



# The Kimball Farms Observer



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Kilimanjaro!!! page 5

April 2021

## ***President's Comments: Our Rules Are Different***

It's a mild and gorgeous sunny day in March as I prepare these comments. Why, I'm not sure, but when I sat at my computer, my mind took a leap backwards to the custom our family had of always watching CBS evening news, anchored by Walter Cronkite. His closing words were front and center in my mind: *"And that's the way it is."*

This is a person who earned the title "Most Trusted Man in America." How did he sift through the barrage of news – JFK's assassination, Watergate and Vietnam are only a tiny representation of what he covered – and capture the minds of millions of Americans by so doing?

So here I sit, certain of one thing: whatever I indicate is happening at Kimball Farms on this beautiful March day may be regarded as "alternative facts" or "fake news" by the time this is read. And never can I conclude, *"And that's the way it is"*.

Simple guidelines for your consideration: respect what the CDC says, and what the Governor says and what the President says. But ALWAYS remember that most of what you read does not apply to persons who live in lifetime care facilities. For that information always seek out the fine print; keep administration memos on your refrigerator or your desk or wherever you can see them in an instant. Those contain the authoritative guidelines we can follow.

Bear in mind that administrative decisions are guided by recommendations from the CDC, the Department of Public Health and the Executive Office of Elder Affairs. Although Sandy has mentioned this in some of her memoranda and talks, it bears repeating. Because Kimball is a **lifecare community**, we operate under different rules than do "retirement"

communities. We enjoy different benefits because of our designation, too, something we're surely grateful for when we file income tax returns and can claim a 53.9% deduction on our annual fees. It is only because Kimball is a lifecare community that we can enjoy this privilege.

Many things are looking up, however, as we work towards a new sense of normalcy. In mid-March we welcomed hugs from visitors who could come into our apartments! Up to four guests at a time, masked and observing outlined procedures, can schedule visits. For now, visitors must stay in the Kimball resident's apartment; no public areas can currently be accessed.

The large tents, tables and chairs that helped us enjoy outdoor activities last year have been ordered again; they're scheduled for an April 15 arrival. Visitors will be welcome there; again it's important to inform the front desk who's coming and when.

I hope each of you has copies of the memos detailing all aspects of visits to Kimball. A copy will be available in the Mail Room and the bulletin board near the Potting Shed. This information also includes policies about dining, transportation, classes

and entertainment.

I'd like to offer special thanks to our eight councilors. None of them signed on for the job they've been asked to do this year. Without monthly Resident Association meetings it is the councilors who bear the brunt of connecting with their "councilees." Many of them have arranged social hours for tea/coffee, wine and cheese and, mainly, conversation.

*(continued on next page)*



**Courtney shows a dinner dish and box to mark the change.**

**(Comments, continued from page 1)**

We are all lonely and crave companionship; they're filling a huge gap with their generosity and good spirits.

Two of our councilors, Suzanne Bach and Paula Byrde, have had to step down from their roles. Difficult as it was to accept that fact, I am grateful and delighted to report that we have found two replacements for them. Molly Pomerance, apartment 141, will assume responsibility for Suzanne's councilors (please, if anyone has a better word, tell me!) in Stockbridge apartments 128-138 and 210-218.

Molly's worn many hats at Kimball since her arrival in September 2018. Connie Montgomery, apartment 239, will take over Stockbridge apartments 219-241, for which Paula had been responsible. Connie's been at Kimball for 12 ½ years and can serve as a well-informed guide to our shared home. Their willingness to step into the openings left by Suzanne and Paula is just one more reminder of the way residents have pitched in to offer support during the pandemic.

I don't know when Resident Association meetings can resume. In the meantime the Residents Council will continue its monthly meetings.

If you have specific issues you'd like us to consider, please put your message in the suggestion box located in the Mail Room.

It isn't only Kimball that's opening up its doors to new activity. The Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, which encompasses all five Berkshire districts, has plans in the works for art walks and informal musical performance in the area. We'll try to keep you informed about when and where events occur, both inside and outside of Kimball's walls. Michelle is already at work searching for groups to entertain us this summer; she'd definitely welcome ideas you may have. The food truck will return to be certain that stomachs and souls will both be nurtured.

Our dining room was scheduled to open on April 1<sup>st</sup>; I'm assuming many residents welcome that. In a separate column, I've included information about policies that will be maintained until ... it's not the way that they'll be maintained. That's the best I can offer as we walk together through what we all hope is the last stretch of an unenviable year.

*Dorothea Nelson*

## **Black Bean Patties**

### **From the Kitchen of Kimball Farms**

### **A Recipe from Chef Mike Paglier**



Ingredients: (yields 4 patties)

- 14 ounce can of black beans
- 1/3 cup of refried beans (vegetarian)
- ¼ cup salsa
- 1 green onion
- ¼ cup gluten free or regular breadcrumbs
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp coriander
- ½ tsp chili powder
- ¾ tsp cumin
- ½ tsp garlic powder
- ½ tsp onion powder
- ¼ cup olive oil

Using a colander, drain and rinse the black beans and pour into a mixing bowl. Add refried beans and salsa. Finely slice the green onion and add to the bean mixture. Add the remaining ingredients to the mixture and, using a rubber spatula, mix the ingredients well, divide into fourths and form your patties.

Heat olive oil in a pan. Once heated, add the bean patties to the oil and gently shake the pan side to side to prevent from sticking. When the first side is nice and brown carefully flip the patties and slightly turn down the heat because we will be cooking them longer on this side to fully heat the patties through. When done, top with your favorite ingredients – salsa, shredded cheese, guacamole, sour cream, hot peppers—there is no wrong answer here! You can also eat them on a roll or wrapped in a flour tortilla (there are gluten free tortillas available).

## Old Times Return (Almost) In the Dining Room

Away with plastic containers; goodbye, plastic utensils; farewell, reheated dinners. Welcome to real plates and real (well, not quite real) silver; and to cloth tablecloths and napkins; and to drinks served in glasses. And especially welcome to waitstaff who take our orders and emerge with HOT food.

For all these amenities we are truly grateful. And for them we promise to remember our table manners and appropriate attire. No shorts in the dining room, for which we say “please and thank you”; shirts with collars preferred.

Dining room particulars include three different seatings. These have been established to accommodate the need for providing hour-and-a half serving times. In addition, time must be allowed to re-sanitize tables and chairs between seatings. With those restrictions in mind, the following schedule will be in operation: reservations can be made for meals at 1:00 p.m., 3:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.

There will be tables for two, four and six residents. One person may call to reserve a table and give the names of his/her companions. Reservations can be made 24 hours in advance by calling 7013. Please note: there will be no block booking of reservations or weekly saved tables; reservations can be made only on a daily basis.

Safety precautions stipulate that only 40 residents may be in the dining room at the same time. This will be accommodated by stationing tables six feet apart. Each resident will be temperature checked before entering the dining room. Kimball staff reserves the right to deny entrance to any resident who does not meet screening requirements. Please, if you are not feeling well, plan to eat in your apartment. Residents are required to wear masks whenever they are not eating or drinking. Waitstaff will wear masks and gloves throughout their service period.



**Nick gets ready for the hungry**

For residents who prefer to have room delivery, that service will continue. Dinners can be picked up near the main dining room from 12 noon to 6:45 p.m. For residents who are under quarantine or requiring nursing services, meals will be delivered to their apartments from noon until 1:00 p.m. daily.

For the most part, dining room services will carry on as they did before the pandemic affected everything we did. There are a couple of changes you'll notice

though. Because the Pub is still closed, temporary large-screen televisions have been placed in the dining room. It is hoped they can serve several purposes (scenic views, future movie nights perhaps, lectures, documentary series). Another change will be inclusion of the Pub menu in the dining room.

Working out these details has involved a tremendous amount of planning, of guessing, of hoping ... and then plunging forward. I doubt there's anyone

who's been involved who is certain the plan is perfect or that it will satisfy everyone's desires. But it's reasonable to assume that everyone hopes this effort to reopen will work, maybe with tweaks here and there, and with good will on everyone's part. I hope you are all as ready as I am to see smiles and feel palpable pleasure. Let's do this!

*Dorothea Nelson*

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## Library Lines: New Nonfiction from Obamas to Trump

Here is a report on some new notable nonfiction titles that have recently been added to our library collection.

Never before have two separate autobiographies by a husband and a wife appeared together on a Sunday New York Times bestseller list. This occurred with the publication and sale of Barack Obama's *A Promised Land* and Michelle Obama's *Becoming*. Both were praised by critics for their interesting content and their literary style, and both are in our library.

We also have added two new titles on our former president, Donald Trump. The first is *Too Much and Never Enough* by Mary L. Trump, a clinical psychologist and niece of the former president. In this authoritative biography of her uncle, she writes of the toxic environment and abuse in which he grew up. She describes vividly the neglect and pain he and his brothers endured. She is also the only Trump willing to tell the truth about "one of the world's most powerful and dysfunctional families."

The second is award-winning journalist Marvin Kalb's *Enemy of the People*. Shortly after taking office, Trump referred to the press being an "enemy of the American people." Kalb writes about how we should be fearful of losing our democracy because of these attacks on the press. He uses historical examples like Edward R. Morrow's reporting on Senator Joseph McCarthy and Woodward and Bernstein's revelations about Nixon to prove his arguments. This book is a "frightening indictment" of efforts, particularly Trump's, to silence the press.

"She is the iconic leader who put Donald Trump in his place with the toughness to take on a lawless president and defend American democracy." Who is she? She is the subject of Molly Ball's biography, *Pelosi*. This book is "a nuanced, page-turning portrait of the life and times of this historic and under-appreciated figure." A carefully researched biography of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

Sonia Purnell's *A Woman of No Importance* has the subtitle "The untold story of the American spy who helped win World War II." The woman is Virginia Hall, a Baltimore socialite who became part of the spy organization Special Operations Executive and later organized a spy network in occupied France.

When her activities were discovered by the Nazis, she escaped by a death-defying hike (in spite of a prosthetic leg) across the Pyrenees into Spain. A fascinating read.

Of particular relevance today is Laura Spinney's *Pale Rider: The Spanish Flu of 1918 and How It Changed the World*. The book chronicles the course of one of humanity's greatest disasters. It was responsible for the deaths of somewhere between 50 and 110 million people (accounts vary) including Franz Kafka, Woodrow Wilson and Mahatma Gandhi. This "gripping narrative history" recounts how the virus traveled around the world and its lasting effects.

Thomas Cathcart and Daniel Klein's *I Think Therefore I Draw* has the subtitle, *Understanding Philosophy through Cartoons*. It covers such topics as religion, knowledge, mortality and the meaning of life – that is, all of the major subjects dealt with in past and present philosophy – through captioned cartoons. One reviewer said, "You'll breeze through these weighty topics as you guffaw and slap your knee."

For the serious reader of philosophy, one recommends Edward Wilson's *The Origins of Creativity*. This celebrated biologist combines the humanities and the sciences in an account that begins thousands of years ago with the primitive ancestors of humans and, later, with the invention of language. He shows how we can learn about human nature from many of our creative endeavors through the ages. One reviewer called this book "a profound and lyrical work."

These are just a few of the many excellent new nonfiction titles now available in our library.

John Gillespie

## Fund Drive Nets \$12,675

The annual Kimball Spring Fund Drive brought in a total of \$12,675.00 from 110 generous residents. We thank each of them and extend gratitude to Dave Vacheron, who was chief honcho for this effort. Susan Dana, Arlene Potler and their committees are tasked with distribution of these funds. We will provide full information on their decisions in a later issue.

## Open Mic: Kilimanjaro in the Dark

*Editor's note: When I posted a request for articles about unusual personal experiences, I wildly suggested climbing Mount Kilimanjaro as a topic. Little did I know.*

When I was in my late twenties in 1968, I climbed Mount Kilimanjaro in northeastern Tanzania. Mount Kilimanjaro is the highest mountain in Africa and the highest free-standing mountain in the world. It is a dormant stratovolcano, 19,341 foot [5,895 meters] high.

I was serving as a U.S. Peace Corps volunteer in Uganda – a beautiful small country in East Africa where the Nile River begins to flow northward from Lake Victoria into the Mediterranean Sea. I went to Mount Kilimanjaro just after Tanganyika became independent and was renamed Tanzania. I travelled with some British colleagues, teachers and doctors in Uganda.

The summit is 16,000 feet above the plateau base, about where our hiking began. Climbing up and down with overnight stays in cabins on trails through the bamboo forests and among plateaus between volcano cones took almost a week.

The expedition was thrillingly beautiful and high but not technically difficult since we hired porters. There

was lots of snow and glaciers and we often climbed on steps cut through the snow and ice. I was lucky; the high altitude did not bother me. Altitude sickness is

unpredictable. Perhaps it did not affect me because I had already been working at some altitude for a year. I was a history teacher partway up on another volcano, Mount Elgin (14,177 feet), in Uganda.

The most striking feature of our trek was that we began the final climb in the dark – up the ice and snow steps cut in Kibo, the highest of three volcanic

cones of Mount Kilimanjaro. The cones are Mawenzi, Kibo and Shira. Kibo is the tallest at 5,895 meters. It has been renamed Uhuru (independence in Swahili) Peak. We climbed partway up one of the other peaks before climbing Kibo.

We felt triumphant satisfaction in reaching the summit before the sun rose dramatically, revealing the curvature of the earth. It took four or five days to go up but only two to climb down.

After climbing Kilimanjaro, I went to the city of Dar es Salaam on the coast of Tanzania. Then I traveled by dhow (a traditional sailing vessel) to the island of Zanzibar, where there were heaps of cloves everywhere and ornate brass doors. I will never forget the lady with a baby dik-dik [antelope] in her hair! I rode the train across Tanzania to the ferry to cross Lake Victoria to get back to Kampala via Entebbe in Uganda.



**Doane at the summit**



**Doane (upper row, far right) with hikers and porters**

### Peace Corps Service in Uganda

My Peace Corps service was teaching world and African history to Ugandan male and female secondary school students at Sebei Senior Secondary School in Kapchorwa on the Kenya border, and at Old Kampala Senior Secondary School in the capital Kampala. Our objectives included enabling students to take and pass British O-level and A-level exams and get into Uganda's famed Makerere University.

Sebei Senior Secondary was a new school with male students from all different tribes. They were brought together in hopes they would build and assemble a nation together in Uganda.

*(Continued on next page)*

### ***Kilimanjaro, continued from page 5)***

After exploring East Africa for most suitably advanced societies, the Colonial powers sent missionaries to convert people to Christianity. In Uganda the British found seven kingdoms with courtly societies and created a relatively independent protectorate status for them rather than a colony.

Old Kampala Senior Secondary was a school built for the Gujarati and other Indian people. Indians built the railroad from the Kenya coast to the western border of Uganda. They ran and owned most of the stores and industry in Uganda. This built resentment among Africans in Uganda. As a result, later, president Idi Amin ejected them from the country of Uganda. While I was on the faculty, the school had many students who were excellent students and refugees from other countries such as Somalia and Sudan.

*Doane Perry  
photos supplied by Doane*

## ***Threats to the Mountain***

Kilimanjaro National Park, established in 1973, initially comprised the whole of the mountain above the tree line and six forest corridors stretching down through the montane forest belt. At the time of inscription in 1987, the main pressures affected mostly the forest reserve which acted as a buffer zone to the park. Following a 2005 extension, the National Park includes the whole of the mountain above the tree line as well as the natural forest (montane forest) which was under Kilimanjaro Forest Reserve. ... The park is connected to Amboseli National Park; however, corridors to Arusha National Park and Tsavo National park have been encroached, impacting on wildlife migration.

Kilimanjaro National Park is protected under national legislation as a National Park and a management plan is in place. The property requires an effective and managing organization, including sufficient well-equipped ranger presence to be able to carry out surveillance and implementation of the management plan. A key management issue is maintaining the aesthetic quality of the property as a spectacular natural site. Protecting its visual integrity and sustaining its natural integrity are key management issues. Key viewpoints to the property

also need to be protected, including from Arusha and Amboseli where the most famous views of the property can be seen. An effective programme of research and monitoring of the property is also required.

Threats to the property include increasing and cumulative stress from sources such as adjacent land uses, downstream effects of air and water pollution, invasive species, fire and climate change. The glaciers of the property are vulnerable to retreat, and are cited as a feature of particular vulnerability to global climate change. The impacts from these threats need to be closely monitored and minimized. Tourism poses a significant threat and careful planning of related infrastructure and access development is required. Human pressure on the property needs to be managed, which can result otherwise in illegal harvest of its resources, encroachments to park boundary and blockage of migratory routes and dispersal areas. Education programmes and integration of park management with all involved partners and stakeholders, including the surrounding rural population, is essential.

*UNESCO World Heritage Centre*

## ***Birthdays!***

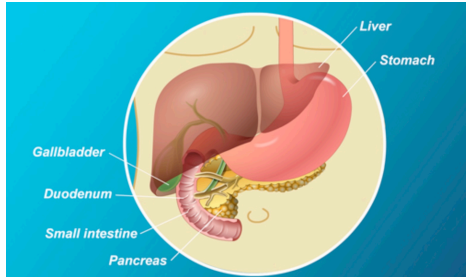
**Twenty-two residents celebrate birthdays in March.** There is a 33-year spread between the youngest and oldest celebrant. March birthdays belong to:

**Burton Levering, Jane Braus, Eugene Hunter, Walter Shenko, Andy Campoli, Helen Mary Shaffer, Priscilla Scheiner, David Vacheron, Sarah Harrington, Ralph Peterson, Georgeanne Rousseau, Charlie Haynes, Paul Nesbit, Molly Pomerance, Garret Roosma, Caroline Medina, Burton Miller, Mary O'Brien, Minna Zaret, Judith Glockner, Annette Gordon and Kristin Gibbons**

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

## The Pancreas: Hidden But Essential to Health

The pancreas is a gland, about six inches long, located in the upper abdomen. It is fairly flat and thin, and is surrounded by the stomach, small intestine, liver, spleen and gallbladder. These other abdominal organs provide protection as well as create a hiding place for the pancreas, making it difficult to examine. The wide end of the pancreas on the right side of the body is called the head. The middle sections are the neck and body. The thin end of the pancreas on the left side of the body is called the tail. The pancreas has two main functions – digestion and blood sugar regulation. It is actually two glands in one – an exocrine gland that secretes digestive enzymes into ducts, and an endocrine gland that secretes the hormones insulin and glucagon directly into the blood stream.



### DIGESTION

Exocrine cells of the pancreas produce enzymes that are essential for digestion. When food enters the stomach, pancreatic enzymes are released into a system of small ducts that lead to the main pancreatic duct. The pancreatic duct runs the length of the pancreas. It connects with the common bile duct, which carries bile from the gallbladder, and together they connect with and enter the duodenum (the first part of the small intestine) to aid with the digestion of fats, carbohydrates and proteins.

### BLOOD SUGAR REGULATION

The endocrine cells of the pancreas produce hormones that regulate vital functions in the body. The two main pancreatic hormones are insulin and glucagon. They are produced in endocrine cells with the exotic name of Islets of Langerhans. These cell clusters produce and secrete insulin and glucagon into the bloodstream. Insulin lowers blood sugar (glucose) levels while glucagon raises glucose levels. Insulin is needed to get glucose from the blood stream into cells everywhere in the body. Together, these two main hormones work to maintain the

proper level of sugar in the blood. When the islet cells malfunction the result is diabetes.

### PANCREATITIS

Pancreatitis is inflammation of the pancreas that occurs when pancreatic enzyme secretions build up and begin to digest the organ itself. It can occur as acute, painful attacks lasting a matter of days, or it may be a chronic condition that progresses over a period of years. Acute pancreatitis refers to pancreatitis that develops suddenly, most often as a result of gallstones or excess alcohol ingestion. Reaction to certain medications, trauma and infectious causes can also lead to acute pancreatitis. It can be life threatening, but most patients recover completely. Hospitalization is often necessary for hydration, intravenous medication and occasionally surgery to remove the gallbladder. Symptoms of acute pancreatitis include severe pain in the upper-middle part of the abdomen, often radiating into the back; jaundice, and low-grade fever.

Symptoms of chronic pancreatitis may develop over a period of time without the sudden dramatic occurrence of an acute attack. In chronic pancreatitis, there is a decrease in the secretion of enzymes needed for digestion and absorption of dietary fats, resulting in fatty, oily stools. Recurrent abdominal pain may be accompanied by nausea and weight loss. There may be an onset of diabetes. Diagnostic scans may find stones or areas of calcified tissue within the pancreas. There are numerous causes of chronic pancreatitis. The most common cause is long-term alcohol abuse. Approximately 70% of cases are linked to alcohol consumption. Other causes may include autoimmune disease, cystic fibrosis and high levels of calcium or triglycerides. Chronic pancreatitis most frequently develops in people between the ages of 30 and 40. The condition is also more common among men than women.

### PANCREATIC CANCER

It is hard to diagnose pancreatic cancer early. Symptoms typically don't occur until the cancer has advanced and unfortunately can be vague, but can include abdominal pain, jaundice, severe itching, weight-loss, nausea, vomiting and digestive problems.

*(Continued on next page)*



### ***Pancreas, continued from page 7)***

Making matters even more complicated is the pancreas' deep-in-the-abdomen location. As a result, tumors cannot usually be felt by touch during a physical exam. Because of the difficulty of early diagnosis and the rapidity with which pancreatic cancer spreads, the prognosis is often poor. Risk factors for pancreatic cancer include smoking, long-term diabetes, chronic pancreatitis and genetics. Cancer usually begins in the cells that produce the digestive juices or in the cells that line the ducts. In rare occasions, pancreatic cancer will begin in the cells that produce hormones. To diagnose it, doctors typically conduct physical exams, blood tests, imaging tests, endoscopic ultrasounds and biopsies. Treatment options include surgery, radiation, chemotherapy and therapies targeted to attack cancer cells without harming normal cells.

*Stephanie Beling, M.D.*

## ***Who Says You're Old?***

Having plans sounds like a good idea until you have to put on clothes and leave the house.

It's weird being the same age as old people.

When I was a kid I wanted to be older ... this is not what I expected.

Life is like a helicopter. I don't know how to operate a helicopter.

Chocolate is God's way of telling us he likes us a little bit chubby.

It's probably my age that tricks people into thinking I'm an adult.

Never sing in the shower! Singing leads to dancing, dancing leads to slipping, and slipping leads to paramedics seeing you naked. So remember ... Don't sing!

I see people about my age mountain climbing; I feel good getting my leg through my underwear without losing my balance!

If you can't think of a word, say, "I forgot the English word for it." That way people will think you're bilingual instead of an idiot.

I'm at a place in my life where errands are starting to count as going out.

**Coronacoaster** noun The ups and downs of a pandemic. One day you're loving your bubble, doing workouts, baking banana bread and going for long walks and the next you're crying, drinking gin for breakfast and missing people you don't even like.

I'm at that age where my mind still thinks I'm 29, my humor suggests I'm 12, while my body mostly keeps asking if I'm sure I'm not dead yet.

I'm getting tired of being part of a major historical event.

I don't always go the extra mile, but when I do it's because I missed my exit.

At what point can we just start using 2020 as profanity? As in: "That's a load of 2020" or "What in the 2020?" or "abso-2020-lutely."

You don't realize how old you are until you sit on the floor and then try to get back up.

We all get heavier as we get older, because there's a lot more information in our heads. That's my story and I'm sticking to it.

*Humbly offered by Diana Redfern*





## Abby Pratt Says She'll Get on Your Nerves

Apartment 234 is under new ownership: it is now home to Abby Pratt, her dog Oliver (Ollie) and her two cats, Rufus and Mitzi. It is also home to memorabilia from many places in the world Abby either lived in or traveled to, or both, with her late husband, Larry Pratt, or on her own.

Our new resident began life on Manhattan's Upper West Side. She graduated from New Rochelle High School and the University of Michigan, but she's gone way beyond there. She's loved lots of other places, including the Berkshires, where she's lived for more than 50 years; but New York's vigor and diversity still live in Abby's blood. Let's look now at some of the spots on the map she's made her own.

The first big transition was the family's move from the City to New Rochelle, NY, when Abby was 12 years old. She loved that diverse suburb close to the City's cultural life, and the fascinating options in the high school curriculum. She played in the band and orchestra and sang in the high school chorus. A quick train ride to New York City, and she and a friend (both in bobby socks) were at Carnegie Hall, listening to the masters perform the masters.

Unfortunately, the next transition, to college at Smith, which in 1958 was nearly all white, mostly boarding school girls, was also in a town that had yet to become buzzing. So, after a couple of years, she transferred to the University of Michigan, which was much more to her liking. She majored in English and hung out with a very interesting group of newfound friends in the Michigan Union.

This was a formative experience, and she relished its challenges: the Midwest, foreign students, artists and scholars. Abby's English studies exposed her to the richness of the language, which, in turn, led to a lifelong love affair with reading and writing. After graduation, she worked at the Graduate Library and at the University's Institute for Social Research, which furthered her interest in exploring varieties of ethnicities. Lots more about that later ...

It was back to Manhattan after a few years in Ann Arbor. She found employment at a foster care agency that specialized in placing Black children. (The foster care agencies were still affiliated with a religion, and this one was Protestant.) It was not an easy situation. There was too much need, too few

resources, even fewer solutions. After two years, Abby realized she had to make a move, and this time it was to Doubleday as an editorial assistant.

She was young, she was in New York, she had a job she liked and friends galore. Life was already good when it got better! She met Larry Pratt, the man who became her husband and took her off to Malawi, where he had been a Peace Corps volunteer. Abby

embraced this new country and developed yet another career — teaching English in a boarding school for Malawian girls outside Lilongwe, the small city that later became the capital of the country. The family remained in Malawi for two years; their first child, Sam, was born there. Then it was back to NYC.



Wherever Abby went there were changes. In New York a second son, Bob, was born. Both Abby and Larry had family ties in the Berkshires: Larry in Williamsville, a hamlet in West Stockbridge, and Abby in northwestern Connecticut, where her grandparents lived. Life became increasingly hectic as they embarked on weekend treks to Larry's grandfather's house in Williamsville. Finally the couple realized they'd be a whole lot happier simply moving to the Berkshires. Fortunately, Larry found a job with the nonprofit think tank in Great Barrington, the American Institute for Economic Research, and later with American Investment Advisors.

They settled happily with their two boys into the family home Larry knew and loved. They enrolled their sons at Berkshire Country Day School, a terrific move for the boys and for the school. In shaky financial condition, it was quite literally saved with the help of Abby, who volunteered to recruit students and donors.

*(Continued on next page)*

*Pratt, continued from page 9)*

Through her press releases, Abby's name became known to the Berkshire Eagle. She was invited to write for the newspaper, part time, and eventually became town reporter at one time or another for various South County communities, including a lengthy stint in Lenox. Her 15 years with the Eagle were among the happiest of her life. She loved the chance to write about people she met and events they were involved in, in a setting so amenable to her interests and skills. The Eagle, everyone knew at the time, was a great little newspaper.

As our conversation continued, I marveled at the way this woman immersed herself in challenging adventures wherever she went, whether it was in Africa or right here in the Berkshires. Consider what she did in 2008 in Great Barrington. With funds inherited from her father, the son of desperately poor immigrants, she looked for an appropriate way to honor his lifelong interest in racial and social justice. That inspired the creation of the New World Fund (NWF) for recent immigrants to the Berkshires. She credits the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation for its help in establishing the fund. Her father would be proud.

During her years living in Africa, and visiting many times in Malawi, Ecuador and Myanmar, Abby saw close up and personal what it was like to live in remote places where sufficient income, healthcare and education were hardly available for almost all the people. She found ways to support nonprofit, grassroots organizations in those countries and also in Bolivia and South Africa, where family members had worked.

This profile of Abby could go on, and on, and then on some more. I haven't touched on her love of the arts, classical music and jazz. Her life is too rich for one article. She is self-described as a "a person who gets on people's nerves sometimes — talkative, curious and lively." I say "Hurray!" that she's a new neighbor for us to get to know. Drop in on 234, or call to schedule a dinner. Do it NOW!

*Dorothea Nelson, Photo by Lorraine Roman*

**Mr. Updike, I Presume**

One slow September afternoon at The Mount, it was my turn to conduct a tour of author Edith Wharton's impressive country home. A single visitor showed up. He was immediately identifiable by his tall stature, eagle-beak profile, and permanently bemused expression. Here was John Updike, prolific novelist and frequent poet.

I should have gone ahead and called him Mr. Updike, but I became tongue-tied and couldn't. Without naming names, I fell back on my printed outline and just gave the best private tour I could manage.

We went through all the public areas, spending extra time in the library and the writing room. I explained that Mrs. Wharton actually wrote her books upstairs in a bedroom, dropping pages on the floor for a maid to pick up and put in order. "That room isn't really open," I told my visitor, "but if you need to see it I can take you there." He shook his head. I offered to take him up to the lookout at the top of the house. Again he declined.

Finally I escorted John Updike to the brick terrace out front. I pointed out the stone steps, lawns and gardens, and a pathway to the edge of Laurel Lake that he could explore on his own.

Remaining on the terrace, I watched that renowned author stroll the grounds toward the water. From what I knew of his poems, this fairly apt fragment played out in my mind: "Beetle-headed Khepri, god of early morning, kisses the misted canals." In fact, that's all of his poetry that I still know by heart.

*Mary Misch*

**In Memoriam**

**Roland Ginzel**

**May 7, 1921 to February 25, 2021**

**Suzanne Denat**

**March 23, 1930 to March 17, 2021**

**Margaret Axelrod**

**Nov. 18, 1926 to March 25, 2021**

**Claire Lowery**

**March 31, 1931 to March 26, 2021**

## Following the Kids, Eventually, to Kimball

If there were a competition at Kimball Farms for “most years of congregate living,” Nancy Brigham would have had a head start when she moved to apartment 245 on the 17th of February. Before coming to Lenox, she had already lived for 11 years at Good Shepherd Village, a community about the same size as Kimball Farms, in Endicott, NY.

In this time of Covid-19, Nancy went straight into quarantine as soon as she moved in. “It wasn’t as bad as I thought it would be,” Nancy comments. “It was only ten days, and there were lots of little things I could do to unpack and settle in.” An important collection of “little things” that came out of a roomful of boxes is the distillation of collections of varied treasures that Nancy and her husband collected, now arranged on a small set of shelves in the living room. “It’s mostly birds, but various other things too that bring me joy,” she said. She acknowledges the challenge of condensing the souvenirs of a lifetime, but since she did it 11 years ago, she’s been through the experience before.



Nancy raves about the wonderful help from her daughter-in-law, who was allowed to come into the building during the quarantine to help her get settled. Now she’s waiting for the weather to warm up so they can assemble the new glider and table for her second-floor balcony. When the leaves have emerged, Nancy thinks sitting there will be like being in a tree house.

She is looking forward to having meals in the dining room and meeting more people. “The residents I’ve met so far have been lovely and very helpful,” she added, “especially when I’ve been lost.” She doesn’t mind eating alone, and she loves to cook, but isn’t sure yet if she really will. She’s also looking forward to strength and balance exercise classes, which she found very helpful for maintaining mobility and flexibility when she participated in classes at Good Shepherd.

Nancy is a devoted reader, and she’s just finished the latest book by her favorite author Patricia Cornwall, but she admits, “I’ll read just about anything.”

Nancy and her husband, Karl, grew up in Endicott and Johnson City, respectively, two towns close to Binghamton, N.Y. They both worked for IBM but hadn’t met at work (she worked the day shift; he was scheduled on the night shift). Eventually, they were introduced at a holiday party. Karl was a man of action: he began calling Nancy right after the party, proposed in May and they were married in August.

The couple produced three boys, Randy, Kraig and Timothy, who have produced a total of five granddaughters, ranging in age from six to 40.

Living near family has always been a priority for the Brighams.

After Nancy and her husband retired, they moved to Brevard, NC to be near their middle son (Kraig) and his family. They built a new house, moved in, and then their son announced that he was moving to Lenox, Mass., to start a new job with the Crane paper company. Nancy and Karl stayed on in North Carolina for two years, but they really wanted to be near family so they left Brevard to return to Endicott, where their youngest son (Timothy) lived.

Fast forward to 2020: Timothy decided to move to Virginia to be near his children; Randy was living in Rochester, NY, and Kraig was in Lenox. “Don’t worry, Mom,” said Nancy’s sons. “We’ll find a place for you.”

Kraig took the lead, making a list and visiting a number of possible communities, but he thought Kimball Farms would suit Nancy best. Having the beauty salon on site was an important amenity for Nancy!

Nancy was happy to accept Kraig’s choice, not only because she thought that she would be happy at Kimball Farms, but also because Kraig and his wife had made such a good choice of neighborhoods when they moved to Lenox. The King William and Westminster Road area, about five miles north of Kimball Farms, had a reputation for being welcoming and close knit.

*(Continued on next page)*



## Adventures on the Road to Kimball

Again Kimball can claim an adventurous newcomer to its residents' roster. Newly released from the constraints imposed by quarantine, Richard Freiberg of apartment 217 eagerly awaits the chance to become acquainted with some of his new neighbors.

By the time this written introduction to Richard is made, it is my hope that some of our residents will have shared a meal with him in our now-open dining room, a meal served on plates with real forks and knives.

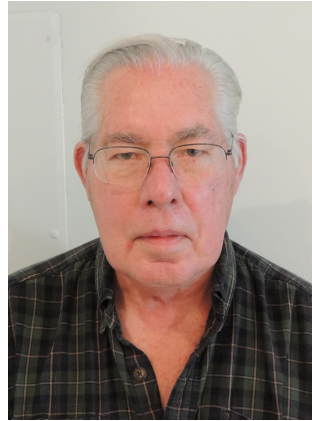
Richard's come to us by way of Boston, Miami, Philadelphia and perhaps a few spots in between that I've missed. Born and raised in West Roxbury, he was graduated from Boston Technical High School, one of Boston's oldest public schools, now known as the John D. O'Bryant School of Mathematics and Science. Along with its sister schools Boston Latin and Boston Latin Academy, these three institutions rank among the top public schools in the country.

That background served Richard well. He entered the field of Information Technology, a field that did nothing but expand. And Richard's job responsibility expanded with the industry's growth, ending with his work as a manager in Medical and Technical Research Associates (MTRA), a multiservice contract research organization founded in 1970 to provide domestic clinical research management services for varieties of firms developing medical devices.

His work included a stint with the USAF in Homestead, Fla. Location was a bit of a disappointment, not the assignment he anticipated when he signed on for overseas duty, but "The Everglades was a nice place to hang out!"

The chance for overseas adventure materialized later in Richard's life. A longtime interest in archeology whetted his appetite for a trip to Central America in 2017. He and his daughter Molly, who lives in East Nassau, N.Y., visited Belize and Guatemala. Their first stop was a visit to Lamanai in Belize, home of a large Mayan ceremonial site. Next they went on to Guatemala to explore Tikal, home to one of the most famous and largest examples of Mayan civilization. Much of the time they were in that country, they were conscious of being followed by armed guards. That did not deter them from accomplishing their

goal of visiting Tikal, with its more than 4,000 Mayan structures.



It was a natural phenomenon that sparked his desire to visit Iceland. He and his daughter drove around this land, guided by his son-in-law, who was familiar with the country. Richard remembers the abundance of waterfalls, crispness of colors, and beauty of a land totally new to him.

He didn't reveal what promoted his interest in visiting Botswana. Elephants, maybe! But he did reveal one of his great pleasures while he was there: bungee jumping! I saw the pictures; he really did it. Seeing him hanging on the ropes, imagining the descent, was more than enough bungee jumping for me!

Before his back forced him to cut down on some physical activities, Richard loved kayaking. That's out of the picture now but he's hopeful he can get in some good hikes in the area. He's interested in the Dan Dorman Trail; I advised him to seek a companion when he's ready to do that. If any of you readers have an inkling to join him, please call him at 7217. Your time will be well spent!

*Dorothea Nelson*

### **Brigham**, continued from page 11)

The neighborhood was featured in a recent article in The Berkshire Eagle (March 10, 2021) after the residents rallied to clear away an enormous pine tree that was blown down at 2 a.m., barely missing the house of a 102-year-old neighbor. It took 20 of the neighborhood volunteers two days to cut up and remove the fallen tree and debris.

With her lovely smile and positive attitude, you'll enjoy Nancy's company. Perhaps she'll let you join her on her balcony in the treetops.

*Susan Dana*