



# The Kimball Farms



# Observer



Volume 31, No 8

Pile on the Blankets!!

October, 2022

## Ahead: A Post Mortem on the Elections

“Republicans will almost certainly win control of the House, but the Senate is a toss-up,” Marc Lendler predicts. As for the chance of increased cooperation with President Biden to get things done, “that’s a big no. If the Republicans win the House, there will immediately be investigations of Hunter Biden and possibly impeachment for his father.”

interview and email exchange, “is analytical. I mean, after all, if you’re talking about elections, no matter what side anybody is on, it’s useful to have accurate information. That’s what I try to convey.” In elections, “you have actual data to rely on. You can draw different conclusions when you’ve got numbers in front of you.”

That’s the recently retired government professor’s forecast for the midterm elections to be held on Nov. 8. On Nov. 15, Lendler, who taught at Smith College, will deliver a postmortem in a Kimball talk titled “What Just Happened and Why?” It will culminate a series of Kimball lectures he has been giving on America’s founding documents, the Declaration of Independence, Constitution and Bill of Rights.



Smith College Photo

Lendler’s interest in government and politics goes back to his parents’ interest and his student activism in the 1960s and ’70s. A graduate of Antioch College, he lived and worked in Ohio for 15 years before returning east for a doctorate at Yale. He has a special interest in First Amendment rights.

He describes his position as left, although not thoroughly progressive “as progressive is currently defined.” But he is open to opposing views in both the classroom and outside venues like Kimball. “What I try to be,” he said in the course of a phone

Lendler began teaching at Smith in 1997. He was used to having his summers free, so he’s just beginning to feel the effects of retirement. It’s a mixed feeling, he said. He’s going to miss going back to the classroom, “without a doubt.” But it had to happen sometime, so two years ago he gave notice.

The fun of retirement has been dimmed by an injured toe, which keeps him from running and playing basketball. He figured he’d have more time for those favorite activities when no longer bound by academic schedules.

At Smith, Lendler gave a series of colloquia examining the presidencies of Bill Clinton, George W. Bush and Barack Obama. “At first,” he says on a Smith website, “it was an experiment in assessing a presidency immediately after it ended, before mainstream interpretations got locked in.”

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*(Lendler, Continued from page 1)*

With his interest in the First Amendment rights, Lendler's most recent book, "Gitlow v. New York: Every Idea an Incitement," is about a landmark First Amendment case. In the Smith classroom, he ran into the hot-button free speech issues, like guest speakers on campus, that have sparked controversy on many campuses. "I find myself on the outside or in the minority on a lot of these issues that get talked about," he said on the phone.

Still, when controversial issues do come up, "I don't make any effort to be careful ... If I get people who are critical of the way I present things, I'll just defend the way I present them." One place where he strongly differs with most progressives, on and off campus, is the issue of speech rights. His views, he says, are closer to those of the American Civil Liberties Union and the majority of the Supreme Court, "where on this issue there is no difference between left and right."

Lendler lives in Wallingford, Conn., his birthplace, where he gives talks in the public library. He is currently planning what else to do in his new-found freedom. Will other things include more talks at Kimball Farms?

They may, he says. After his election talk, he and activities coordinator Sharon Lazerson plan to sit down and discuss what comes next.

*Andy Pincus*

## ***President's Report: Join a Committee***

The Committee on Committees has been working on the form for residents to sign up for possible selection to a committee or committees for 2023. The first step is to assist the association president in selecting committee chairs for the 17 committees under the aegis of the Residents Council. The committee chairs can serve for two consecutive one-year terms and then must step down. They can serve additional terms if there is no one willing to take their place for the coming year. Once the committee chairs are selected with the consent of the Council, the Committee on Committees then works up the

form for residents to indicate which committees they would like to serve on.

By the time you receive the October issue of The Observer, the committee sign-up form will have been made available to residents to fill out. Placement on a committee is at the discretion of the committee chair or chairs as the case may be. There is no guarantee that a resident who indicates a desire to be on a committee will be selected, as some committees limit the number of members.

As a member of the Kimball Farms Community you are encouraged to sign up for one or more committees. The committees, along with other groups, make life at Kimball Farms interesting and more enjoyable. This is a chance for you to get involved in the community and to get to know others at Kimball Farms and enhance the lives of all. Some committees meet once a month and others less frequently or as deemed necessary by the committee chair. Give consideration to joining a committee. You will enjoy your experience here at Kimball Farms so much more.

*Garry Roosma*

**Birthday Wishes to our residents!**  
**Twenty-six residents celebrate birthdays in October.** There is a 32-year spread between the youngest and oldest celebrant.

**October** birthdays belong to: Howard Brandston, Ann Trabulsi, Daniel Kaplan, Albert Segal, Gale Crane, Jean Rousseau, Shirley Brownell, John Moynahan, Jane Gilligan, James Tremblay, Janet Johnson, Rita Weinberg, Melanie Brandston, Audley Green, Betty Jones, Nancy Curme, Buck Smith, Lorraine Roman, Patricia Curd, Arlene Potler, Nelda McGraw, Nora O'Brien, James Weber, Stuart Dalheim, Dottie Hayes and Anna Smith

**Happy Birthday to each of you!!**

## Newcomer Sparkles as Sandy's Aide

Liesl Carlson has joined the Kimball Farms family administrative team as Executive Assistant to Executive Director Sandy Shepard. You'll know her by the jewelry and smile.

For the last three years, Liesl has worked at Fairview Commons in Great Barrington, another Berkshire Health Care Systems facility, where she was responsible for Central Supply, ordering everything the facility needed to function properly. Her predecessor at Kimball Farms, Lisa Rizzo-Cabrera, has been promoted to the Berkshire HealthCare Systems home office in Pittsfield as a Staff Accountant

Liesl grew up in Mendon, Mass., which is near Worcester, but "even closer to Woonsocket, Rhode Island," she says, "in the part of Rhode Island that is tucked under Massachusetts." Her parents and brothers still live there, although her other siblings live in towns near Boston. After finishing high school, she started her career in health care just over 10 years ago as a Certified Nursing Assistant in several facilities, and then learned medical billing and coding. For several years, she worked at a Skilled Nursing Facility in Northbridge run by Michael Quirk, who is now the BHCS vice president of Housing Services, which includes Kimball Farms.

Her name is unusual, and naturally there's a story behind it. There were already Carlson boys, and her parents expected to have another one, so they weren't prepared to name a girl. When her mother went into labor, they were watching *The Sound of Music* on television, and in the movie, the eldest daughter is named Liesl. Serendipity!

Now that she's at Kimball Farms, Liesl is trying to introduce herself to residents and staff. She is easy to recognize. In addition to a great smile, you'll be

wowed by her jewelry, lots of jewelry, that she's made or collected. Her necklaces (worn in multiples), earrings and rings are stunning examples of her creativity, and her armful of bracelets represents three generations of women in her family. "It's a family history in bracelets," Liesl laughs.

Fifteen years ago, her grandfather mailed her a catalogue of craft courses, in which he had circled an "Introduction to Jewelry" course. "He knew me better than I knew me!" Liesl remembers. She was hooked immediately.



Liesl went on to study at the Worcester Center for Crafts, in – you guessed it – Worcester, Mass., one of the oldest schools for crafts in the country, established 150 years ago to teach crafts to the young girls who worked in the textile mills. Now she practices her artistry in a studio in her basement, completely equipped with saws, files, hammers, pliers, soldering irons and materials she needs to produce the stunning pieces she exhibits and sells in galleries around New England and online

([LieslCarlsonCreates-Etsy](#)).

"Making jewelry keeps me sane," Liesl declares. "I need to be in my studio." In the future, she wants to learn to cut stones for her pieces. Liesl also works on commissions for clients.

Jewelry is not her only interest, though. She also quilts and makes stained glass pieces. Her current project is a panel for the new front door of her house, which was made by her husband. (More about him in a bit.) Liesl thinks the first panel should be just of the number of the house, but she's already full of ideas for seasonal and holiday-themed panels for the space too. She's a fan of Post It notes for keeping

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(Newcomer, Continued from page 3)  
track of ideas, and also has a large collection of small notebooks in many places so she's prepared when inspiration strikes.



Liesl and her husband, Steve Butler, and their 14-year-old son Quinn live in New Marlborough in southern Berkshire County, where they moved six years ago. Liesl met Steve at the Worcester Center. He is an artist and furniture maker who has taught woodworking at Austen Riggs Center in Stockbridge, and for five years has been the "content creator," producer, director and star of "The Garage with Steve Butler," a television show described as "A DIY (Do It Yourself) show unlike any other." In his garage workshop, Steve Butler creates a collection of clever woodworking projects, from a foosball table to a castle-themed sandbox. The show can be seen on Create TV, on PBS channels nationally and local access channels.



Steve grew up in Canada and is a graduate of Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. Most of his family still lives near Toronto. Steve is in the process of becoming an American citizen.

Quinn is in the eighth grade at Mount Everett school, and has inherited the creative family genes. He's heavily into music, playing the clarinet in the concert band, and guitar in the rock band.

Introduce yourself to Liesl if you've not met her already. She's a great addition to the Kimball Farms team.

*Susan Dana*

## October Trips

**Sunday Oct. 2nd - Bus at 2:15p**  
South Mountain Concerts – 3p

**Thursday Oct. 6<sup>th</sup> - Bus at 10a**  
Olana

**Sunday Oct. 9<sup>th</sup> - Bus at 2:15p**  
South Mountain Concerts – 3p

**Wednesday Oct. 12<sup>th</sup> - Bus at 9a**  
Breakfast at Ozzie's & Scenic Ride  
To Williamsburg General Store & return over  
Mohawk Trail

**Saturday Oct. 22<sup>nd</sup> - Bus at 12:15p**  
Met Opera- Mahaiwe – 1p

## *In Memoriam*

**Stephen Johnson**  
May 7, 1939 to September 7, 2022

**Helen McCarthy**  
October 15, 1931 to September 13, 2022

## Starbuck, From Old Nantucket to Kimball

Fact: A 17<sup>th</sup>-century whaler, along with Nathaniel Starbuck and 12 others, bought an island known as Nantucket off the coast of Massachusetts. This recollection of his ancestor was shared by Starbuck (Buck) Smith, who with his wife, Anna, has moved into apartment 254 at Kimball Farms.

Hence comes the unusual first name, which continues with the current owner but ends there, his son, Nathaniel, not wishing to continue the tradition! Buck believes that Starbuck was a familiar name in Europe, and of course Starbuck was made famous by Herman Melville as the first mate and voice of reason aboard the Pequod in *Moby-Dick*. And then there's the coffee ...



The Smiths have lived in the Berkshires for 50 years, mostly in Stockbridge, arriving when Pittsfield architect Terry Hallock was looking for a younger colleague to join him. (Terry's wife, Beverly, is currently living in Pine Hill.) Buck had just received his Master's in Architecture from the University of Pennsylvania. His BA is from Colby College, where he and his future wife met. Buck's architectural career in the Berkshires was as one of three partners in Bradley Architects, including work in a broad variety of building types.

Anna's family roots go back to Finland. She tells us that the Finnish language followed the generations down through the years. In 1890 her mother's parents came from Finland to Maine. They spoke Finnish at home and English with their non-Finnish neighbors. In 1950 a Finnish exchange student

arrived in Portland, Maine, near where Anna and her parents lived. They spent many happy hours speaking Finnish together.

In 1968 Buck and Anna traveled to Finland to visit that student. "By then," Anna recalls, "that exchange student had become an architect and was married to an architect. We had a memorable visit looking at outstanding architecture in the land of the midnight sun."

Anna was a high school English teacher for many years, including briefly at Lenox Memorial High School after moving to the Berkshires. She also was co-owner of Country Herbs, a Stockbridge nursery selling 150 varieties of herbs, and greenhouse instructor at Austen Riggs Center in Stockbridge. She is a member of the Lenox Garden Club and lists reading, gardening and walking as other activities. Architecture remains an interest.

Buck is a member of the Masters Swimming Team at Simon's Rock, the Stockbridge Golf Club and, recently, the Norfolk Curling Club. In Stockbridge, he serves on the Green Communities Committee and the buildings and grounds committee of the Congregational Church. Also a bicyclist, he has ridden in the Pan Mass Challenge, raising money for cancer research at the Dana Farber Institute.

The Smiths have two children: Jenney Maloy, who is the children's librarian at Lenox Library, and Nathaniel Smith, who lives in Tennessee and teaches English, and two grandchildren. Buck and Anna are well-traveled, their trips having included much of Europe plus Canada and Ecuador. For more of their many interests you are encouraged to meet up with them and discuss a broad spectrum of subjects (or, perhaps, go for an invigorating swim at Simon's Rock!).

Janet Tivy

## Eyes Tell a Story — Not Necessarily Love

Since time immemorial eyes have been an inspiration to artists and poets. But when a doctor (who is not your spouse and/or lover) looks into your eyes, he or she is looking for more than inspiration. The eyes might be the proverbial window to the soul, but they are also a clear window to your health, revealing an enormous amount of information. Many conditions cause symptoms throughout the body, and a detailed physical exam (these days often overlooked) can reveal telltale signs in the skin, the mouth, and even in fingernails — but the eye is one spot that reveals a particularly large percentage of health issues.

For one thing, it's the only place you can see blood vessels in action, as well as the optic nerve, which is part of the brain. With so much visible, more than 30 conditions show symptoms in the eyes. That's why eye doctors — ophthalmologists — and optometrists are frequently among the first to spot certain problems. A study of 120,000 patients by the insurance company VSP Vision Care found that an eye exam was the first indicator of 34% of diabetes cases, 39% of cases of high blood pressure, and a shocking 62% of cases of high cholesterol. VSP president Jim McGrann says that these findings showed that for many of these patients, "if they hadn't gone to see their eye doctor, they'd be walking around with time bomb diseases."

Here are some of the irregularities that show up in your eyes — and that may mean something more serious is at stake:

1. Itchy, swollen, red eyes are common giveaways that a patient is suffering from allergies, frequently triggered by pollen, dust or pet dander. Eyedrops can help, especially if they include an antihistamine, but be careful of taking antihistamines by mouth as some can cause eyes to dry out, worsening the problem.
2. Dry eyes are a side effect of both computer usage and many medications, like sleeping pills, pain relievers or anti-anxiety medications. Autoimmune diseases can cause dry eyes as well, especially one called Sjögren's syndrome, which destroys moisture-producing glands and mostly affects older women.
3. Red spots, caused by dots of blood in the eye, can be a sign of diabetes or pre-diabetes — a disease that the CDC predicts 40% of Americans will develop in their lives. If blood sugar builds up too high, blood vessels begin to get blocked and to swell up. This can burst the tiny blood vessels in the retina, causing bleeding. If it's not treated, this can potentially lead to impaired vision or even blindness. Bloodshot eyes can be caused by many conditions ranging from benign to more serious, such as an intense cough to pinkeye (a bacterial or viral infection) to a fungal infection.
4. Some people experience seeing specks or flashes of light with migraines or simply as they grow older. But a sudden increase in the size and number of specks or flashes of light you see can be caused by a torn retina, which needs immediate treatment. That's especially the case if the flashes or spots are accompanied by a shadow or loss of peripheral vision, which very likely indicates a detached retina.
5. Blurry vision can be caused by a long list of eye conditions, but for those already at risk of high blood pressure, it can be a signal to get to the doctor immediately.
6. Eye doctors can sometimes be the first ones to detect some cancers. An eye doctor may find a rare form of melanoma in the eye that usually can't be detected by looking in the mirror.
7. High cholesterol can frequently cause white rings to develop around the eyes, and can also cause yellowish bumps to appear in eyelids.

Most people lose the ability to focus on close-up things like the print on restaurant menus as they age, but certain medications — antidepressants, antihistamines and diuretics — can cause this condition, called presbyopia, even before middle-age. The large number of diseases that cause symptoms in the eye should convince people that an annual eye exam is worthwhile. An annual exam is especially necessary for anyone over 40. At that point, changes in the eye and body mean that eye doctors have important conditions to monitor, even if vision is stable.

*Stephanie Beling, M.D.*

## Bill McKibben Looks Back – and Forward

Environmentalist and social activist Bill McKibben's latest book, now available in our library, is at first glance misleading. It has a pure white cover with the main title in bright blue: *The Flag, the Cross, and the Station Wagon*. This could appear conservative, or even reactionary, but for an interspersed subtitle in deep red: *A Graying American Looks Back at His Suburban Boyhood and Wonders What the Hell Happened*.

In this compact volume of 226 pages with no footnotes, McKibben gives readers a capsule history of, in his opinion, our country's most significant events and characters. With a brisk conversational style, he provides glimpses ranging from the Founding Fathers to present-day scholars and activists.

McKibben states near the beginning, "This is as much memoir as I'm likely to write, but it's as much the story of a place as of a person." The logical place he uses to frame his account is the town of Lexington, Massachusetts. A transplant from California and Canada at the age of 10, young Bill was to participate in flag-raising ceremonies and tour guiding on the Battle Green there. But before any of that happened, in 1970 he witnessed a large-scale demonstration by Vietnam Veterans Against the War. It ended with the Lexington police arresting Bill's father, Gordon McKibben, along with hundreds of other antiwar protesters. This was the first event that directly influenced the course of Bill's career. As he states, "In my mind, my generation was, and would remain, the generation that came of age amid hope and change (and I've lived my life as if that were true, working to build new movements, following my father to jail over and over)."

Another pivotal event in Lexington started with a positive public vote at a Town Meeting in 1971, to allow development of affordable housing for low-income and minority families. This was soon followed by a petition for referendum, leading to a secret ballot vote. The project then failed by a landslide. Bill McKibben shares excerpts of written

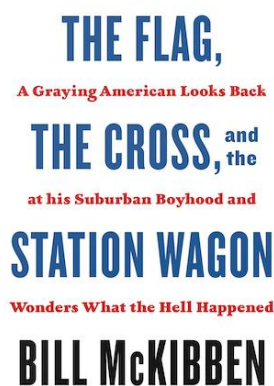
accounts and oral histories to reveal how all that happened. Moving into a comment on the present day, he says, "A town like Lexington is 1.3 percent Black in large part because it's zoning mostly prevents multifamily housing. ..." He also points out, "... It will take far more than fair housing laws to level things out." He adds that white home buyers got ahead by "getting in near the ground floor and riding the suburbs up."

Awareness of the long history of economic imbalance for minorities caused McKibben to delve into the past and future of efforts toward reparation. He looks at the negative Supreme Court decision in a 1973 case, *Rodriguez v. San Antonio Independent School District*. He finds that a federal court "ruled that indeed Texas's public school finance system, based as it was on property taxes, was unconstitutional — a ruling that, had it stood, would have turned education in America on its head." As to the majority decision written by Justice Lewis Powell,

McKibben reports, "It was enough, he wrote, that the children in the barrios of San Antonio had access to 'education'; nothing required that that education be any good."

Numerous are the causes that Bill McKibben has supported. Among the best known and most obviously successful was the campaign against the Keystone Pipeline. This resulted in the abandonment of a project that was shown to be highly detrimental to the environment. At the end of this book, McKibben speaks of organizing people in their 60s and over for positive political action. His most convincing statement may be: "But older Americans vote in such high percentages—74 percent in 2020, versus 57 percent of those aged eighteen to thirty-four — that we'll exert outsized power on our political system for decades to come."

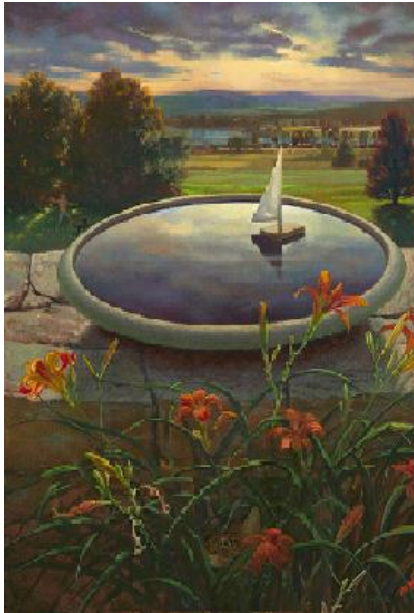
Mary Misch



## Inspired by the Sensuality of Nature

The second art show in the newly reopened Kimball Farms Connector Gallery is now up and features work by two Berkshire County artists and two who are more distant. Ann Getsinger of New Marlborough and Kate Knapp of Alford are joined by Karen Israel, pastelist from Hartford, Conn., and Luu Nguyen from Hanoi, Vietnam. Eleanor Lord of Great Barrington also contributed.

I recently had the pleasure of sitting down with Ann Getsinger for a conversation about her beautiful and intriguing paintings. Though her work is masterful, with each piece perfectly executed and finished, Ann avoids sketching towards a finished vision. She is clearly inspired by the sensuality of nature, especially the round or S-shape in evidence in many of the paintings in our exhibit. Her jumping off point might be a natural or discovered object like a shell, a pumpkin, or the military helmet in two of her paintings, and she wants “to love these things up.” She dives in and enjoys the individual journey of each piece.



*“Lullaby of Birdbath” is one of Ann Getsinger’s paintings in the exhibit*

Ann recognizes that the juxtaposition of seemingly unrelated things can be challenging for a viewer. For her, there is a deep and vast sense both of everything being ultimately related and of objects as metaphor. Furthermore, “It’s an awkward thing

to be human. The different states of experience and different levels of consciousness are very interesting to me.” In this way, the challenge becomes an

invitation for us also to have a bit of a journey, to engage and widen our lens.

Already so accomplished, Ann’s goals for her future work are to let more things go, to depict the world with a larger vocabulary, and, having sold her first sculpture at the age of 10, to move into three dimensionality again. The depth of her immersion in her discovered world, combined with her striving for excellence, results in works that have the power to astonish and move the viewer.

Karen Israel is an award-winning pastel artist who offers us a grouping of beautiful landscapes.

Kate Knapp is known to some residents as a former art teacher. Her bold, colorful paintings brighten our long corridor. And Luu Nguyen’s gentle watercolors on silk have a tender loveliness. All proceeds from the sale of her work go to a foundation she started to help underprivileged Vietnamese children learn English. To that end, she is also looking for 10 pen pals for her current group of students. Please let me know if you or perhaps your grandchildren might be interested in corresponding via email with an 11- to 15-year-old child in Vietnam.

The show will be up until Nov. 13. Please take advantage of the generosity of the artists and see it. Family and friends are warmly invited.

*Sharon Lazerson*

*The Kimball Farms Observer is written and published by and for the residents of Kimball Farms*

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