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# GOOD SHEPHERDS GOOD TOWN GOOD NEWS PAPER

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WINTER 2013

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*Sugar Pine, 48"×60", fresco on canvas*

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Cover Artist

Isabelle Truchon is inspired by nature and history. Although much of her art is naturalistic, she says, “My goal as an artist is not realism; if it happens, it happens—but my goal is to create a feeling, an emotion.”

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# Jesus Bugs Me

Randall Tremba

*Then Jesus asked, "Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?" The lawyer replied, "The one who showed him mercy." Then Jesus said, "Go and do likewise."*

—The Gospel according to Luke

**H**ave you seen that bedraggled man outside of town with the sign: "HELP ME"? I don't know about you, but that guy bugs me!

That guy bugs me, and Jesus bugs me, too. *Jesus bugs me, this I know...* (Could be a new song there!)

Jesus bugs me, this I know, for the Bible tells me a story he told about a priest and Levite who saw a helpless man along the road, and they—to their everlasting shame—passed by on the other side.

When I see that bedraggled man, I just keep rolling by, cursing Jesus under my breath for his annoying "Good Samaritan" parable. If you're not careful you'll see bedraggled people everywhere!

Forty some years ago, when I was a college student, a group of us were strolling through Chicago's Union Station licking big ice cream cones. Suddenly, Mark tossed his cone into a trashcan. The rest of us stopped in our tracks. We turned to Mark and asked, *What was wrong with that cone?*

"Nothing. Nothing, really, he said. It's just that... well, it's just that we passed a homeless man sitting on rags back there, and I couldn't keep eating ice cream knowing that guy had nothing to eat."

*(Tossing away your ice cream cone will feed the hungry?! Like, really?!)*

My friend Mark went on to be a Rhodes scholar, author of a dozen books, and a distinguished professor of history at the University of Notre Dame. To this day I can't eat an ice cream cone without thinking of that homeless guy in Union Station and my friend Mark.

Mark bugs me.

I know that guy with the HELP ME sign outside of town hasn't been beaten, mugged, and robbed like the victim in the Good Samaritan story. But I know enough about the inhumanity of our social and economic systems to know that guy may, *just may*, be a victim like all those hungry children in Green County, Tenn., described in *The Washington Post* this past summer. Who will feed those children and millions like them now that Big Ag-Business got its government subsidy and food stamp recipients got pushed aside?

You see, *knowing* about those hungry children in Tennessee and *knowing* about HIV-stricken children in Africa and *knowing* about bereaved families in Sandy Hook and war-ravaged Afghans; and *knowing* about terrified illegal immigrants and persecuted LGBT youth and profiled young African-American men; and knowing about the jobless in this country and the hundred or so homeless children in Jefferson County; and *knowing* about threatened species, wetlands, rivers, farmlands, and forests; *knowing all of that and so much more*—all of it bugs me!

Sometimes I wish I didn't know so much. Sometimes I wish I'd never heard of Jesus and his goody two-shoes Samaritan.

“ Sometimes I wish I didn't know so much. Sometimes I wish I'd never heard of Jesus and his goody two-shoes Samaritan. ”

That Good Samaritan story bugs me, even though I'm not a "priest" or a "Levite." It bugs me because I know what Jesus means by "priest" and "Levite."

You know and I know he means people who are well-off, comfortable, powerful, and influential. He means people who *know* the right thing to do, who *could* do the right thing but don't. He means people who pass by hurting human beings because they don't want to get their hands dirty. Or because they just don't see. Or maybe they pass by because they are on their way to discuss the problem of inhumanity.

I get it. I get that I'm one of those who walk by on the other side, and I'm not happy about it. But I have some questions for Jesus that the lawyer in the story didn't ask: *What is love? What is the right thing to do and how can we be sure?*

I don't know about you, but "Who is my neighbor?" is not my question. I know that answer. I get that "neighbor" isn't about location or race or nationality. I get that. Neighbor is an attitude. Neighbor is a verb not a noun. It's being *neighborly* to any and all.

We are one family—brothers and sisters all. I get that! And because of television and the Internet, we now see bruised and wounded neighbors everywhere.

So, what's a good, sensitive, compassionate, thinking person to do?

*What's the right thing to do when so many needs and needy people cry out and when victims may be faking it anyway and when help isn't always helpful and when helping just creates dependency and when helping just makes me feel good and superior for being better than slobs who don't care?*

And, oh, by the way, doesn't the Bible say, "God helps those who help themselves"? Actually, no. Quite the opposite.

You see how hard this can be if you want it to be?

I don't have the answers. But I do have a few suggestions.

One: Keep calm, be still, and be *glad*. Be glad for that troubling question. Don't let that question die.

Two: Keep calm, be still, and be *humble*. Be humble because you cannot fix the world by yourself. Rushing about doing good is more devilish than holy.

Three: Keep calm, be still, and be *grateful*. Be grateful because countless others are working to mend the world and its wounded multitudes. All kinds of people are doing good work everywhere!

Four: Keep calm, be still, and be. Simply be there for someone in your own small world. You can't do everything, but that doesn't mean you can't do something. And whatever you do, let it be joyful, or you won't be doing much good for yourself or anyone else. As Mother Teresa put it: "If you want to work for world peace, go home and love your family." It's true: Compassion begins at home. But it hardly ever ends there.

And finally: Keep calm, be still, and *know*. Know your own wounds. Know your own vulnerability and need of grace. We all end up "robbed and beaten" in some "roadside ditch" in one way or another, often more than once.

It's not ours always to be giving. At times it is ours to receive.

Which is to say: When you're down and out, be still and watch. The night may be long but there's a neighbor holding out a candle for you.

# Frank Hill: Always Engaged in Something

Todd Cotgreave



Frank Hill

*Frank Hill is a Shepherdstown original. Raised right here in the middle of town, he has a unique perspective. Frank has been practicing law at 136 German Street for nearly 30 years. The GOOD NEWS PAPER sat down to discuss what it's like to grow up in a town called Shepherd.*

**GNP: Tell me about growing up here in town.**

**Frank Hill:** Back then kids didn't spend the night with anybody; you never had an overnight with any children in school. Yet there was a core of classmates that lived on each street that you knew well. You'd sled ride with them, or ride bicycles to school, or just be engaged in town activities with them.

**GNP: When you were growing up in the '60s, town had to be pretty small.**

**Hill:** Yeah, and most things focused around what you did in school. One of the main activities of the summer was called Story Hour [which was] held at the library. On Friday night, young children would have a reading session once a week. At the end of the season, the big reward was the fire department showed up with their main truck, parked between the library and the Men's [now Community] Club, and the children would ride on top of the fire truck in the hose bed to Kearneysville, turn around and head back into town. Of course, the fireman ran the siren to beat the band. There were about 15 to 20 of us that went there regularly. Nobody was around you;

it was completely open, riding 50 or 60 miles per hour with the siren blaring. That was a big deal.

**GNP: So what brings you to 136 German Street?**

**Hill:** This is in 1976; I was 24 and had already purchased an apartment house and two or three other houses in town. A gentleman by the name of John Egle, who had retired from Shepherd College [now University] and was in charge of finance and administration, was operating Western Auto, where Dickenson and Wait is now. It was an auto supply place that sold general merchandise. He saw me on the street one day and came up and said, "I want you to buy my building." [136 German Street] "I'll show it to you in the next couple days."

I arranged to meet him here. He took me around the building, showed me the different apartments, and particularly the cottage in the back, which is a stand-alone structure. We sat out on the front porch here and he said, "What do you think?"

He agreed to finance it for me, which was very generous, and I said I'd let him know in two weeks. He said, "No,



I need to know by two days from now."

I looked around to my left and saw the front door to the building. I noticed for the first time that there was a glass front, and on it was an etched "H," which was for his father-in-law's last name, "Hill." (I found out later he was not related to me.) So when I saw the "H" on the door, I looked around to Mr. Egle and said, "Well, I'll just go ahead and buy it." Four days later we settled on it, and I paid him until he died: once a month for 20 years, by visiting his house and taking



Pharmacy present day

him a check, which is the way he wanted it done. I think he just wanted to see me, in addition to getting paid.

**GNP: Why did he want you to buy it?**

**Hill:** He probably saw me growing up in town and knew that, well, believed that, I was industrious, compared to lot of students or kids. I guess he thought I would make the payments, and he probably liked me. But he sought me out. When I was a kid, I cut a lot of lawns for people, sold corn cobs, firewood, did odd jobs, got people's mail from the post office and took it home to them, raked leaves, shoveled snow. Then I had a two-wheeled garden tractor that I used to plow snow and that was kind of nice. I was always engaged in something, and I guess he saw that in me; I suspect he liked me and thought I'd pay him.

**GNP: And was he a funny guy or was he just a sweet old man?**

**Hill:** He had unique sense of humor as I guess some people might have. One of his favorite sayings was, "Doubtful things were very uncertain."

**GNP: So what changes have taken place in this building over the years?**

**Hill:** I've done my best to maintain this structure in the appearance it had when I bought it almost 40 years ago. That was not really intentional on my part, but I know what the structure was, and it's easier to keep it in that condition than change it.

When [the previous] Mr. Hill decided to put in the drugstore downstairs, he lowered the floor joists to



An enlarged postcard showing the interior of the Shepherdstown Pharmacy in 1913.

ground level so that people could walk in from the street without having to walk up three steps, like the entrance next door. He also put in, what I think is, the only skylight in Shepherdstown town, so that he could see with natural light. When it was a drug store, that's the way it was.

When we converted it to a restaurant [The Pharmacy], we were able to maintain the same flooring, cabinetry, and marble countertop. Pam and Rusty Berry were the prime powers behind creating the restaurant; it was their idea, and they did a real good job. They operated that for at least five to seven years. It was well-run, good food, right price, right location, and right menu. The staff was good and well managed. I was sad when they left.

**GNP: Are you happy that you now have the real estate business there?**

**Hill:** Oh, completely. Within a month of the restaurant leaving, Greentree Realty asked about renting. It's an ideal relationship; I've thoroughly enjoyed their being there and I'm sure they really appreciate all the glass frontage and the building itself.

There is a picture postcard on the wall that Pam found when she rehabbed the place for the restaurant that she enlarged. You can look at that picture today and the building is substantially identical to its condition and appearance of 100 years ago. I think you'd be hard pressed to identify another building in town that hasn't had more than cosmetic alterations done within 100 years. I'm kind of pleased about that.

**Todd Cotgreave is the chief operating officer of WSHC 89.7 Shepherd University Radio. To hear the full interview log on to: [facebook.com/ShepherdstownGoodNewsPaper](https://facebook.com/ShepherdstownGoodNewsPaper)**



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The first issue of the GOOD NEWS PAPER was published in May 1979 with a press run of 1,000 copies. We now print 13,000 copies and mail nearly 12,000. Virtually every mailbox within five miles of Shepherdstown gets a copy—and, by request, hundreds more from Maine to California and from Alaska to Florida. Nearly 20,000 people read each issue.

The GOOD NEWS PAPER is *free* because dozens of people—writers, editors, typists, photographers, illustrators, proofreaders, and designers—donate their time and talent: designer Melinda Schmitt, photographic editor Nan Doss, copy editors Rie Wilson and Claire Stuart, proofreaders Caroline Ford and Betty Lou Bryant, typist Kathy Reid, pre-publication editor Libby Howard, and regular writers Claire Stuart, Cassie Bosley, Ed Zahniser, Mark Madison, Wendy Mopsik, Sue Kennedy, Sarah Soltow, and Todd Cotgreave. Kathryn Burns is our new Artworks editor.

Jessica Schmitt is our photographer, interning with mom Melinda! And Jamie Lawrence makes his photographic debut in this issue.

We are grateful to John Snyder for the donation of design and set-up services at HBP in Hagerstown. Lex Miller faithfully distributes 1,000 copies to shops, restaurants, and visitor centers.

Volunteers keep the cost of producing this community magazine to an absolute minimum. Each quarterly issue costs about \$3,000 to print and mail. That adds up to \$12,000 for the year. Our “Business & Service Directory” brings in \$4,800. The several religious communities of the Shepherdstown Ministerial Association contribute another \$1,500. The rest—\$6,000—must come in gifts from you.

And your gifts do come in—ranging from \$5 to \$300. Please send your gift today. You may use the enclosed self-addressed envelope—if it hasn’t fallen out! If it’s missing, please put GNP, P.O. Box 1212, Shepherdstown, WV 25443 on an envelope, stamp it, and mail it. Make checks payable to the GOOD NEWS PAPER, or simply GNP, and help keep a good thing going for another year.

Sincerely,



Randall W. Tremba  
Executive Editor

P.S. Give a *gift subscription* to your friends or relatives. Absolutely free, of course. Use the handy coupon on page 2. They’ll thank you for it.

# "Tender Transitions" Comes to Shepherdstown

Mary Bell



Marlene Gallo

PHOTO SUBMITTED BY MARLENE GALLO

When her mother died, Marlene Gallo found herself driving 440 miles round trip every weekend for months to help her sister clear out and clean their mother's house. This was, of course, draining and exhausting. As difficult as this was, Gallo says, she had the resources—physical, emotional, and financial—to do it. A lot of people, she realized, simply do not. Seeing that people need someone to help them through this painful process, Gallo developed her business, Tender Transitions, to meet that need.

Gallo's background is in psychology and crisis intervention. She worked as a patient advocate in a hospital in Syracuse, N.Y., when she developed the idea for her business. She brainstormed with friends, networked with other business owners, and attended training classes in business management—and Tender Transitions was born.

At first, Tender Transitions specialized in clearing homes where the owner had died. Then, Gallo began getting requests for help from other people, people preparing to move and those who just needed help organizing their present households. She branched out to offer client-tailored assistance to anyone who needs help organizing a household and paring down possessions for any reason.

When asked what Tender Transitions is in a nutshell, Gallo says, "It's helping."

Most of her clients need help in preparation for moving. Think about it. What was happening in your life the last time you moved? You probably moved because of a major life transition—a job change, marriage, empty nest, illness, a death—all sources of stress. On top of that, you had to pick up, look at, and pack each and every item in your home, from toothpicks to lawn mowers. Moving itself always makes the list of the top sources of stress in our lives. So, stack one major stressor on top of the other, and it's no wonder people need help!

Most of Gallo's clients are people preparing to move, but many just want some help organizing their households. They may know they have duct tape, but they have so much stuff they can't find it anymore. Or, they have discovered boxes in the attic they had forgotten about. Whatever the motivation, Gallo can tailor her services to meet the client's needs.

When potential clients call, Gallo sets up an initial consultation, which is free. At that meeting, the clients tell her what they think they need, and Gallo explains how she thinks she can help. It might be a little or a lot. And, sometimes, by the end of the consultation, Gallo and the clients discover that they need something different from what they initially thought. Honing in on their needs and tailoring her services to those needs is a dynamic process, according to Gallo. Surprisingly, it can even be fun! After the consultation, Gallo prepares a flat-fee proposal for the client.

Gallo moved her business from upstate New York to Shepherdstown a year ago, when her partner, Donna, made a career move. Both Donna, a physician's assistant, and Gallo, love life in Jefferson County. "It's different," Gallo says. "I like the warmth and friendliness of this community."

Asked about the biggest obstacle people face when they prepare to move or organize their belongings, Gallo said they simply don't know where to start. "It's overwhelming," she says, "and I help

people break the task down into manageable, achievable pieces."

Sometimes, Gallo acts as a teacher. One client, for example, asked her to help organize an entire wall of built-in cabinets. By the time they finished the first one, the client had learned how to do it herself.

Gallo understands and appreciates that people feel a strong attachment to certain belongings: a sieve that your grandmother used to make raspberry jelly every summer, tinsel garland your father put on the Christmas tree, the crayon drawings your children brought home in first grade. To honor these connections and memories, she has her clients make a memory box. It may contain 10 carefully chosen photos of a family member so that the other 500 photos that have been deteriorating in a box in the basement can be discarded. Discarding a photo is not discarding a person, Gallo counsels. The love and memories live on.

Realizing how taxing this process can be, Gallo proceeds through it at a pace that's comfortable for the client. "We take lots of breaks," she said. "I've drunk a lot of coffee with my clients."

Gallo has some tips for all of us. Do not save old magazines and papers. If you really want that article about holiday decorating from the 1994 Christmas issue of *House Beautiful*, scan it into your computer and throw out the paper version. Talk to your accountant about how long to keep your financial records, and don't keep more than you have to. Every year, purge out-of-date records.

Another tip is to put like things with like things. This is particularly important in organizing tools. You will be surprised to discover how many hammers, wrenches, and screwdrivers you really have! More important, if you put like things with like things, you'll know where to find them when you need them. There's that duct tape!

Preparing to move and organizing your household involve getting rid of things. In deciding what to keep and what to part with, Gallo advises that you think about how you live now rather than

how you lived 20 years ago. When and how do you entertain? Generally, people entertain less formally than they used to, and you may not need three punch bowls anymore. And, your interests may have changed over time. So, you lost interest in sprouting your own mung beans. You can get rid of that bean sprouter and still live a fulfilled life.

It may help to think of the process of getting rid of possessions as editing. Also, consider that when you move your unused possessions along to someone who will use them, they become meaningful and functional once again. Think of the trumpet you've been moving around with you since you were in high school. Someone could be playing it!

One of the difficult aspects of getting rid of possessions is accepting that most used household goods have little value. Goods have the value that people are willing to pay for them, Gallo says, and that is usually not close to what you paid for them new. The silver-plated serving dishes your mother used are sold for scrap and melted down so the metal can be reused. This can be a hard pill to swallow, but, Gallo assures us we'll be better off for it.

When it's time to get rid of household goods, Gallo encourages her clients to donate items to local charities, many of which operate thrift shops. She keeps a record of donations for her clients to use at tax time. Also, as part of her services, she holds a tag sale to dispose of the saleable items.

When Gallo finishes her work with clients, she finds that they are physically and mentally unburdened. There is an element of relief and satisfaction in having gotten one's house in order, and that shows in a client's face, posture, and attitude.

You can contact Marlene Gallo at Tender Transitions ([www.tendertransitionsny.com](http://www.tendertransitionsny.com)) by phone, (315) 480-3792, or e-mail, [marlenegallo50@gmail.com](mailto:marlenegallo50@gmail.com).

**Mary Bell** is a Shepherdstown resident who still will not part with her Salton food warming tray.

# Read Aloud West Virginia Raises Readers

Claire Stuart

In his classic novel *Fahrenheit 451*, Ray Bradbury wrote, “You don’t have to burn books to destroy culture. Just get people to stop reading them.”

If you are lucky, you can remember being curled up with Mom, Dad, Grandma, or Grandpa, and having your favorite stories read aloud to you. Sadly, everyone doesn’t have this happy childhood memory. Says Margaret Didden, board member of Read Aloud West Virginia in Jefferson County, “There’s a good percentage of parents in Jefferson County who never go to the library or Four Seasons Books.”

In 2012, the Kids Count Data Center showed 73 percent of West Virginia’s fourth graders as not proficient in reading, and 2011 figures showed our eighth graders below those of 46 other states. There are many reasons, including poverty, absence of books in the home, traditional emphasis on physical labor for making a living, and parental substance abuse. And of course, West Virginia shares with the rest of the country the increased time children spend with video games, television, and various electronic devices.

Read Aloud West Virginia’s aim is to “raise a state full of readers” and motivate children to want to read. It was founded in 1987 by a group of Kanawha County parents, first with readers in schools and “Books for Babies,” and they then added other programs. It was successful and was adopted by other counties, with 53 of the state’s 55 counties using it by 2000.

The West Virginia Education Fund (now Education Alliance) took over from the Kanawha County group in 1993, administering the program under the name Read Aloud West Virginia, but they decided to eliminate the program in 2006 and focus on research and advocacy. Counties were left to carry on with whatever versions of the program they put together, so the original group took the name back and decided to reestablish the program. In 2008, a Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation grant for \$200,000 helped them on their way.

The Read Aloud program has four major parts: community volunteer readers who read regularly in classrooms, book distribution, classroom enrichment (materials for teachers), and public education

(outreach to parents and communities to encourage reading).

The Jefferson County Read Aloud Committee is striving to get the program back up and running. Some schools have re-joined the program, while others are continuing with their own versions. Kendra Adkins, of Four Seasons Books, explains that there are some major differences between the Read Aloud program and the independent programs.

“Many schools have parents who come in and read. But the Read Aloud program has non-parental readers from the community,” Adkins notes that it is good for children to meet other caring



Read Aloud volunteer Jim Schmitt and author Malcolm Ater

adults who come in regularly and read to them. “It sends a message to kids that the community cares about them and that other adults like to read.”

She went on to explain that Read Aloud provides free magazines for the children and a huge collection of “book trunks” for teachers to borrow. The trunks contain 40 to 100 assorted fiction and nonfiction books on various subjects for various age groups. “It costs the school nothing and it gives so much.”

Another important feature of the Read Aloud program is that volunteer readers are asked to attend a short orientation session before reading for the first time. Reading to oneself is not like reading to a room full of children in a way that will engage them, and people may not have given much thought to their read aloud skills. The session covers research on what works in reading, the volunteer’s role (the expectations of the teacher and their own expectations), and the best books to share.

Mary Kay Bond, executive director of Read Aloud West Virginia, observes,

“Affluent schools often think they don’t need a read aloud program. They say, ‘Our kids can read.’ But it is not related to money. For the first time, we are seeing language delays in affluent homes. They are very busy homes with lots of electronics.”

As part of Read Aloud’s goals of involving whole communities, businesses partners with schools pay for projects and recruit readers for their schools from their employees.

Kathy Klein of Shepherdstown has been reading to the fifth graders in Sarah Ayer’s class at North Jefferson Elementary for two years. She works for the U.S. Coast Guard, which participates in a partnership with North Jefferson, and employees can spend 30 minutes a week reading.

Klein says that there is a suggested reading list for volunteers new to the program, but books can be tailored to each classroom as the readers get to know their children’s tastes and interests. “Each class is different,” she says. “Around Halloween I was reading stories about the ghosts of Jefferson County. I explained to the class that they were old tales that had been passed on for decades. Sometimes I read from *Highlights for Children* and even from the *Farmer’s Almanac*! I want the whole class to be interested—to give



Jim Schmitt and Malcolm Ater and the fifth grade class after reading Tyler’s Mountain Magic by Ater

them an awareness of what reading can do and where it can take them. For some kids, it’s an escape.”

There is a lot of concern about the shrinking attention spans of children, but Klein observes that this does not appear to be true when they are interested and engaged. She recalls that when she read a book that took five weeks to finish, it continued to hold their interest. And when

she accidentally started reading something from the previous week, the class said, “Mrs. Klein, you read that before!”

Klein says that she looks forward to her visits to the classroom. Obviously the kids do, too, because, she says, “Now, when I’m finished, they clap!”

Jim Schmitt of Shepherdstown is a veteran reader. He has been reading to fifth graders at Shepherdstown Elementary for 15 years, starting when the original Read Aloud program was in effect. He credits Mary Smith, then coordinator for the program, with recruitment of people from the community.

Asked whether he had started reading at his children’s school, Schmitt says, “My children were only two and five when I started, so I wasn’t reading at their school, but I knew they would be going there. Paula Tremba, who was the fifth grade teacher, asked me to read. She said she thought I’d be good for the job!”

Schmitt says that he used to have three kids go to the library as a team and pick three books. Then the class was consulted and one of the three books would be picked to read, based on an interview with the class. If anyone had already read it, it couldn’t be used because there was the potential for somebody to be bored.

“My object was to get the attention of 100 percent of the audience,” Schmitt says.

Recently he has been picking the books himself. He reads both fiction and nonfiction so that kids can learn to distinguish them. “I found some West Virginia authors that the kids can relate to with storylines near their age.”

Schmitt reads to the class on his lunch break from work, reading for half an hour to 45 minutes, and the kids look forward to seeing him. “We enjoy each other,” he says, “and it’s a break for the kids and the teachers and me.”

For information on how you can get involved in Read Aloud West Virginia, visit [readaloudwestvirginia.org](http://readaloudwestvirginia.org).

**Claire Stuart** has always been a reader, thanks to her mom!



# Up On the Hill

Cassie Bosley

One of the bonuses of living in Shepherdstown is the strength of its community. A small yet strong aspect of that is the group of shops in town. Just about every business along the two blocks of German Street, the two blocks of Princess Street, on Duke and Washington streets, is owned by the person behind the counter. Years ago, Shepherdstown Outback Basics was in the space where Needful Things is now. The owners of Outback Basics, Jo and Jane, opened that shop to provide a wholesale source for Jo's *toys*: kayak and bicycle equipment, backpacks, water bottles, Appalachian Trail maps, and more. The shop was not opened as a get-rich-quick plan, but as a way for the owners to follow their passions. Many of Shepherdstown's shops have that wonderful quality of being owned by people who love what they're doing—in their own store with fly-fishing supplies, books, Mexican food, bicycles...

Up On the Hill, the shop at 121 W. German St. (first floor), celebrated the end of its first year in business on October 1. Amii and Guy Fritz opened Up On the Hill as a place to sell cloth diapers and healthy supplies for young parents. Amii's interest in cloth diapers began with their first child, River. She wanted to avoid disposable diapers—the main filler in trash dumps—and their nagging expense. When River's sister,



PHOTOS BY AMII FRITZ

*Some of the wonderful items for sale...*

Luna, was born, the diaper world was in full swing at the Fritz household. But cloth diapers were only available online, at least for Shepherdstown residents, and online prices are high and require a credit card. Once the shop was open, Amii and Guy's enthusiasm about *the product* had a place to blossom, and the whole shop reflects this.

Amii also provides one-on-one service to anyone with a question about using cloth diapers; she is able to troubleshoot with both the product and the customer—a service not available online. Again, it's the idea of enthusiasm. "I love cloth diapers," Amii says. The shop offers classes by Guy (diapering for dads, with, its rumored, beer tasting) and by Amii (Cloth 101). Check with the shop for dates.

The cloth diapers in the shop are not the cloth diapers I used for my sons, born before the availability of disposable ones. Those diapers were square feet of terry cloth, or the pre-folded ones like flannel (those oldies are good for under-the-sink rags). Cloth diapers in Up On the Hill come in a variety of colors and patterns. The diaper is formed into two parts: the holder and the washable diaper, all made from soft natural fiber. When the shop first opened, the table in the middle of the room held an assortment of these colorful soakers. A few children's T-shirts hung on the racks.



*...in Shepherdstown's newest children's clothing and toy store*

The mantel over the old (cold) fireplace held the Zum soaps (cut with a corrugated blade), and wonderful chocolate sat on the counter. There was lots of room to walk around and appreciate the wooden floor, the old windows.

Over the year, more shelves have been put in and all the T-shirt racks (made by C. Schwartz for Conscious Clothing, the previous shop in this space) are full. The chocolate has expanded into its own shelf unit. (I'd like to thank those who went public with the info about the health benefits of dark chocolate.) Teething necklaces fill the shelf under the checkout counter. (And check out the counter—a beautiful piece of maple and another creation by Schwartz.)

Amii and Guy also encourage local craftspeople. Many of the shop's products

are made by local artists. For example, blown glass ornaments hang in the window; some of the cloth diapers are made locally; small quilts hang above the mantel; and crocheted animals sit on shelves. The newest addition to the shop is the back room (where Steppin' Out shoe store first opened), now full of toys, both wooden and cloth, all eco-friendly. Another new line is locally tie-dyed T-shirts for grownups. There are too many products in the shop to list them, but cloth diapers and baby carriers are the big sellers. As we get closer to the holidays, the windows will fill with more blown-glass ornaments, even more beautiful in winter's afternoon sun.

We're lucky to live in a town where most of shop owners work behind the counters, providing goods and services. Like Amii and Guy, these owners believe

in what they're doing. Each business not only provides an income (of sorts) for the owners but also helps build the community. At the very least, the shops save us from having to go to the big-box stores. (As we near the holidays, this becomes even more attractive.) As a plus, we experience community.

**Cassie Bosley** has lived in Shepherdstown since 1985. She teaches at Shepherd University, gardens, practices t'ai chi, and has fun with her grandson.

#### Hours:

10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday–Tuesday

10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Wednesday–Saturday

(304) 839-9031

[amii@uponthehilldiapers.com](mailto:amii@uponthehilldiapers.com)



*Up On the Hill sign at the storefront on German Street*



# What Kind of Name Is That for a Church?

Sue Kennedy

There's a new pastor in Shepherdstown. His name is Rob Davis and he's senior pastor of the 2nd Act Church. We met for breakfast at Betty's just before 7:30 a.m. on what promised to be a good day. It was a very good way to begin a good day.

If the telling of the 2nd Act Church was to be done justice, there were two major questions that needed answers right up front. (1) *What kind of a name is that for a church?* (2) *Why Shepherdstown?* Rob has a gently passionate way with straightforward answers, and though the subject might bring out the skeptic in some, after a well-spent hour with him, I understood.

In all candor, Rob said, "I believe before Christ the world was living in Act 1. When Christ came, we were given instructions by Jesus to go into the world and preach the gospel. With His arrival, we began living in Act 2. The final act will be when our Savior and soon-coming King returns for his people."

Rob Davis grew up in Punxsutawney, Pa.—coal country. His father, Leroy Davis, was a coal miner. Mom, Ethel, was a nurse's aide. Leroy and Ethel had four children. The Davis family was very close and very religious.

"My grandfather was a pastor, but he passed away when I was only one year old," said Rob. "My parents raised me in the Assembly of God church, which I attended throughout my life until around June 2008. That is when I began attending a Foursquare church.\* These two churches are identical in their beliefs so it was a smooth transition. The church I grew up in was the Assembly of God Church in Punxsutawney. The boy's ministry was called the Royal Rangers. I was about 13 years old when I attended Junior Leader Camp. I was a pretty typical kid but this is when I began to feel a tugging on my heart—a calling to ministry."

At Punxsutawney High, Rob caught the computer bug. Computer science became his passion. This discovery, however, posed an immediate problem because, in Rob's words, "Up until the 10th grade, I *hated* math. But I really wanted to take computer science courses so I had to change my view." And change he did. He went on to excel in every math and computer course available.



Rob Davis

Upon graduation in 1981, Rob was offered a job with EDS (of Ross Perot fame) in Columbus, Ohio. Rob stressed that Irwin, his older brother by four years, paved the way and made this "great opportunity" possible. Irwin worked for EDS and, because of his stellar performance, management agreed to interview his little brother for an entry-level job. Rob's gratitude toward his brother is still in his voice when he talks about this time in his life 40 years ago.

In 1984, Rob Davis married his high school sweetheart, Tammy Anthony, and the young couple spent the next 15 years in Columbus. By the time he was transferred to Charles Town, W. Va., in 2000, Rob was EDS account manager of systems development, and he and Tammy were the parents of Savannah (Shepherd University), Gabriel (Shepherd), and Gideon (Washington High.) Today, the Davis family numbers seven. Five years ago Austin was born, followed three years later by Riley.

Rob said, "We love this area and, for some unknown reason, we had the heart to see ministry occurring in Shepherdstown. We were launched out of a Foursquare church, The Bridge, in Ranson, and encouraged by Pastor Tim May. In 2011, Tim had started talking about a young adult ministry. It took off and within six months about 30 kids would show up at the Davis home on

Saturday night for Bible studies. "They had loads of questions and a real interest in talking about the Bible. When the new ministry began to take shape, Tim asked where we felt led to plant a church; it was an easy answer."

"As God had begun to lay Shepherdstown on my heart, I began praying for a name. One evening after a church council meeting for The Bridge, I very clearly heard God say '2nd Act—A Foursquare community church. Healing Hearts, Changing Lives, Building Community.' In that very moment, clarity of the name was immediate."

Sunday morning service at The 2nd Act Church is at 10 in the Ram's Den of the Student Center at Shepherd University. "The school has been very good to us," Rob said. "It's not just a college ministry though; all ages are welcome. Everyone's looking for answers, but especially college-age kids." The service is one of questions and answers and Bible reading and discussion. There's no pressure to participate (and Sweet Shop donuts are served).

Everyone responsible for the ministry is a volunteer, and that includes the pastor. Rob liberally spreads praise and gratitude for the hard work and unwavering support of others. The mainstays include: Bill and Joy Felegie, Ali Snurr, Steve Stupar, Jessica Peduzzi, Pat

McNulty, Cookie Carper, Sheron Bias, and, of course, Tammy Davis.

In addition to Sunday service and midweek Bible studies, 2nd Act Church holds community fundraisers. Last July, Pancakes and Portraits (P&P), a free pancake breakfast and free family photo (taken by Shepherd photography students) raised funds for the Shepherdstown Volunteer Fire Department and the Shepherd Junior Fire Training Program for kids 18 and under. The JFTP had mostly hand-me-down expired equipment. Pancakes and Portraits' donation-driven proceeds all went to help get new training equipment. P&P will be held again next spring.

Rob retired from EDS in 2011, and is now a senior business analyst for DMI on contract at the Coast Guard in Kearneysville. The Davis family home in Summit Point is full of kids of all ages and all the love and craziness that includes. Today, Rob's mother, Ethel, has brought her wise and loving grandmother's touch to the lively mix, and life is even richer.

I had one more question of this self-made computer whiz out of coal country—this community leader, volunteer extraordinaire, and senior pastor of a church in Shepherdstown. *So, Rob, what would you say is the most important Christmas tradition in your life?*

"Christmas has always been a time to reflect and remember. We have a tradition within our family to give everybody a Christmas ornament each year and as we decorate our tree, reminisce what each ornament means. We also give a birthday ornament to Baby Jesus in memory of the real meaning of the holiday. Our lives are full of good memories and we believe that it's important not to forget where we came from and the many blessings that we have received," said Rob Davis, the family man.

**Sue Kennedy lives in Shepherdstown—one of the many blessings she has received.**

*\* The Foursquare Church was founded by Aimee Semple McPherson in the early 20th century. She summarized her message into four major points, which she called "the Foursquare Gospel": Jesus is the savior; Jesus is the healer; Jesus is the baptizer with the Holy Spirit, and Jesus is the soon-coming king.*

# Becoming Fluent

Marellen Johnson Aherne

Writer and designer Nancy McKeithen prefers to work in the background, behind the pencil or the computer screen. But a year and a half ago, she brought together the work of local writers and artists and created a thing of elegance—*Fluent Magazine*—and stepped to the other side of the monitor.

*Fluent*, a bimonthly e-zine, or online magazine, covers art in its many forms: visual, literary, performance, movement, and culinary. Focused on the art, artists, and culture of West Virginia's Shenandoah Valley counties and neighboring regions, *Fluent* itself is a work of art. Exquisite layouts, diverse articles, and availability—it's free online—make *Fluent* a must-read.

Though somewhat circuitous, McKeithen's path to creating *Fluent* seems almost inevitable in retrospect. In grade school, she started writing short rhymes and limericks and in high school longer poems. At Bowling Green State University in northwestern Ohio, she studied English and creative writing, later graduating from then Shepherd College, where she studied graphic design. Two principal skills needed to create *Fluent* had been set in place.

Her career stops along the way included sales, corporate publications, and magazines—AOPA Pilot; Empire Press (now Weider History Group), a publisher of history magazines, including *Aviation History*, *Military History*, and *Vietnam*; and *FPO* (For Publications Only), a startup magazine for magazine designers.

McKeithen moved to West Virginia in 1986, having migrated to the region from Ohio via stops in Louisiana, Indiana, Virginia, and Maryland as a military dependent. In 1997, she established The McKeithen Group, a marketing communications company. It kept her traveling to Delaware weekly for several years but now operates from her home in Bakerton, where she has lived since 2001.

While doing contract work for the Arts & Humanities Alliance of Jefferson County (AHA), she created an online version of its monthly newsletter, the *AHA! Voice Online*. Through her affiliation with the organization, she met and became friends with The Bridge Gallery owner, Kathryn Burns. Over a winter

Sunday afternoon conversation with Kathryn at the gallery, the idea for the online magazine was born. Burns is *Fluent's* Visual Arts editor.

"I didn't have to think about it for long, about an hour," she laughs. "I knew it was something I wanted to do." Within a few days, she had written a business plan for the as-yet-unnamed magazine and applied for a Community Grant from AHA, which she received. A Facebook page followed, friends and acquaintances inquired about being part of the effort, and the brainstorming for a name ensued. "Finding the right name took longer than designing the first issue," she says. She liked "Confluence" because of the coming together of the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers but thought "con" sounded negative, and she also wanted a shorter name. "Confluence" became "Influence," then "Fluence" and finally "Fluent." But not before she and friends had gone through a few hundred possibilities. The first issue e-mailed in July 2012.

*Fluent* became and remains a passion for McKeithen. Its mission is to publicize the art and artists of the greater Eastern Panhandle region, and to make art and the magazine accessible to everyone. And *Fluent* does this beautifully. Through its elegance, *Fluent* encourages people to take in and explore the area's rich culture and creative community. "In addition to Jefferson, our coverage includes Berkeley and Morgan counties in West Virginia, and crosses the borders, into Clarke, Frederick, and Loudoun counties in Virginia, and Frederick and Washington counties in Maryland," she says.

McKeithen speaks of *Fluent* as a "we" experience. "I don't do this alone—a lot of people are involved in creating the magazine's content," she says. "To have people share their passion for the arts through their contributions to *Fluent* is a real gift." Sheila Vertino is associate editor; Ginny Fite, director of Artomatic@Jefferson, was managing editor through the first year; Todd Coyle, Shepherd Ogden, and Ed Zahniser have their own columns; and Amy Mathews Amos, Paula Pennell, and Cheryl Serra are contributing editors. Each issue also features poetry and fiction.

As a vehicle for showcasing visual artists' work, *Fluent* excels. McKeithen

had a vision of how she wanted the feature pages to look from the very beginning—like walls in a gallery, with a lot of white space and large photographs. "We couldn't produce the magazine without the support of the artists, who have given it a wonderful reception and are very generous in letting us share their work with *Fluent* readers," McKeithen says. "And we couldn't continue to do it without the interest of the subscribers and advertisers. They've been very generous in their compliments, and their numbers are increasing."

*Fluent* currently goes to 1,875 subscribers, about 70 to 80 percent of those are in the Panhandle and surrounding region. But the e-zine has subscribers from around the country and as far away as Mexico, the United Kingdom, France, and Turkey.

Don't overlook *Fluent's* inviting and informative website. There you'll find current and back issues of the magazine, an events calendar, gallery happenings, a listing of arts classes, and links to advertisers.

Go to [www.fluent-magazine.com](http://www.fluent-magazine.com) to subscribe. It's free. Prepare to be enchanted.

**Marellen Johnson Aherne** is a recent transplant to Shepherdstown. The extensive local arts scene was an important factor in making the decision to move here.





# Ralph Scorza: Jewelry Spanning Generations

Hannah Cohen



PHOTO SUBMITTED BY RALPH SCORZA

Ralph Scorza

I have a story to give you. Once mine, this story is now yours to wear. My story cannot ease your pain or exalt your joys, but it can be a symbol of comfort or a good spirit. I cannot tell you my story; time has replaced the words with this embodiment. The art of my telling forged and molded to be heard with the mind and heart and cast to take shape of the wearer.

Our storyteller is a jeweler whose talents present wearable works of art. Ralph Scorza has long been interested in jewelry—“Something about jewelry excites us.” Maybe it is the realistic tangibility of displaying a work of art, thereby a display of beauty. Or maybe jewelry carries something else with it—a deeper meaning of our giving. Our grandmother’s engagement ring passed down generations is not a ring but a symbol of a lineage of love. For Scorza, jewelry spans generations as a portable symbol of memories and relationships—a lineage of stories, a poignant reminder of what matters most to us.

Scorza was born in Brooklyn, N.Y. His family moved to Florida, where he lived for most of his childhood and completed undergraduate studies in agronomy at the University of Florida. He served as a Peace Corps volunteer in the Amazon region of Brazil before matriculating into the university’s masters program. Pursuit of a doctorate in plant genetics and plant breeding relocated him to Purdue

University. Eventually, Scorza settled in Shepherdstown, taking a position at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, where he continues to work as a fruit tree breeder.

Needing a means of telling the stories scribbled in his thoughts, Scorza sought a form of artistic expression. In 1984, inspired by his wife Marsha, also an artist, he enrolled in a jewelry design course at Shepherd University. There he learned basic techniques of jewelry design and fabrication. Over the years, his talent has been self-nurtured, supplemented with workshops and a curious mind. Scorza’s work has been shown at a number of galleries and juried exhibitions, including the 2009 Biennial Exhibition of the Creative Crafts Council, an umbrella organization of craft guilds in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia. There he was awarded first place in mixed media and honorable mention in metals. At the Cumberland Valley Artists Juried Exhibitions in 2010, he received the Hagerstown Area Religious Council Award. Most recently, at the 2013 Creative Crafts Council 29th Biennial Exhibition, he was awarded first place for mixed media.

In the early stages of adapting his artistry, Scorza crafted more traditional forms of jewelry—rings, earrings, necklaces, and brooches—of metal and stone. He sold his designs at small shops in Shepherdstown. Scorza credits Ricco at Ricco’s Gallery in Shepherdstown with professional guidance that honed his natural talents for learning and seeking purpose. Joining a community of local artisans brought more guidance and technical advice, particularly from Bradley Sanders, in jewelry and metal craft, and Nancy Streeter, in wood carving. What began as a private hobby took a professional route, as he allowed his emotions, not just a talent and eye for aesthetic, to develop his pieces.

*If I feel an emotion, I wonder if others face the same emotions.*

In the early 1990s, Scorza’s style of jewelry began to evolve from “pieces based simply on design to works with their own stories to tell.” He struggled against a mental undertow of strong concern for the welfare of former colleagues

in Sarajevo, caught up in the civil war in Yugoslavia, Scorza’s compassion guided his next phase of work.

Scorza had traveled to Sarajevo to study his colleagues’ abandoned plum trees on the brink of extinction and to establish a joint program to research disease-resistant genes. Not long after he left, the city was besieged by violence. Some of his colleagues died in the Bosnian War.

To relinquish anguish and helplessness, Scorza turned to his studio. There the passage of time and the crafting of one of his most memorable works healed his emotional wounds: *Refugee*. Two hands, one reaching upward prying an opening in a barbed wire fence, is the physical object. But the hands grasp an emotional and spiritual embodiment. Who is seeking refuge? Is the person asking for our help? Is it the artist seeking refuge? Is it us trying to find the answer that will fill the hole in the fence?

*Refugee* was created as a tribute to the people of Sarajevo, yet it embodies a larger spirit of people left homeless and abandoned. The feelings that Scorza transcribes into his works tell timeless stories. The wearer of his jewelry carries a reminder of our humanity.

Over the years, the jewelry he creates has changed as he seeks a larger understanding of the human condition. Each piece begins with an orchestra of thoughts playing in his mind. A vague sketch becomes a physical embodiment of these replaying synapses. Some works can take years; the mind cannot be forced or coerced to understand. Within his workspace, connections and inspiration gather larger meanings. The undertones of life bring forth a larger meaning from isolated events.

Scorza and I met at The Bridge Gallery, where he showed me a selection of his recent works not yet on display. Meeting at the Gallery was more about logistics than convenience. Scorza’s workshop allows just enough room for one person to physically occupy the space. This deeply personal isolation drives his therapeutic resolution. Ironically, this was not the original intent when designing the studio. The workshop

was presented to him by his family: his wife, Marsha, to whom he’s been happily married for 40 years, and his two wonderful grown children, Cameron and Pamela. Scorza says, “Can’t get any better than that!”

Scorza’s current works channel lessons through his jewelry by integrating a piece of wearable jewelry into a stationary life study. His *Sacred and Profane* explores the connection of money and our chosen value system and work ethic: Men rush to work, money dripping from their feet, under the presence of Buddha. Most of his works are made of natural materials—wood, fossils, stones, and metals—and incorporate themes from indigenous cultures.

Inspired by his life, the lives around him, and the lives of people he may never meet, his works remind us that we all



“Sacred and Profane”

share the same Earth and feel the same emotions. In creating a piece of art, many stories unite. Where will you carry them?

Select pieces of Scorza’s work can be viewed at The Bridge Gallery. For more information about his recent work, contact the artist at (304) 876-3130, [ralphscorzastudios@gmail.com](mailto:ralphscorzastudios@gmail.com), or via [www.ralphscorzastudios.com](http://www.ralphscorzastudios.com).

Special thanks to Kathryn Burns at The Bridge Gallery and Marsha Scorza for their help in producing this article.

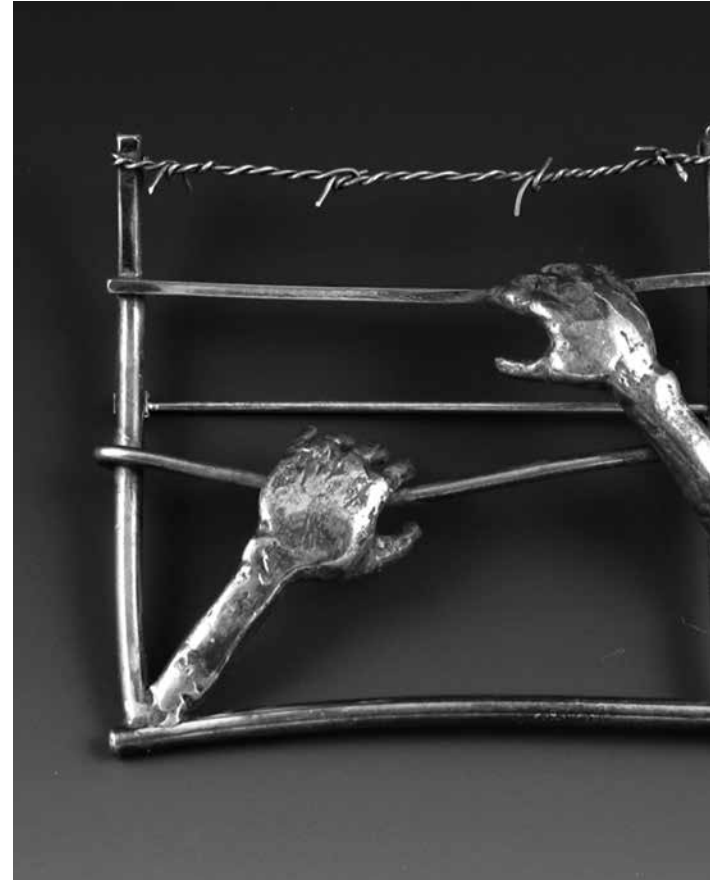
**Hannah Cohen** grew up in Shepherdstown and finds her past reconnecting with her present.

**Artwork** →

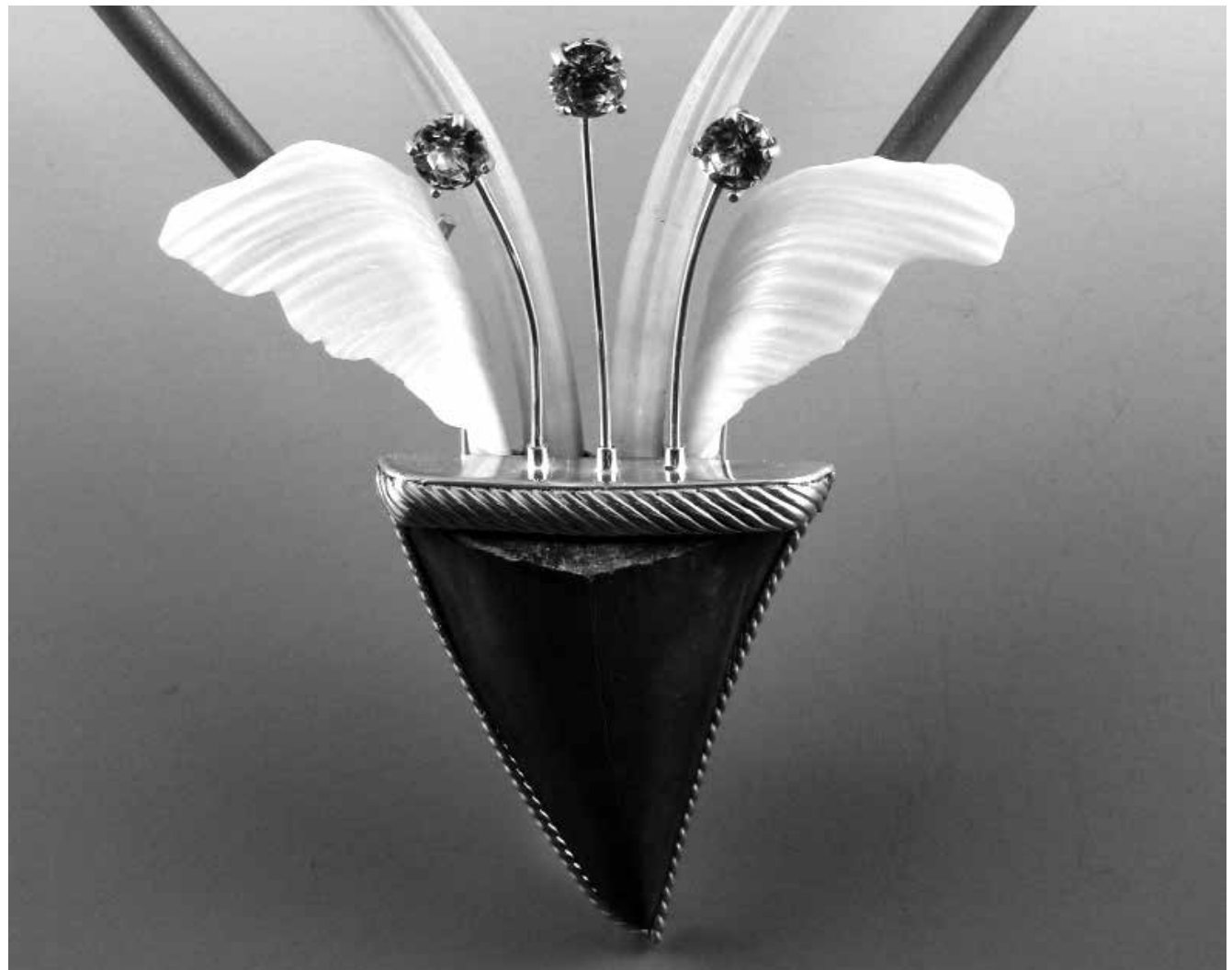
# Ralph Scorza



*"Celebrate We Will"*



*"Refugee"*

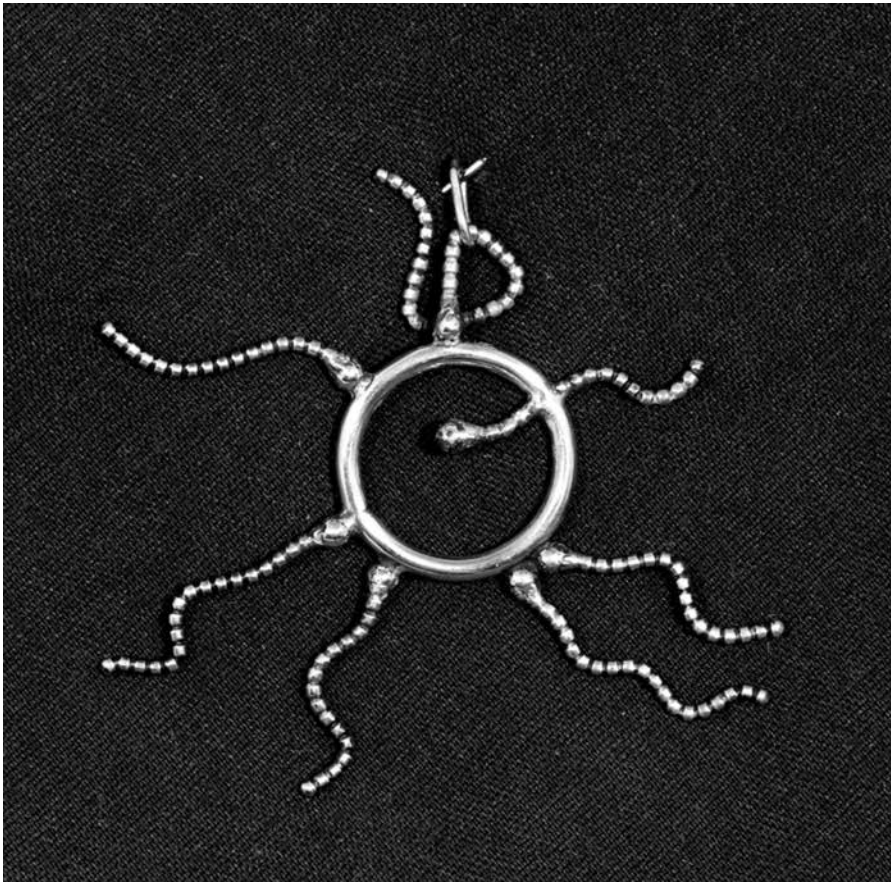
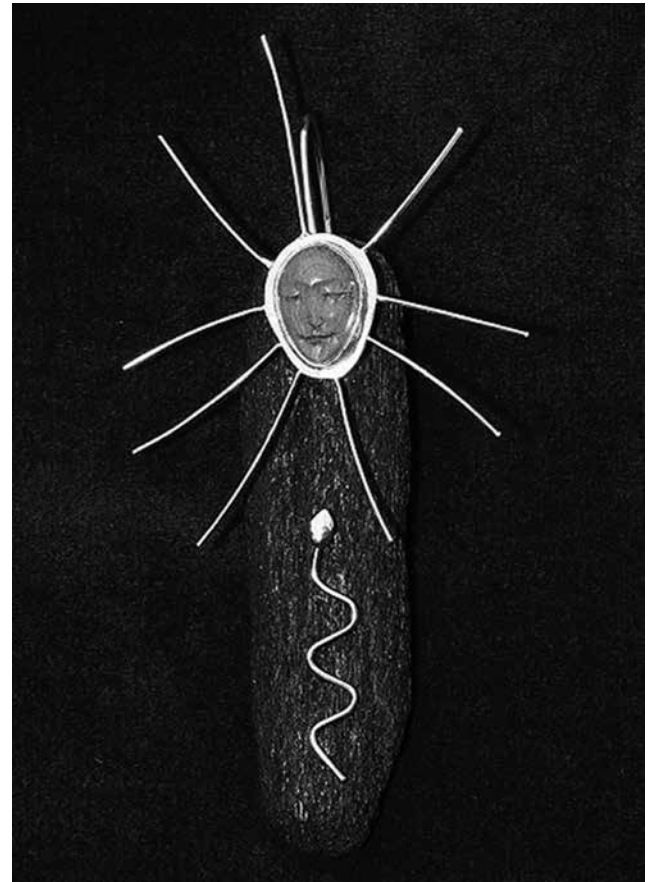


*"Gifts From the Sea"*



*"Dream Warthog"*



*"Conception"**"Goddess"*

PHOTOS SUPPLIED BY RALPH SCORZA

See artworks in color at  
[shepherdstowngoodnewspaper.org](http://shepherdstowngoodnewspaper.org)

# Dylan Kinnett: Recent Work

## Reflection

that's my reflection on the slick stone floor  
 not so far from the inside of the glass  
 barely a distance between us  
 barely the black  
 space  
 separates  
 or brings us back.  
 It's curious.  
 Bending over to look at me.  
 Dim dumb mumbling lips repeat  
 I remember being small,  
 a triptych of mirrors,  
 a fitting room from every angle.  
 I had crawled into a kaleidoscope,  
 just to say hello  
 to wave  
 and to wave back  
  
 just the same from every angle.  
  
 it's a self-same expression  
 on every face  
 now and from every angle,  
 and on every surface,  
 the eyes are always  
 exactly the same

## There Are Rabbits in the Woods

There are dead fish in the run  
 Go out and have fun, boys  
  
 Strange men linger by the tracks  
 Before the dark, boys, come back  
  
 A truck's stuck in the mud  
 Throw rocks at the sun  
  
 They'll laugh at your games, boys  
 You build a fortress

## Graduation Day

They taught us to argue  
 Never whether to win or to resolve  
 Nor anything about the difference  
 And now it's time to go.  
  
 We tasted spirits  
 The kind kept in bottles, left on shelves.  
 No feeling but fun. No thoughts, only words,  
 And now it's time to go.  
  
 We plied our voices,  
 In quantity and volume clambering.  
 The spirits are shelved.  
 And now it's time to go.

## Doubt

Do you know me  
 as a word—  
 something you can spell  
 something you can whisper  
 something you can yell  
 something you can say?  
 Do you know me  
 as a name?  
  
 Do you know me  
 on sight—  
 something you can describe  
 something you can remember  
 something you can overlook  
 something you can recognize?  
 Do you know me  
 as a face?

## An Acquired Taste

No florescent, linoleum, walkways and rows  
 No marketplace to influence decision.  
 Wandering, hungry, seeking shade,  
 I plucked a paw-paw from the paw-paw tree.  
 I chose which one seemed ready made,  
 But I was wrong.  
  
 No light to spoil the fruit's repose  
 No spots to mar its perfect skin,  
  
 The smoothest one, green, brightest, taut,  
 I plucked a paw-paw from the paw-paw tree.  
 The only one I wanted was one only I would want.  
 It was a new thing.  
  
 No recipe or menu to describe the food  
 No tools to use to prepare for it,  
 Sustenance in the wilderness.  
 I plucked a paw-paw from the paw-paw tree.  
 I savored the first bite's bitterness.  
 I never knew better.  
  
 No one told me which was good.  
 No one there to share my dinner with.  
 Tangible, edible, so I ate.  
 I plucked a paw-paw from the paw-paw tree.  
 It left me in a sorry state.  
 I was ill.  
  
 No ripe fruit had ever left that place.  
 No ripe fruit would, till I came back  
 Later, wiser, considerate.  
 I plucked a paw-paw from the paw-paw tree.  
 The choice I made was deliberate  
 But I was right.

## Out of Range

The song changes  
 to a faded station, static,  
 harmony all but lost.  
 Reaching, over and out,  
 changing the frequency,  
 over.

## Listening for Rhythm

Study how the present begins.  
 It is a thing best done  
 listening for rhythm in the wind.  
 There is no rhythm in the wind  
 but listening helps.

## History

Look up, Woman and Man  
 sky is all you see.  
 You break the bread.  
 You made the bread  
 out of the ground.  
 You made the plow,  
 and mounds out of the dead.  
 Dirt knows nothing of them.  
 The only thing it feels is feet.

## Sonnet on the Occasion of a Wedding

When love blossoms, it isn't a flower  
 Picked from the earth and ready to wither.  
 Rather, love gardens to keep its power.  
 Where blooms wilt or roots rot, love goes thither.  
 Love plucks the dead parts, brings what's lacking,  
 mends.  
 Attend likewise to every living part  
 That ever, slowly, to the sunlight bends,  
 Whether it be a limb, a spine, a heart.  
 Mind flowers, but also what thorns they wield  
 And hope that they sting for a good reason.  
 Mind cultivation over what fruits yield  
 And so come to know the greenest season.  
 Love is work, but it's done like keeping friends.  
 Do it right and you'll find it never ends.

**Dylan Kinnett** grew up in Shepherdstown, where he published a zine, the town's first. Now, in Baltimore, Md., he manages the website and recently co-facilitated a crowd-sourced exhibition for the Walters Art Museum. He holds a bachelor's degree in writing from Maryville College in Tennessee and has work published or performed by Annex Theater at Artscape, Seltzer magazine, and Les Kurbas Theatre in Lviv, Ukraine.



# Government Is the Solution, Not the Problem

Mark Madison

*What a puny effort is this to burn a great city.*  
—Edward R. Murrow commenting on  
Hitler's Blitz attacks on London in 1940

What a puny effort is this to shut down the federal government. I write as we enter the third week of a federal government shutdown (I refuse to use the Orwellian double-speak of “partial shutdown”), and I find myself, as an American historian, disgusted. Aside from the personal difficulties caused by living without a paycheck, I find a broader anti-governmental bias doing irreparable damage to both our society and our civic institutions. I can no longer abide the anti-government platitudes and “know-nothing” attitude of a certain portion of the American populace to *their* government.

I have worked both within and outside the government for 32 years and by no means have rose-tinted glasses as to the functioning of either public or private institutions. But by and large, the federal government has done a superlative job in many arenas including: the Post Office, Head Start, the Interstate Highway System, Social Security, NASA, the U.S. Military, Medicare, the Peace Corps (where I was a volunteer), etc. If those are the programs that critics want to shut down, they need a better excuse than platitudes about waste and “big government.” Long-functioning successful programs deserve thoughtful critique, not empty phrases.

But I would like to focus on just one governmental success story I am most familiar with, the American conservation movement. Our current American environment has largely been shaped by the federal government (for better or worse, depending on your proclivities). This is an indisputable historical truth. Early conservationists like Henry David Thoreau and George Perkins Marsh had pushed for some type of conservation of the nation's forests and wildlife since the mid-19th century, yet nothing concrete was achieved. It was not until Republican President Theodore Roosevelt put the full force of federal government behind conservation that the first major strides were made.

From 1901 to 1909, President Roosevelt popularized the new term “conservation” and then showed how it could work at the federal level. He designated the first 55 national

wildlife refuges, five national parks, and 18 national monuments, and created the U.S. Forest Service—then gave it 150 new national forests to manage.

Roosevelt largely laid out the mandate of federal conservation noting: “I recognize the right and duty of this generation to develop and use the natural resources of our land; but I do not recognize the right to waste them, or to rob, by wasteful use, the generations that come after



*Theodore Roosevelt and John Muir at  
Yosemite National Park*

us.” This has remained the mission of federal conservationists, a mission in the best interest of our society as a whole.

A second stage of the American environmental movement came under Republican President Richard Nixon. While Roosevelt had set up the protected lands that eventually made up the current National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Nixon went on to add regulatory rigor to protecting our environmental health.

In 1970, Nixon created the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). For the first time in our history there was one agency responsible for writing and enforcing the rules to ensure environmental and human health. In that same year, he signed the Clean Air Act, which gave the EPA the power to regulate air quality and almost immediately helped alleviate smog pollution across much of the nation. Nixon pushed through the aquatic equivalent with the Safe Drinking Water Act, which helped protect our imperiled watersheds and supplies.

In 1972, he signed the often forgotten Marine Mammal Protection Act, which helped push the American environmental movement into the oceans and helped save whales and other marine mammals from extinction. And finally, in 1973, Nixon signed and supported the Endangered Species Act (ESA), the most far-reaching legislation ever to prevent extinction. California condors,

whooping cranes, Yellowstone wolves, and bald eagles all owe their continued existence at least in part to the ESA.

With a major public land base, providing habitat for both wildlife and humans, and a series of laws to prevent us from being poisoned by earth, air, or water, the American environment became healthier and more robust. It was a tremendous success story that we enjoy every day as we breathe the air, take a hike in a park, or drink a cup of water. All of this was made possible by your federal government.

Granted this is a history of a century of conservation in a nutshell. Its brevity has left out the tremendous contributions of local and state governments and the many non-governmental organizations that have built the American conservation movement. But then again, none of these groups is currently shut down out of pique.

And in this story, one can see a true distinction between the public and private sector. In the private sector, such a success story would lead to bonuses, salary raises, and the esteem of one's stockholders and customers. Yet in a bizarre irony, federal employees have unilaterally had their salaries frozen for the last three years and then had imposed on them mandatory furloughs—first brought about through sequestration and, most recently, through the lack of a budget. None of these actions were based on performance. They were broad-scale punitive measures, something we normally discourage in schools, sports, and business as not being a “best practice.” Almost certainly a genuine sense of “public service” can counter these iniquities for a time, but eventually the best and brightest citizens will look for careers where their contributions are more equitably recognized.

Counter to the success story of the American government, there are several existing nations without functioning governments. One thinks of Somalia or



*Federal employee with  
endangered red wolf pups*

PHOTOS COURTESY NCTC/FWS

Afghanistan as nations without high-functioning governments. If one wants to emulate these nations as free citizens, one can easily move there and enjoy the freedom unshackled from governmental rules and regulations. But one should be honest about the correlation between nonexistent governments and very low-functioning nations. I can think of no counter examples of extremely weak governments and high-functioning societies, and I would challenge governmental critics to do so. In fact I would challenge anti-governmental critics to apply the same rigor to their arguments that such an important discussion deserves.

If one is going to critique “the government,” specific agencies, programs, and missions should be discussed rather than an amorphous entity of more than two and a half million federal employees and millions more federal contractors carrying out the functions set by the American public. As for me, I will easily hold up Yosemite, the Grand Canyon, the Clean Air Act, and the Endangered Species Act against similar non-governmental initiatives to protect our environment.

So, enough with the government bashing. The government is as imperfect and flawed as the American public who makes up its ranks and sets its agenda. But it is not a foreign oppressor nor is it a do-nothing bureaucracy. Its recent record in the last century or so has been an impressive series of accomplishments to improve human health and our shared habitat with the rest of nature.

The greatest danger from the government would be a loss of faith in its ability to improve our lives and the resulting self-fulfilling prophecy—low voter turnout, poor recruitment, loss of civic duty. A functioning democracy needs to understand how its government works, what it does, and the citizen's role in shaping the government. Shutting down the government, willfully (or mindlessly) bashing the government, or remaining ignorant of this institution are the greatest perils we currently face as a nation.

**Mark Madison** used his furlough time to catch up on overdue articles, reviews, lectures, and research projects to counter the stereotype of lazy bureaucrats. He can be reached at: [mmadison@shepherd.edu](mailto:mmadison@shepherd.edu).

# A Tour of the Wastewater Treatment Plant

Claire Stuart



PHOTOS BY JAMIE LAWRENCE

From the time that humans quit living as hunter-gatherers and started settling down, they have had the problem of how to deal with their waste. About 3000 BCE, toilets were invented—holes in stone walls draining to underground water. Soon, ancient cities began building pipes to carry wastewater away.

The Romans had an elaborate sewer system using water from their public baths to flush public latrines. By around 100 CE, wealthy people had direct connections from their homes to sewers. Poor people used public latrines or pots that they emptied into the sewers.

While sewer pipes did take the waste away from homes and towns, it did not go far. It was simply dumped into the nearest body of water. By the end of the 19th century, the first sewage treatment plants were operating. Unfortunately, up until the mid-20th century, right here in the United States, untreated sewage of some large cities was still going directly into whatever river, lake, or harbor was handy.

People living far from a large body of water seldom think about how they affect the environment downstream, but everyone lives in a watershed—an area that drains to some body of water. We are in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, covering over 64,000 square miles and six states, fed by five major rivers, including the Potomac, and home to over 17 million people.

Wastewater plants from the hundreds of towns in the watershed threatened the health of the bay by pumping wastewater full of nitrogen and phosphorus into

ivers and streams. These nutrients promote excess algae blooms that deplete oxygen in the water and kill aquatic life. Federal regulations set pollution limits to improve the water in the bay, and wastewater treatment plants have upgraded to meet these requirements.

Shepherdstown's upgraded wastewater treatment plant was completed last year to meet the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Initiative clean water requirements. It was the first big wastewater plant in West Virginia to meet the standards. Shepherdstown finished the system a few years earlier than mandated, giving the operators extra time to learn its nuances.

Public Works Director Frank Welch and his crew gave the GOOD NEWS PAPER a tour of their state-of-the-art facilities. The plant is a Class II wastewater plant staffed by two Class II operators, Frank Welch and chief

operator Kenny Shipley, and two Class I operators, Brian Welch and Bobby Miller. Frank Welch explained that Class I operators must work at a public plant for one year and pass a West Virginia Department of Health written exam. After a year as Class I, an operator must work three more years and pass a Class II exam.

Wastewater goes from your home to a pump station on Princess Street. From there it is pumped to the wastewater plant. "Everything in the plant is pumped in," says Welch. "Nothing is gravity fed."

He noted that the plant is designed to handle a peak flow of two million gallons per day. He explained that in the event of a severe storm, it would be very unlikely that any part of the plant could overflow into the river. It is built to contain many gallons and can be put into a *storm* mode to treat more gallons during a heavy flow.

The first stop the water makes is in the screening area. Sewage water enters

and goes through three screens. The first is 3-millimeter mesh, followed by two, 2-millimeter fine screens. These screens remove inorganic matter and grit, taking



out much of the solid material in the beginning so it doesn't contaminate the membrane filters.

A huge tank on the hill above the plant is the digester. Excess solids and wastes are pumped up there. If there is too much of this sludge, it is sent down to a rotary fan press, a machine with big fanlike blades that rotate and press out the water. The dry sludge is then pushed out onto a truck that takes it to the landfill.

In the next step, the screened wastewater goes to the bioreactors. These



Left to right: Kenny Shipley, Class II operator/chief operator; Bobby Miller, Class I operator; Brian Welch, Class I operator; and Frank Welch, Class II operator and Public Works director





are two side-by-side concrete tanks that rather resemble (very murky!) swimming pools. All biological treatment takes place here. The incoming water is constantly stirred with large paddles and oxygen is blown into the water from below. Naturally occurring microorganisms in the water feed on the organic matter and break it down.

Periodically, the oxygen is cut off for several minutes while the stirring continues, creating what is called an *anoxic zone*. This encourages certain microorganisms to release the nitrogen from the sewage into a gas form that goes off into the air.

One tank fills and stirs for 72 minutes, while the other tank *draws down* for 72 minutes as the water is pumped out and sent to the membrane filters. In the drawdown mode, clean water is going to the filters and sludge is going to the digester.

Neither tank either fills or empties completely. When the drawing tank is nearly empty, it starts filling with wastewater from the screening area. The residual water in that tank provides more working microorganisms to the entering water. At the same time, the full tank will start drawing down and sending its water to the filters.

The membrane filters are housed in a colossal tank that takes up about half

of a building. It measures about 40 by 80 feet and is probably as high as an average roof. It is made up of four separate tanks, each one with five modules of filters, and each tank holds 20,000 gallons.

The membrane filters themselves are narrow tubes that Shipley describes



as “looking like spaghetti.” The holes in these tubes are microscopic, so small that even viruses cannot pass through. Clean water is sucked out through the holes in the membranes and sludge stays behind. Waste sludge is pumped out of the filters and goes to a small tank where chemical reactions remove the phosphorus, and then it is pumped to the digester.

Once every day, each filter tank goes through a chemical cleaning with a very strong bleach solution. Every 90 days, the filters are cleaned with citric acid.

Welch says that the water coming off the filters is very clean and can be reused in the plant to clean and back-flush components.

From the filter tank, clean water goes to a disinfectant tank where it is treated with ultraviolet lights. Welch filled a plastic bottle with this water and held it up to the light. It was just as clean and clear as bottled water. However, this is still considered nonpotable water. From the disinfectant tank it goes to a holding tank, then to a flow meter, and finally it is discharged back into the river.

A high-capacity generator stands by to keep things running in case of power outage. The heart of the operation is a room full of switches that looks like the control room of a spaceship, and a touch-screen computer that monitors everything, providing an instant look at the status of every component in the system.

The good news: Shepherdstown has a state-of-the-art water treatment plant.

The bad news: Once, if you lost your diamond ring while washing dishes or your child flushed valuables down the toilet, they could possibly have been recovered in the open screening area of the old plant. Those days are gone!

**Claire Stuart** wrote about the old wastewater treatment plant back when you could still recover those flushed valuables!



# In Ephesus Searching for That Shepherdstown Feeling

Wendy Mopsik

October in Shepherdstown is such a lovely time of year. The weather is warm enough to spend hours out of doors; Shepherd students stride purposefully around campus preparing for midterm tests and papers; fall mums add color to doorways and window boxes; and anticipation of Halloween on German Street brings excitement to merchants and children alike. Why would a town resident choose to travel anywhere in October?

In our little family of two, we packed suitcases with mixed feelings. Each easy-to-laundry, lightweight item was neatly folded and put into a rolling valise. The carry-on case was filled with reading material, in print and on Kindle. Passports were checked, money changed to euros, average temperatures for three countries researched, and instructions for watering plants left for visiting caretakers.

The ambivalence we felt was a combination of excitement about the prospect of a cruise with my sister and sadness at missing those uniquely October happenings. How were we to reconcile the conflicting emotions and maximize our upcoming adventure? Was there a way to leave home but take something of home with us? Perhaps we could find a place in our travels that was similar to Shepherdstown. Maybe we could discover a village in Italy, a small city in Greece, or an ancient site in Turkey that would contain the elements of the town we were temporarily leaving behind.

Our quest began in Rome, but that destination was quickly eliminated from consideration. The huge crowds, bustling commercial areas, immense squares, and thoroughfares are in complete contrast to quaint, charming Shepherdstown. Although spectacular in every sense, even Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel was "out of whack." Vatican guards loudly remind the throngs via microphone to be silent and respectful. "No photos, no talking, and keep moving so others may see." It was difficult to imagine what the crowds

must be like in the busy tourist months of summer!

The Amalfi Coast of Italy looked as picturesque as the travel posters and postcards. Towering cliffs dotted with tiny villages and beach towns filled with sailboats and bathers caught our eye as we motored past on an excursion launch. A walk in Amalfi led us through narrow winding streets full of shops and cafes, but we found none of Shepherdstown's back-alley wonders. Lunch in a medieval castle high in the mountains was grand, yet a vague homesickness was already tickling the edges of our consciousness.

Next were the island of Malta, boasting the ancient city of Medina; Mykonos with its brilliant white buildings trimmed in sky blue or deep red; and Rhodes, home to the oldest synagogue in Greece, dating to 1577. Even the glorious and frequently photographed island of Santorini left us wanting more.

On the 10th day of our trip, we arrived in Kusadasi, Turkey. This popular seaside resort is named for the small island of Guvercin Adasi that was once home to a defensive castle. Modern-day residents need only to be protected from overzealous tourists seeking the best prices in the myriad shops found on every block.

Most cruise ship visitors come to Kusadasi as the gateway to Ephesus, 20 minutes away by bus. This well-preserved site on the eastern Mediterranean has been the focus of formal archeological attention since 1869, when the first excavations began, yet only one-tenth of the original Roman city has been unearthed. Stonemasons, museum curators, restoration professionals, graduate students, and university scholars continue to flock there for work and study.

Imagining the daily interactions of the people living in Ephesus during its golden age around 334 BCE was easy. Perhaps this was because the ruins are so painstakingly reconstructed and because I felt something akin to familiarity, being guided through the hallowed ground.

And yes, it was possible to see—or only feel—remnants of the hometown left behind.

Ephesus, now six miles away from the sea, was originally located on the banks of the Meander River and a thriving harbor town. Unfortunately, the river disappeared because of earthquakes and the introduction of silt, which over thousands of years filled in the land. As with Shepherdstown's history, the river and its importance for trade and transportation defined its beginnings.

The Arcadian Way, lined with shops, along with the Marble Road and Curetes Street, paved with marble slabs, are pedestrian friendly and reminded me of German, Princess, and Church streets. Residents could find medical services, houses of worship, meeting places for commerce, public toilets (the *latrina*—something that Shepherdstown might imitate) and, central to all activity, the library.

Tiberius Julius Aquila built the Celsus Library as a mausoleum for his father. It was completed in 135 CE. This monumental edifice had two exterior stories, intricate architectural ornamentation, and four female statues representing Virtue, Knowledge, Destiny, and Wisdom. One can visualize the townspeople referring to the 12,000 scrolls housed within or gathering in the open space auditorium in front to hear local poets and literary speeches.

Two distinct theaters can also be found in Ephesus. The Odeon or roofed theater—seating capacity of 1,500—was used primarily for political meetings. The Great Theater, which dates back to the second century CE, seated 24,000 people and is one of the most impressive structures in the city. At various periods it was a place for theatrical performances, religious gatherings, and even an arena for gladiator and animal fights. All festivities were prefaced with a sacrificial ceremony honoring Dionysus. At this very site on the day of our visit, a large gospel group from the International Church of Christ



PHOTOS BY STAN MOPSİK

*The Celsus Library, a well-known symbol of Ephesus, was central to the lives of the Romans.*

convened to sing and give praises. What a poignant reminder of mankind's universal and timeless need to connect with a spirit beyond ourselves.

Water and wellness are the final elements linking Ephesus with Shepherdstown. We have Town Run (and now modern plumbing) to provide running water, and the Romans had revolutionary aqueducts to bring clean water to their cisterns and public baths. Early engineers placed earthenware pipes in the ground beneath the city to bring hot air to the Tepidarium and the Caldarium so that citizens using the facilities could relax while sweating or cooling down. An elliptical pool of cold water in the Frigidarium allowed for a swim before leaving the building. Romans, like their Shepherdstown counterparts, were known to linger at the Gymnasium discussing politics, current events, and philosophy before reluctantly returning to business or study.

Feeling strongly revitalized and much less homesick, we left Ephesus for the shops and carpet demonstrations waiting in Kusadasi. Suddenly, the small handmade masterpiece of our dreams was being ceremoniously rolled out before our eyes. After prolonged bargaining on both sides, we attempted to purchase the carpet on the spot. But to our horror and dismay, we learned that our credit card had been compromised on the previous day, rendering it useless.

An emotionally charged discussion ensued and finally, at my suggestion, the manager agreed to retain my husband as collateral while I took the carpet home with the promise of payment to follow. He will be back in town soon, although his version of the story and the trip may differ from mine. By the way, the carpet looks perfect in our hallway and reminds me daily of the meaning of "Home Sweet Home."

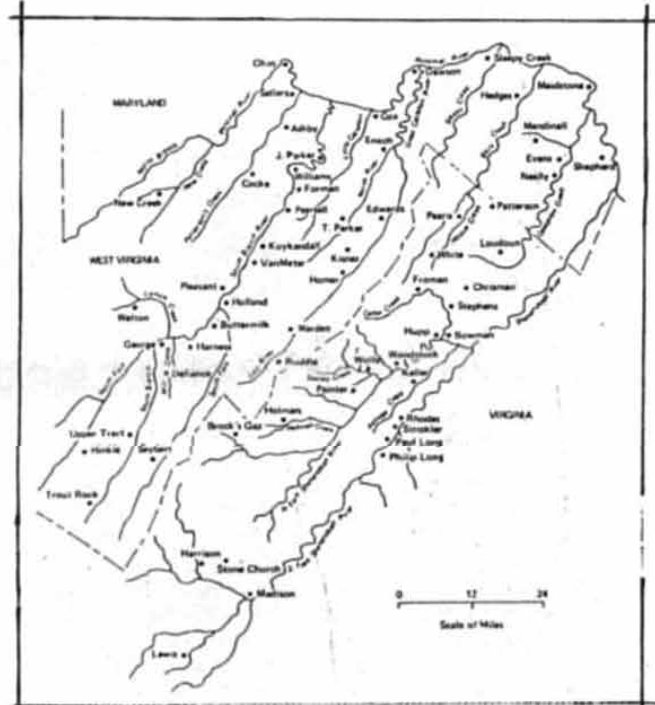
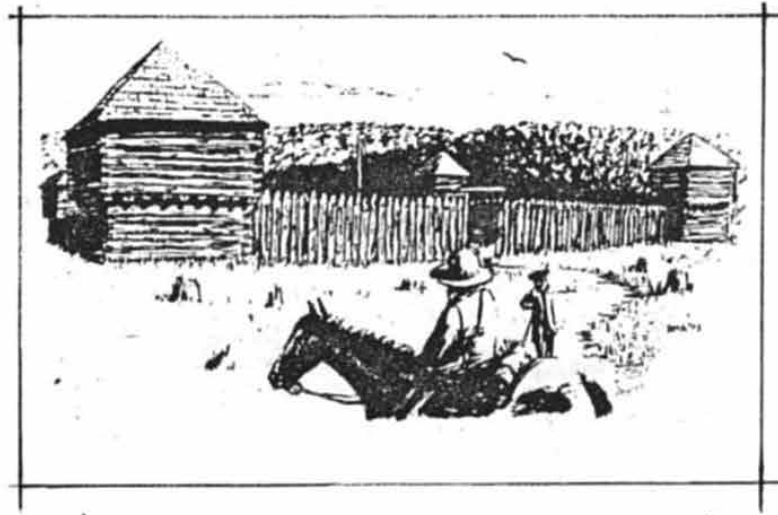
**Wendy Sykes Mopsik** is happy to be home after an educational, recreational, and therapeutic travel experience.



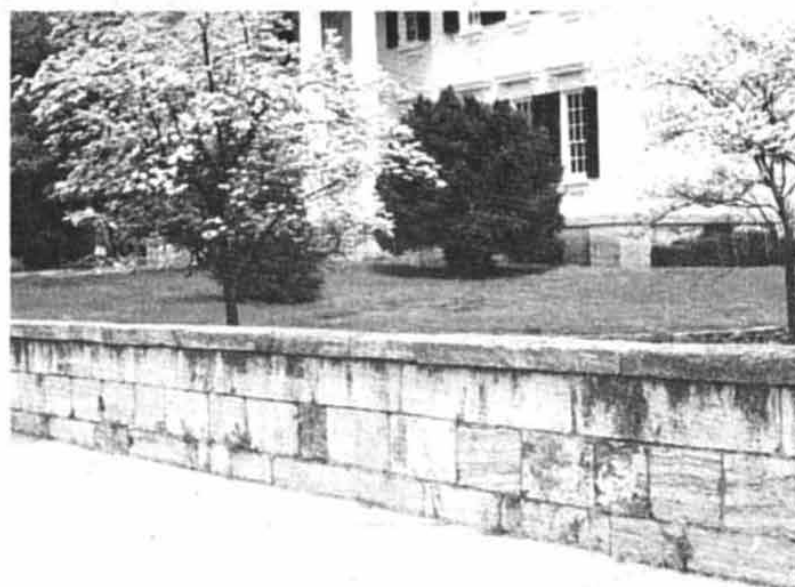
War clouds thickened and soon the English were busy constructing forts to protect the settlers and to make strong centers from which the men could fight. The French and the Indians were attacking the settlers at an alarming rate. The writings of George Washington tell of the terror of the inhabitants when the whole country was overrun by Indian war parties carrying death and destruction. Scores of defenses were erected along the frontiers in Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania during the period from 1754 to 1765, from the fountain springs of Conococheague Creek in Pennsylvania to the headwaters of the Shenandoah River in Virginia. Of the Virginia forts, 38 were located within the bounds of West Virginia. Little is known about many of these forts. Settlers on the frontier possessed little or no formal education and thus left scant records having to do with the places they built. Some of the forts speedily erected along the frontier include Fort Ashby

# Fort Shepherd

**By Eloise Clem**



*Forts located in Virginia and in what is now West Virginia.*



*The wall today—built with stone from Fort Shepherd.*

(still standing intact) along the east bank of Patterson Creek; Fort Wagoner, on the South Branch of the Potomac, 3 miles above Moorefield; Fort Capon, at the forks of the Cacapon River, near Bloomingery; Fort Edwards near Capon Bridge; Fort Evans, 2 miles south of where Martinsburg stands; Fort Pearsall, on the site of Romney, and Fort Shepherd at Mecklenburg (now Shepherdstown).

All defenses were called forts, embracing stockades, blockhouses, forts, stations, posts, log cabins, stone houses, cellars, or any other positions that could be strengthened and fortified to offer protection from enemy attack--any haven in time of danger.

Fort Shepherd was situated in the village of Mecklenburg, Frederick County, Virginia, now Shepherdstown, Jefferson County, West Virginia. In 1750, Captain Thomas Shepherd built a sturdy house of native limestone. After the Indian troubles began, he constructed a stockade around the house, thereby creating a refuge for himself and his family (Abraham Shepherd, the Captain's son, and several other Shepherd children were born here), as well as a haven for many of the citizens living in the community.

Shepherd's Fort occupied a strategic position on the south bank of the Potomac, near the southern terminus of old Pack Horse Ford and close to the Virginia landing of Thomas Swearingen's ferry. Both of these places were important crossings on the river. On May 2, 1755, on his way from Frederick to Winchester and Fort Cumberland, during his tragic campaign against the French Fort Duquesne, General Edward Braddock accompanied by George Washington, crossed the Potomac to the Virginia shore of Swearingen's ferry. Captain Shepherd, as a leading citizen, would have been among those welcoming these important men to Mecklenburg, and he probably entertained them at least briefly in his home.

Fort Shepherd was one of the most easterly of all the Virginia defensive posts but it was west of the Blue Ridge Mountains and thus subject to attack at any time. No record can be discovered that would indicate Indians ever attacked it.

It was in November of 1758 that General John Forbes, with 7,000 British and colonial troops finally engineered the downfall of Fort Duquesne and thereafter, Indian raids declined. In 1764 General Henry Bouquet crossed the Ohio River and invaded Indian territory, finally bringing the Indians to the peace table, with a treaty that ended most of the eastern border warfare.

History books tell us that Fort Shepherd stood until 1812. When it was torn down the stones were used to build the wall around the lot where McMurrin Hall of Shepherd College now stands.



# Joan Fisher

John Case

Joan Fisher, founder and former clerk of Shepherdstown Friends Meeting, was born in 1942 in Galesburg, Ill., just like Carl Sandburg a few decades earlier, but she considers herself an Iowan. Both of her parents are native Iowans raised in rural northern Iowa. “Near Lake Wobegon,” Fisher quips.

With intervals for service in World War II, Fisher’s father returned to Iowa to complete a doctorate in political science at the University of Iowa and to pursue a career on the faculty of Drake University. He left the farm of his youth, as so many during the Great Depression were forced or inspired to do.

Transformed by his experience in the war years, he achieved both a college education—the first in his family—a knowledge of the world, and a love for peace that he passed on to his family.

Though he felt the Second World War was necessary to fight, he remained afterward in practice a pacifist, deciding to devote his professional and avocational life to peace work. He was active in United Nations groups, was a Fulbright fellow, and even did an expedition to New Guinea, before it was an independent nation, to give reports to the UN on development plans to promote a unified country.

Fisher’s mother came from a large, poor, rural family, including eight brothers and a sister. Achieving even a high school education in such circumstances in the Great Depression was a heroic task. She had to knock on doors for work to cover room and board to be able to attend high school. She went on to a career teaching music at Drake University. The memory of both need and purpose stayed with her as lifelong compassion and caring and helping those less fortunate than herself.

One of the great benefits of being on the faculty of a college in the 1960s was subsidized or free college tuition for college-qualified children. The gift of education could be passed on. Joan attended Drake in Des Moines and managed to snag a husband before she was through (Bob Fisher, a roommate of her cousin also attending Drake). And she graduated with a teaching degree and certificate. Bob and Joan Fisher headed

to Wisconsin where she taught school and Bob got a doctorate in biology. Destiny then sent them to Cambridge, Mass., where Bob had a post-doc position, and where Joan engaged one of the callings of her life, the Religious Society of Friends, or Quakers.

Fisher’s journey to the Quakers was initiated by her children, whose friends introduced them to Cambridge, Mass., Quaker Meeting. They caught her in a mood somewhat indisposed to organized religion. Her family church in Des Moines was Presbyterian. However, her peace and justice leanings conspired with her children and a rather odd event to shortly bring her to Quaker Meeting.

The odd event was a drama in a Unitarian Universalist parish in Boston where a declining and somewhat long-in-the-tooth membership actually rejected Bob and Joan for membership in their community. One might speculate that this was because of the very elevated condition of that Unitarian parish. However, as it turned out, the dispute over this drove half the remaining parish away, and it went out of existence not long after.

No doubt each of us, like Jesus, has had the experience of being refused. But it was not a setback for Fisher. Cambridge Meeting connected to the powerful peace, compassion, and care testimonies Fisher already carried, inherited from the culture and life stories of her family. Her career migrated toward school librarian from teaching. “As a teacher I had a child for a year, and then was forgotten—but as librarian, I knew them through half their childhood, and they never forgot me!”

Further, the joys and trials of raising a family and working sent her from Iowa to Wisconsin, to Cambridge, to Frederick, Md., and to Shepherdstown (and now Florida too). Throughout the years, her deepening knowledge and spiritual practice of Quaker worship became a binding thread of her life.

Fisher would deny being a Quaker evangelist. Yet everywhere she moves, new meetings are formed and new ears are drawn to the calm and granite spirit that extends generously in her presence.

Asked whether she has a philosophy, “I do not!” she replies. “Having a

philosophy is like wearing a slip. If you don’t have it on, no one’s going to know! Anyway, we’re all naked underneath.”

When asked to define *the good life*, however, she quickly affirms, “It’s all about—I mean what motivates *me*—is compassion and caring. Care of nature. Care of community. Care of yourself. ‘Take care of each other; I won’t be around forever,’ is what I keep telling my kids, and grandkids!” she laughs.

I laugh, too, since it was her love of that slogan that inspired me to keep it as a kind of label used to close my weekday radio program.

As each life is the convergence of many streams, Fisher’s walk through the garden and the world is impossible to describe without a word about music and storytelling. Fisher was formally trained in piano and self-taught on guitar, but her love of music channeled straight into adding resonance and new dimensions to a storytelling practice she developed as a school librarian.

She could relate nearly everything in American history from the narratives she wove of family myths and dramas. They wound from the pioneer days, through generations of farming the Midwest, through the Depression and two world wars, through industrialization and the revolutions in science and technology to our own times. Song, the history of folk song, and her own compositions added a deeper way for students and friends to participate and make the stories also deeper.

“Caring is even more important the older I get. I am finally getting the stories in organized shape, and edited,” she says, but she makes no promises of an upcoming book.

Unlike some, Fisher is not a pessimist about technology. She is much more impressed with the potential for good than ill. “Did you hear that they now can reproduce a spider thread and soon be able to build very strong micro-organic materials? Everywhere you look and read, it’s amazing and moving so fast. How can the climate change deniers prevail when there is *so* much real information, right on the Internet?”

However the above expression and sentiment would not be her preferred way



PHOTO BY BOB FISHER

Joan Fisher and her granddaughter

to communicate her amazement. More characteristic would be to embed both the challenges and gifts of technology in the tale of her grandfather’s first sight of a motor-driven tractor after a lifetime of depending on horses.

On advice for staying close to *amazement* in these senior years, Fisher’s recommendation is to stay in touch with young people. She devotes extraordinary time to taking the pulse of the new generation, noting more the vast differences over the common themes—in the newness, in choices, in preferences, in opportunities, requirements and risks—from her own generation. One of her favorite pastimes is cooking for Quaker summer camp!

Fisher holds to her storytelling style, even in Quaker Messages, which are rare but jeweled moments in Meeting. Asked to comment on Quaker Messages, she closes with this thought, which is in complete character with Joan Fisher:

“The strongest voices in Meeting are often the most silent; those who can center, connect to the spirit, the Light of the divine in each person, and listen deeply.”

**John Case** is clerk of Shepherdstown Friends Peace and Social Justice Committee, retired software developer and union representative, and morning radio host on WSHC.

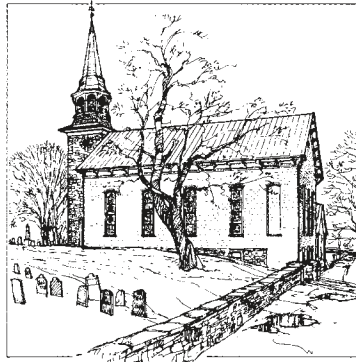


# Religious Worship and Education Schedules



## Asbury Church

4257 Kearneysville Pike  
Rev. Rudolph Monsio Bropleh, Pastor  
Telephone: 876-3112  
Sunday Worship: 8 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.  
Mid-Week Mingle: Wednesday, 6:30–8:00 p.m.  
Real Recognize Real Teen:  
Wednesday, 6:45–8:00 p.m.  
E-mail: [info@4pillarchurch.org](mailto:info@4pillarchurch.org)  
[www.4pillarchurch.org](http://www.4pillarchurch.org)



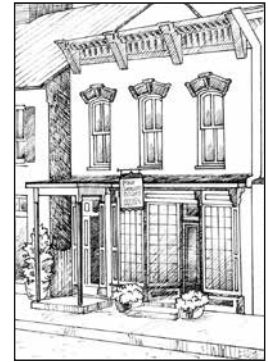
## Christ Reformed, United Church of Christ

304 East German Street  
Br. Ronald C. Grubb, OCC, Minister  
Telephone: (304) 876-3354  
Bronson Staley, Minister Emeritus  
Telephone: (301) 241-3972  
Sunday Worship: 11:00 a.m.  
[www.christreformedshepherdstown.org](http://www.christreformedshepherdstown.org)



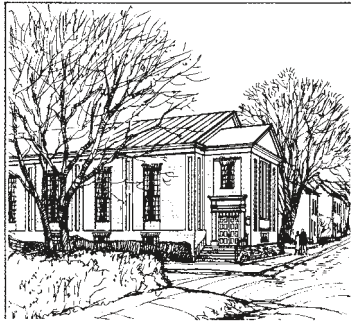
## Christian Science Society

Entler Hotel—German & Princess Streets  
Sunday Worship & Sunday School: 10 a.m.  
Thanksgiving Day service: 10:00 a.m.  
Reading Room is in Entler Rm. 210,  
open before and after the service and  
by appointment. Call to confirm Sunday  
school and child care: (304) 261-9024  
All are welcome.



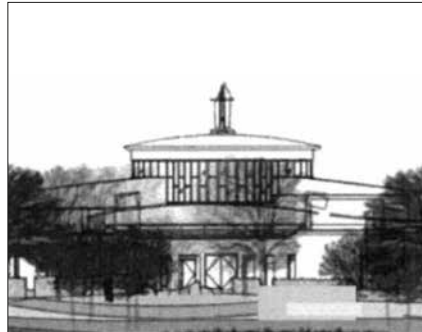
## Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

Shepherdstown Preparative Meeting  
Worship in silent expectant waiting  
Sundays at 10:30 a.m.  
Four Seasons Books (thru the side gate)  
Contact: Neal Peterson (304) 582-0852  
<http://shepherdstown.bym-rsf.net/about-2-2/>



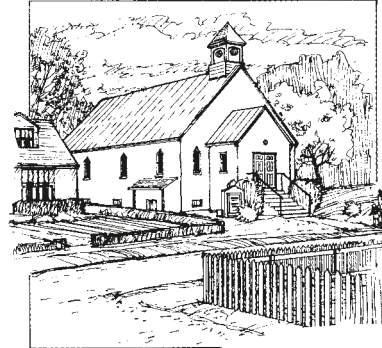
## New Street United Methodist

Church & New Streets  
Dee-Ann Dixon, Pastor  
Telephone: (304) 876-2362  
Sunday Worship: 10:00 a.m.  
Children's Sunday School: 10:00 a.m.  
Adult Sunday School: 11:15 a.m.  
[www.newstreetumc.com](http://www.newstreetumc.com)



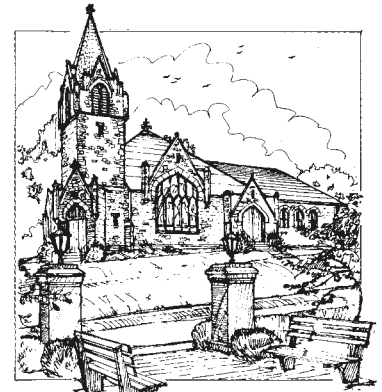
## St. Agnes Catholic Parish

106 South Duke Street  
Father Mathew Rowgh  
Telephone: (304) 876-6436  
Sunday Eucharist: 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.  
Saturday Eucharist: 5:30 p.m.  
Sunday School: 9:15 a.m.  
[www.StAgnesShepherdstown.org](http://www.StAgnesShepherdstown.org)



## St. John's Baptist

West German Street  
Rev. Cornell Herbert, Pastor-Elect  
Telephone: (304) 876-3856  
Sunday Worship: 11:00 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.  
Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.



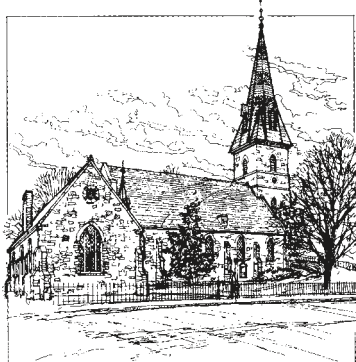
## St. Peter's Lutheran

King & High Streets  
Fred A. Soltow Jr., Pastor  
Telephone: (304) 876-6771  
Sunday Worship: 11:00 a.m.  
Children/Adult Sunday School: 9:45 a.m.  
(located in grey house adjacent church)  
[www.Shepherdstownlutheranparish.org](http://www.Shepherdstownlutheranparish.org)



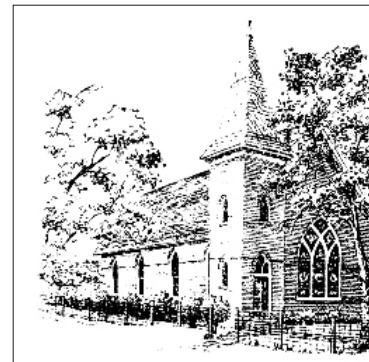
## Shepherdstown Presbyterian

100 W. Washington Street  
Randall W. Tremba, Pastor  
Telephone: (304) 876-6466  
Sunday Worship: 8:15 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.  
Sunday School: 10:45 a.m.  
Nursery year-round  
[www.shepherdstownpresbyterian.org](http://www.shepherdstownpresbyterian.org)



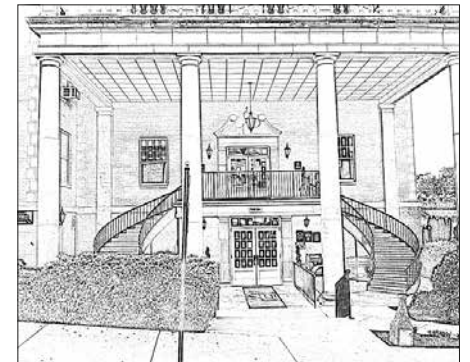
## Trinity Episcopal

Corner of Church & German Streets  
The Rev. G. T. Schramm, Rector  
The Rev. Frank Coe, Priest Associate  
The Rev. Susan McDonald, Priest Associate  
Telephone: (304) 876-6990  
Sunday Worship: 8:00 a.m. & 10:00 a.m.  
Sunday School: 10:00 a.m.  
[www.trinityshepherdstown.org](http://www.trinityshepherdstown.org)



## St. James' Lutheran Church, Uvilla

Rt. 230 Uvilla  
Fred A. Soltow Jr., Pastor  
Telephone: (304) 876-6771  
Sunday Worship: 9:00 a.m.  
Children's Sunday School 1st Sunday of month



## 2nd Act Church

meets in the Ram's Den  
Student Center, Shepherd University  
Rob Davis, Pastor  
E-mail: [rob@2ndactchurch.org](mailto:rob@2ndactchurch.org)  
Sunday Services: 10 a.m.  
[www.2ndactchurch.org](http://www.2ndactchurch.org)

# GOOD NEWS PAPER RADIO HOUR!

Second Saturdays at 11:00 a.m. | Shepherd University Radio

Host: Sarah Soltow | WSHC 89.7 FM | [www.897wshc.org/listen-live](http://www.897wshc.org/listen-live)

- Dec. 14** Celebrate the season with Christmas in Shepherdstown organizers and participants.
- Jan. 11** Dr. Dave Didden discusses all things heathful and complementary.
- Feb. 8** Neil Super, local artisan, talks about wood turning and life's turnings.
- Mar. 8** Kathryn Burns of The Bridge Gallery describes her upcoming spring season and the gallery's role of celebrating local artists in our community.

More info: [WWW.SHEPHERDSTOWNGOODNEWSPAPER.ORG](http://WWW.SHEPHERDSTOWNGOODNEWSPAPER.ORG)



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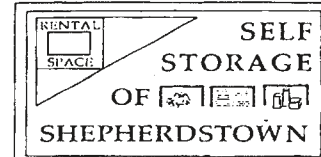
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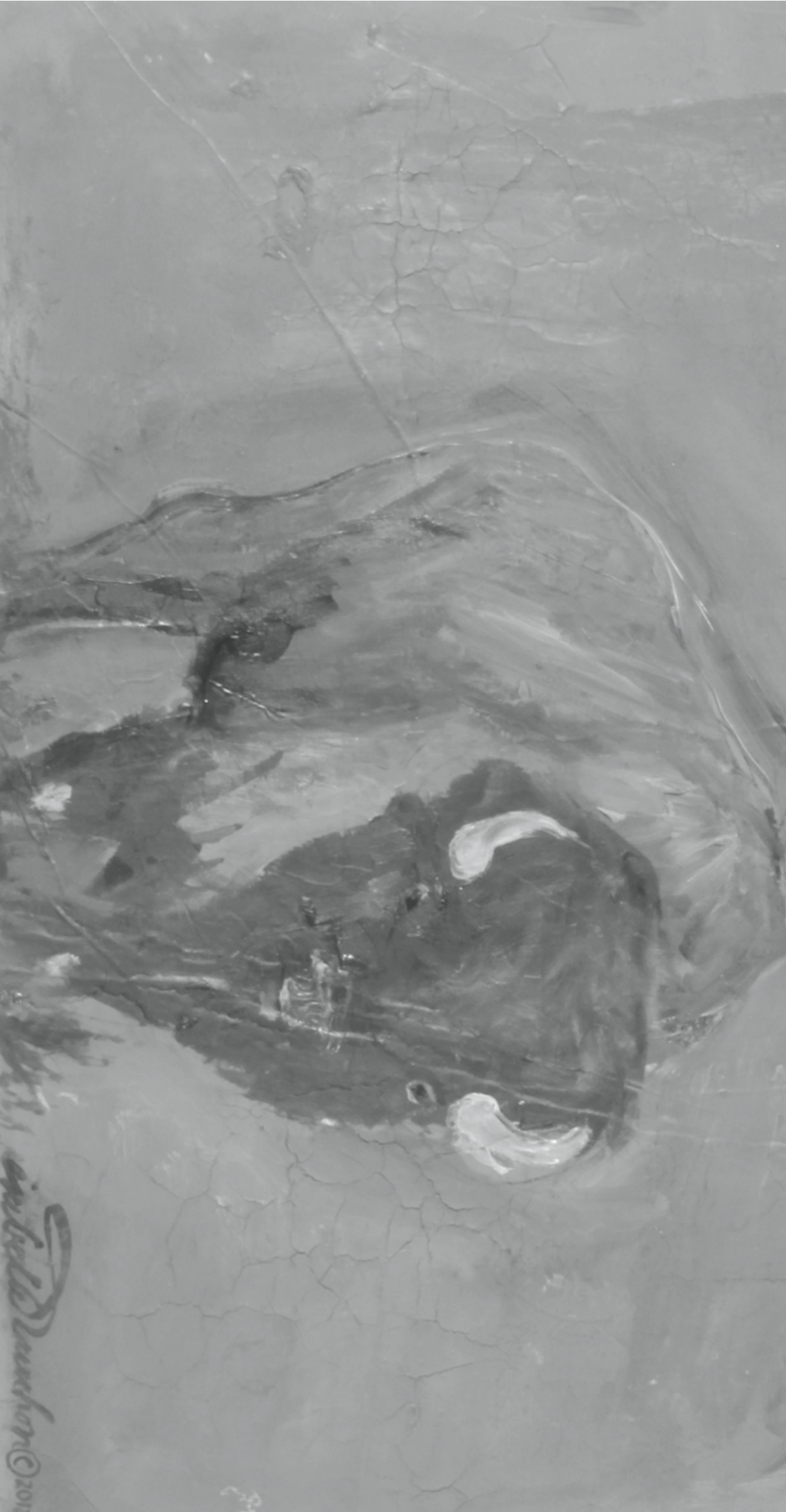
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