only know 25 letters of the alphabet. I don't know y."
 - "How does the moon cut his hair?" "Eclipse it."
 - "What did one wall say to the other?" "I'll meet you at the corner."
 - "I asked my dog what's two minus two. He said nothing."
 - "What did Baby Corn say to Mama Corn?" "Where's Pop Corn?"
 - "What's the best thing about Switzerland?" "I don't know, but the flag is a big plus."
 - "Where do you learn to make a banana split?" "Sundae school."
 - "What has more letters than the alphabet?" "The post office!"
 - "Dad, did you get a haircut?" "No, I got them all cut!"
 - "What do you call a poor Santa Claus?" "St. Nickel-less."
-
- "I got carded at a liquor store, and my Blockbuster card accidentally fell out. The cashier said never mind."
 - "Where do boats go when they're sick?" "To the boat doc."
 - "I don't trust those trees. They seem kind of shady."
 - "My wife is really mad at the fact that I have no sense of direction. So I packed up my stuff and right!"
 - "How do you get a squirrel to like you? Act like a nut."
 - "Why don't eggs tell jokes? They'd crack each other up."
 - "I don't trust stairs. They're always up to something."
 - "What do you call someone with no body and no nose? Nobody knows."
 - "Did you hear the rumor about butter? Well, I'm not going to spread it!"
 - "Why couldn't the bicycle stand up by itself? It was two tired."
 - "What did one hat say to the other?" "Stay here! I'm going on ahead."
 - "Why did Billy get fired from the banana factory? He kept throwing away the bent ones."

A Love Story Elizabeth Elliott

Peter stared over the fence at the large herd of longhorn cattle feeding there. “All this for my son,” he lovingly thought as he rolled another cigarette. “When is Angela going to give me one?”

That very afternoon Angela had just left the cottage in a huff, yelling, “I’m going home to Mother back east. I love you, Peter, but I do not love the US west with miles and miles of grassland and lots of cows but not one other human woman to gossip with.”

“Angela, you are the love of my life. You will come back. You will miss the gently rolling hills, the grasses blowing in the breeze, the wonderful sunsets with no billboards, the roads free from red lights and traffic jams, and women blabbering all the long day about genius children, the newest miracle diets, and wandering husbands.”

Peter thought these things to the empty lands, wondering when Angela would be back, and hoping it would be in time for her to fix his dinner.

CHILDHOOD SUNDAY AFTERNOON CAR RIDES

Suzanne B. Crowder

In my early years, Pop-pop & Mom-mom Buckson took my parents and me for Sunday afternoon rides in Pop-pop’s two-door Plymouth. Pop-pop & my father worked for the Delaware Trust Bank in Dover, Delaware, served on the bank’s board, & needed to approve loans for customers who were trying to buy ‘for-sale’ properties. That meant a dinner after Church and then a long drive through lower Delaware looking at houses and land that meant nothing to my young eyes!

In colder months Pop-pop would keep the car windows rolled up, light up a cigar, and puff on it throughout the ride of about 2 hours (Aghhhh, the smoke smell...), with him and my dad estimating the value of properties for sale so the

bank would not lose money in loans granted to buyers. Looking back, I clearly did not feel called to be a banker!

On other family occasions when banking business did not need to be done, our larger family of up to 16 would gather for Sunday dinners. Pop-pop would sit at the head of a restaurant dinner table and say, "Order whatever you would like." When he would see that everyone had enjoyed all that they could eat, he would signal with his hands to pass down any food that we had left on our plates as well as the roll baskets & butter for him to finish eating. Then he would signal with his finger for the waitress to bring him the hand-written bill with the meals' costs added up by her. Nearly every time, Pop-pop would find an error in either the restaurant's favor or his and then he would pay the bill. (My father looked like he was dying a thousand deaths with this process.) Need I add that with my grandparents having lived through the Great Depression, food served in their home was inexpensive. Thinning the orange juice with water at breakfast time was a good example! Eating school lunches with them meant bologna or cheese sandwiches and tomato, bean, or chicken noodle soups. Jell-O for dessert was a treat! I did enjoy joining them for lunch but did not like my grandmother asking in winter months why I wasn't wearing my snow-suit leggings and hat & gloves. (She did treat me to snow-suits every year so I know that she wanted them to get good wear!)

Sunday rides and Pop-pop's treat of restaurant meals still make me smile. Life was seen and experienced more in looking at our outside world than watching TV shows, getting computer messages, receiving phone calls, and sitting in movie theaters now!

Downsizing Saul Lindenbaum

It's one thing to understand something intellectually, but quite another to understand it emotionally. Take the expression, "You can't take it with you," for example. Before you can fully grasp what this means you have to first accept, emotionally, that you will be going somewhere. Not so easy, really, for many people. But once you accept that idea it becomes clear that, despite the diversity of opinions about *where* you may be headed, you'll be traveling light, i.e., "You can't take it with you." Which leads to the interesting question of what to do with all the stuff you've accumulated. In other words, how do you downsize?

Ellen and I have been married for 61 years, and we decided that moving to a retirement community, while we are still able to be in charge of where to go and when to go there, was a good idea. This led to the need to downsize. You accumulate a lot of “stuff” over six decades, much of which you don’t recall having saved and is easy to get rid of, but some of which – for me, it’s mostly books - you find that you are deeply attached to, and can’t bear to let go. But let go you must, so we began going through boxes, where some surprises awaited us.

Many items I remembered and was glad to see again. There was my treasured scorecard to Game 3 of the 1951 World Series, when my beloved New York Giants defeated the hated Yankees by a score of 6 to 3. And my diary from our first trip to Europe, a five-week, five-dollar a day jaunt through England, France and Spain. But best of all were the unexpected findings, the discovery of things we had either forgotten, or never knew that we had.

The prime example of the latter was a thin notebook, with entries in my mother’s handwriting. It contained notes dating from the 1960s on expenses in their new apartment in a senior-living community in New Jersey. But more interesting were some loose pages, tucked into the notebook, also written by my mother and dated “1929,” when my mother was 15 years old. These turned out to be song lyrics. I know that because I remember her often singing one of those songs when I was a child. I think that it was called “The Gypsy Love Song,” and I believe that it’s set to a piece of classical music. It was a very poignant and moving discovery. I felt as if I could hear my mother’s voice, singing to me from the past.

Another surprise was the discovery of my army dog tags, which I thought I had lost many years ago. I was pleased to confirm that I still recalled my two-letter- eight-digit serial number despite not having seen it for sixty years. In the service you knew that number as well as you knew your birthday. It was a frequent question during inspections, and woe to the soldier who could not recite it correctly.

And then there were the ticket stubs. One was for the first New York Giants game of the 1956 season. The word was out that this was to be their last year in New York, before moving to San Francisco. It was the Easter vacation, so my best friend, Gerry, and I took the bus to the Polo Grounds to see the game, and our hero, the great Willie Mays. The Giants defeated the Philadelphia Phillies that day behind the fine pitching of Reuben Gomez. I carried the ticket stub in my wallet for decades,

still mourning the loss of the Giants and Willie Mays. At some point I put it in a plastic baggie, and then into a box. It was good to see it again.

Last, but by no means least, were two ticket stubs for the Newport Folk Festival, dated July 25, 1965. We were overjoyed to find them, because we had completely forgotten that we had them. But there they were, neatly wrapped in a plastic bag. We had driven down to Newport with two other couples from Cambridge, where we were living at the time. We were excited to see Pete Seeger and Joan Baez, but the sensation of the evening was Bob Dylan. We didn't know, no one knew, that this was the night that he had chosen to depart from his pure acoustic sound and "go electric." When he began to play, many in the audience started to boo and shout, and the standees in the back surged towards the stage. For a moment, I feared that we were going to be trampled, but the surge ended as abruptly as it had begun, though the shouting – now mixed with cheers – went on. We had witnessed an historic event but, with the passage of time, stopped telling people that we were there, because we believed that we had no proof of our presence. Now, once again, we did, and I can say with confidence that if there is any more downsizing in our future (perish the thought), those Folk Festival tickets will not be a part of it. We won't try to take them with us, either. We have two children, and one ticket apiece seems like a fair solution.

Gallery of Life Ellen Lindenbaum

Entering our new residence, the first thing that meets the eye is a brick fireplace with a clock on the mantle and a teakettle suspended over the fire. Two ladderback chairs flank the hearth rug. It is part of a framed embroidered scene on once-white linen, that has now softened to a pale brown. Across the bottom are words neatly cross-stitched by a young bride, my mother, expressing her hopes and dreams:

At thy hearthstone's steady glow,

Precious memories ebb and flow,

All thy days this home has blest

Thy busy life with tenderness.

Further along the same wall is a black and white woodcut of old style wooden houses, acquired during our family history trip to Ukraine.

Dominating one bedroom wall is a large color photograph of Delicate Arch in Utah. It brings back memories of a long hike starting at first light, and the feeling of being the only two people in the world as we savored the silence, and majestic beauty of red rock stretching away in every direction. Another photo depicts Canyonlands National Park and a wild jeep trip through streambeds and too narrow rockledge roads.

On either side of the bed's headboard are anniversary memories, a beautifully illustrated *ketuba* (Jewish marriage contract) celebrating our 40th wedding anniversary, and a framed drawing of a heart containing two map fragments of our respective hometowns. It was a gift from our children for our 60th wedding anniversary.

Over a tall bookcase is a small rectangular drawing our family's synagogue during the service celebrating Rosh Hashanah in 2009. The fourth bedroom wall has a water color of Blue Mountain Lake, a memento of a vacation in the Adirondacks.

Pride of place in the living room is a grouping of framed art over the sofa. These reflect our growing delight as we explored life in our adopted city of Baltimore. Two street scenes by Harry Evans, and two charcoals by Don Swann of Peacock Alley and old Fells Point rowhouses, plus a watercolor of the Mother Seton House complete our cityscape. Across the room is a large print of an 18th century courtyard in Brittany. It evokes warm memories of a favorite Aunt and Uncle who lived in Washington Heights in New York City.

Tucked into a corner in the den is the desk with two framed academic degrees affixed above. They are out of sight of most guests, but visual reminders to us of the years of study and meaningful work lives that we both led before retirement.

Along the same wall a sepia print of a young man courting a demure maid as she weaves a flower wreath recalls a trip to the renowned Argosy Bookshop in Manhattan. Two small detailed and beautifully tinted lithographs of bridges in Florence remind us of the morning we stopped at a poorly attended swap sale on Cape Cod and were able to successfully bid on those lovely pieces for about \$10. Years later we were able to see the bridges in person.

Which brings us to the last piece, a small fabric *batik* of white sailboats on a sea of blue against a rosy sky. It was the very first art piece we acquired, for the princely sum of \$15. It was then that we realized that modest art purchases for our house would enrich our lives while supporting in a small way the creativity of gifted artists.

Two walls remain bare, waiting for family photos, old and new, to be selected and arranged in a pleasing manner.

Finally, back near the front door of our home there is one more piece of embroidery, lovingly stitched by me for my mother, with the words of the Irish Blessing:

May the road rise to meet you

May the wind be always at your back

May the sun shine warm upon your face

The rains fall soft upon your fields

And until we meet again

May God hold you in the hollow of His hand.

A Schofield Ice Cream Story Francine (Schofield) Nietubicz

We were finishing dinner one evening, the whole family sitting around the table. It was time for dessert so someone went to the basement. That is where we had a large chest-type freezer. A large container of ice cream was pulled out and carried up to the kitchen. For some very unusual reason my father happened to be in the kitchen and saw the container opened. He happened to glance inside it and saw the finger marks that had been clawed in the surface. He picked it up and took the whole container back to the dining room and sat down with it. We were all back at the table. He held up the ice cream container so that we all could see inside it and said “Who did that?” No one said a word. He repeated the question. No one said a word. This went on for a few more times and the room was filling with tension. At least, I was filling with tension, or, more probably, terror. Not that my father ever hit any of us but, as the culprit, I had no idea what would happen if I fessed up

because I could tell that he was getting very angry. Probably by this point everyone was unnerved. Eventually, when he asked his question one more time, I said in a tiny voice “I did it Daddy.” And, with that, the ice cream came sailing over the table at me. Fortunately, I ducked. And he got up and left the house instead of killing me.

I told this story many years later in a large family gathering. When I was finished, my older sister said “You dummy – I used to keep a spoon in the basement.” Everyone laughed but I wanted to kill her.

Laying Around Doing Nothing Steven J. Scheinin, Esq.

How I got to this stage in my life:

When I was about 11 years old my father’s drugstore was the neighborhood hang out. 1957 in Baltimore City was the time of neighborhoods. Each neighborhood had a bar, local market, drug store, candy store, school and library. I worked the soda fountain in my father’s drugstore.

On this particular day it was myself and an older gentleman, probably 65 years (really old to an 11 year old). He had recently retired and was lamenting the fact that he never took advantage of opportunities that came his way. He told me when these opportunities present themselves to me as I go though life to grab them. I am not sure I really understood what he meant at the time. But his words did stick with me, and as my life progressed I took advantage of them: Do you want to go spelunking? Yes. Do you want to go white water rafting? Yes. Do you want to do car road rallies? Yes. Do you want to go hang gliding? Yes. Do you want to go skiing? Yes. Do you want to go snowboarding, Yes. Do you want to go skydiving? Yes. Do you want to learn to fly an airplane? Yes. Do you want to be a firefighter and run into burning buildings? Yes.

In addition to all the above I ran my own Law Offices, was a College Professor; active in my community as President of my Community Association; active in local and State Politics (even ran for Judge); was treasurer for one of the local county council persons; was People’s Advisory Counsel for Harford County; was appointed by the Harford County Executive to be on an elite panel to rewrite the

Harford County Charter. Served in the U.S. Army Reserves for 11 years in Military Intelligence, entering as a private, leaving as a 1st Lieutenant.

My life was full and I loved it. Even after retiring, my wife and I bought an RV in which we lived full time and traveled the North American Continent, driving all the way to the Arctic Circle and back.

However, there did come a time when I said to myself, “one of these days I am just going to lay around and do nothing”.

We would still be in the RV today but for the China Virus. We kept thinking “It will end next week” and the next week, and the next, but it never did.

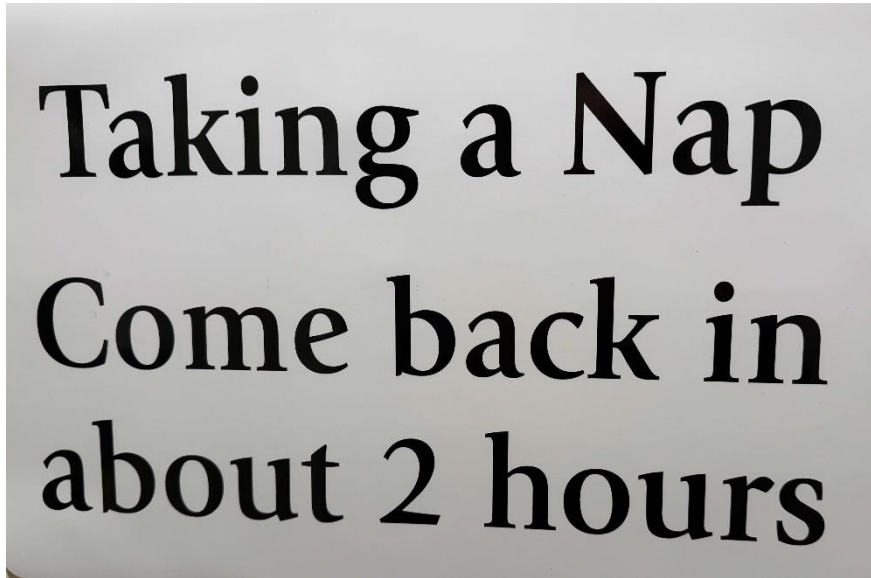
Ultimately we gave it all up and moved here to Broadmead. Now I am fulfilling my promise.

I am laying around doing nothing. I have turned it into a fine art. I don’t get pulled into doing things that will detract me from my goal. I chose my apartment for its tranquility and peacefulness.

I sit in my la-z-boy recliner, watch movies on my widescreen TV. I don’t read the newspaper, or watch the news on TV. No matter what happens in the World, it doesn’t effect me as Broadmead has promised to take care of me the rest of my life, whether I get sick, or run out of money, I will be cared for.

When the weather is nice, I sit out on my patio, smell the grass and flowers, listen to the birds sing, and daydream all day.

I take a nap every day, doing nothing can be tiring.



Some days I sit in the Community Center and watch and listen to the Waterfalls.

When people ask, I tell them I did nothing all day. They respond “didn’t you do that yesterday?” I tell them “I didn’t finish”.

Puzzled Donna Mollenkopf

In these days of darkness, I am finding it necessary to spend more time working to not let the external fear, anger and destruction become an internal anger, fear and destruction. I look longingly for the light, for hope and for trust that good will prevail.

To help center myself this past month, I decided to work on a thousand piece puzzle as a spiritual practice. A puzzle helps me pay attention to what is in front of me. Helps me to look for patterns, slight variations in color and endless possibilities of how one puzzle piece

could fit into more than one place. A puzzle takes time, and blocks out other distractions. It centers me.

This Christmas my granddaughters gave me a thousand piece puzzle of *Wicked* so i thought that would be my choice.

My typical pattern of working on a puzzle is to find all the edge pieces and complete the border. This time, I couldn't make it work. The edges were a unique spiraling of a two toned frame that seemed to have no apparent transition and I couldn't find the pattern. Finally, i gave up on the border, separated the other pieces into like colors. At least, I tried to do that. There was so much black —the puzzle features Elphaba's costume. The pink pieces for Glinda's dress were hard to distinguish because she appeared in several areas with varying light. The green for Elphaba's face has so many tones. The Wizard of Oz is hidden in striated faint colors to screen him.

The puzzle is very difficult, and my usual ways of working are not working. Some days i can only find a few pieces to fit and sometimes, I find more on the floor under the table.

I pondered this puzzle a number of times and I won't give up on it. I realized it fits perfectly at my struggle right now to find ways to be an advocate for justice and to be open to new perspectives . Looking at the tiny pieces, I consider how they might fit together to make a whole. I have to be more patient. I have to give it more time and work at it in small steps. I have to step away from it and rest. I have to be persistent and not give up. I am still working on it! The puzzle is not finished and neither am I in my journey of the puzzle of how I am to be in these times.

Galapagos - extension of Ecuador trip in 91. . . . Joe Nietubicz

We flew from Guayaquil to Baltra, which was one of the few populated islands. Baltra also served as a prison until 1959 or so, with a short respite when it was an Air Force base during WW II. There, about 15/20 of us boarded a 70-foot boat and off we went.

The unique thing about Galapagos is that there is no predation. The wild life has no fear of humans. We walked through nesting grounds, rockeries, leks and got no notice.

1. Sat down in the Frigate bird nesting area to watch the courtships. The male has this huge red pouch on their neck, that they inflate to attract females. So, he would blow up his pouch and display and display, until a female showed and they went off to make little frigate birds.

2. This is one of the very few time and places that the albatross stays on land, to breed. He/ she/ they spend most of the year at sea never touching land. We didn't see any mating rituals. We did watch them try to take off. They would run down the beach, into the wind, flapping their wings trying to get off the ground. Some even dove off the cliff, just to gain momentum to get airborne. As clumsy as they were on land, they more than made up for in the air, beautiful, graceful, magnificent birds in flight.
3. Francine's and my personal favorite were the Blue Footed Booby. They would face each other and take turns holding up their feet and showing them off. One then the other – the top – the bottom – at what point, they get aroused or satisfied or whatever goes on, they would “sky-point” – rock back, point their beaks straight up and whistle. So, Francine and I started doing that, showing each other our feet and Sky Point – I guess that is booby for “Tonight's the night!!”
4. There any number of sea birds there, brown boobies, brown nadides. We just walked around and through them, watching
5. We'd watch the boobies dive into the ocean from great height for small fish to take home for the family

We'd go onshore twice a day, once in the morning until lunch, back to the boat and lunch, siesta and go back on shore in the late afternoon – avoid the mid-day heat. On our tours, we crossed a pink beach, made up of crushed coral, a black beach of lava, a green beach made up of - - - of - - errr- ummm – what!?!?! Then we saw a small herd of seals and their beach master (bull that owned the harem). Then we realized that not so long ago this beach was covered thousands of seal giving birth. Is what we are standing on, remnants of that. Should we wash our feet before we get back on the boat? Our guide cautioned us to stay away from the seals. The bull may perceive as a treat to his harem or his ownership and he will attack; he will knock you down and he will take a chunk out of you, as they have learned from experience

We stood on pristine beach, about 1 or 2 miles wide, no foot prints, no marks, just smooth sand. Our guide bent down and with her hands uncovered a sea turtle's egg nest. She covered it back up quickly, so as to not totally disturb the nest. Was this a set-up? I have no idea of how in the world, she knew exactly where to dig. I guess that's why she's a naturalist/guide and I am a tourist.

Snorkeling

How to go underwater, breathe through a tube and not drown. The basic idea is to come to the surface, blow the water out of the breathing tube and suck air. Now, maybe I'm Polish, but I hafta tell you, when I come to the surface out of breath, my first instinct is NOT to blow out water from the tube. Anyway, it took me some time to learn how to not drink the Pacific Ocean. Duhhh – come up for air BEFORE you're out of breath. What a novel idea!!

Consequently, I stayed inside the reef and played with the penguins and iguanas. Oh yes, penguins – Humboldt penguins – the Humboldt Current comes all the way up to the equator and Galapagos from Antarctica and the penguins enjoy the ride. They are bullets underwater – a streak followed by a trail of bubbles. Iguanas – something prehistoric. They just eat and eat.

You have to appreciate that your attention here is focused on whatever is front of you, looking through a round glass/plastic thingee over your face – no peripheral vision. You get totally enthralled by what you are looking at.

Now, the seals like to come out and play with you. It's OK because the Beach Master stays on the beach. So, you're safe. The seals like to nip at your fins and swim around. Now, one seal glided up next to a woman and brush against her for the entire length of her body. - - - - Have you ever heard a woman scream under water???

A whale shark was reported in the area. Our captain was intent on finding it. He thought we all should go swimming with this whale shark. Now, a whale shark is about as big as our boat (70 feet); lumbers through the water and eats plankton; perfectly safe so I'm told. We never did find it and I had mixed feeling about that. It'd be great to see one – I'm not sure about getting the water with it

I See What You Are Saying Susan Saunders

American Sign Language (ASL) gives me Aha experiences. Words I have not heard correctly suddenly make sense when seen. At the graduation of my Intermediate Sign class each student interpreted a song. I chose *Hey, What About Me* by Anne Murray because it expressed longing to communicate and to be included.

Then Dirk, a teen aged boy in my class, who absorbed ASL as though it was his first language, interpreted a song from the rock opera *Tommy* by The Who. *Tommy* is a satirical, dystopian fantasy about a boy who is psychosomatically deaf, blind and mute. Tommy becomes a pinball champion and a religious cult leader.

(Please note---most people who are Deaf have no damage to their vocal cords. Vocalizations can be plentiful and varied. Combined with banging and stamping to attract attention, gatherings of Deaf people can be noisy. We no longer refer to Deaf people as deaf/mute. Just Deaf.)

Dirk interpreted the song *Pinball Wizard*. He was riveting. Alone on stage, he transported us to a hectic arcade where he became Tommy. Then he got to a line in the song I had never understood.

“He’s a pinball wizard,
There has to a twist.
A pinball wizard’s got
Such a ??”

And Dirk showed me exactly what Tommy had. He had such a Supple Wrist!!!

Recently I was asked to interpret the Christmas Carol *Silent Night*. I looked on line to see if there was a more visual ASL interpretation than Sign to English. I have been singing *Silent Night* since I was 3 years old. I have been Signing it for over 50 years.

I have always heard and sung the beginning of that song with the following punctuation.

Silent Night, Holy Night.
All is calm. All is bright.
Round yon virgin...

I never really understood why the virgin was round or yon. There is a joke about a boy who drew a picture of Silent Night with a small fat man in one corner. He named the figure “Round John Virgin.”

When the on-line Interpreter got to “All is bright”, he said, “‘All is bright’ means the sky is full of stars.” His right hand Signed a sky full of stars. Then he raised the pointer finger on his left hand, establishing a person. With his right hand he brought the starlight down around the head of that person as he Signed “All is bright *around* that person”, then the Sign for the Virgin Mary. Oh! The night was not silent and bright everywhere. It was silent and bright around Mary and Jesus.

You may wonder why I never knew that before. Now that I do know that I wonder the same thing. My point in writing this is that, for me, Sign language is not only a way to communicate with people who are deaf or deaf and blind. Sign Language also holds a key to spoken language. Oh, how I enjoy a good Aha! experience.