



The

Kimball Farms



Observer



Volume 27, Number 6

June Is Bustin' Out All Over!

June 2020

Up Close and Personal with Covid-19

(Editor's note: This is Stephanie Beling's monthly health column.)

Mid-May and we still shelter in place, keep our distance, wear masks and enjoy our delicious meals in solitary splendor in our apartments. There is no end in sight. We have received official word that the entire Tanglewood season is cancelled, the first time in 75 years, adding to the bleakness of a summer without Jacob's Pillow, Shakespeare & Company, the Williamstown Theater Festival and a severely curtailed Barrington Stage and Berkshire Theater Company season. This is the "new normal," but surely at some time in the near or far future we will have another "normal."

Then there are the numbers with which we are bombarded on a daily basis. Right now in the United States, according to the CDC, there have been

1,412,121 confirmed Corvid-19 cases with 85,990 deaths. This all seems a bit abstract, until I remember hearing that on any Easter Sunday, when the Pope celebrates the Mass in St. Peter's square, there are 80,000 in attendance. I can see that picture in my mind and imagine that number of dead bodies. Another mental picture suddenly appears and that is of four Madison Square Gardens filled to capacity – another picture of 80,000 people. Now, that death toll is less abstract.

A little more abstract is the unemployment picture. As of May, there are 36,000,000 unemployed, the most since the Great Depression. Even picturing bread lines and soup kitchens, I can't create an image with 36 million people. One hundred million (\$100,000,000) is another number that remains

highly abstract. That is the loss in revenues to our local communities sustained by the absence of our cultural venues and subsequent reduction in tourism. Of course it is more real when we consider our inns and restaurants, small businesses and large, that depend on customers so that people can hold onto their jobs, buy food and pay their rent or mortgage.

One day in March, out of the blue everything changed. This disease, this pandemic suddenly hit close to home. For weeks, the news was about the novel coronavirus sickening and killing people in China, beginning to spread to other countries, and by the end of March had appeared in all 50 states. But for me it got personal.

A phone call from my daughter Jenny on Long Island saying that she had fever and fatigue rang alarm bells. There had only been one reported case in her town and she didn't know who that person was. Of course Corvid-19 was front and center in both our minds. It took four more days for her to get a test, both for influenza as well as Corvid-19. She had a drive-through test, the doctor in a mask and personal protective gear and she in her car. The test for "flu"



Jenny Recovering

was negative and she got the results that afternoon – it took another 11 days to get the results for Corvid-19. The result was the one ominous word "detected."

During those 11 days waiting for the test result as well as the four preceding days she had fluctuating fever, extreme fatigue, nausea, headache and could barely get out of bed; friends were leaving food at her door. *(continued on next page)*

(Covid-19, continued from page 1)

She had a telephone consultation with her physician during the first week which permitted her to stay at home as her breathing remained fairly stable. However, during the second week, she was able to get a video consultation with an infectious-disease pulmonary specialist from New York City confirming, that she could continue to recover at home but needed to treat her dehydration.

That was so reassuring and helped to allay some of my mounting anxiety and depression at not being able to be with her. She continued to recover and towards the end of April began to feel like her old self. Speaking of old, she will be 60 this year and that put her in a slightly higher risk category. Fortunately her basic health is excellent.

Once recovered, with social distancing in full force, she told me that some of her friends were still a little leery of spending time with her, even with appropriate distancing, and she herself wasn't too keen on being with people as she had no clear idea of her degree of immunity. There is still so much to learn. The good news is that a follow-up test for the virus was done on May 7th and came back the next day with the most welcome two words: "not detected." An antibody test for immunity will be done soon.

There is one other way in which the pandemic became personal, and that is that the first day of the closing of the dining room at Kimball Farms was March 24th, which just happens to be my birthday. A small dinner party with an outside guest, of course, was cancelled and I had a lovely dinner in my apartment with a lot of phone calls and good vibes. I will close with a Loving Kindness Haiku for trying times inspired by the OLLI course last winter:

May we stay healthy
May we stay safe and at ease
May we stay happy.

article and photo by Stephanie Beling, M.D.

Keeping Distance

The Observer doesn't publish in July and August, so we'll be keeping social distance until fall. Happy Covid-free summer to all.

To Spring, Hark!

the scarlet-vented catbait
so-called for plaintive mewing in the nodberries
the honey-scented bent-bill
the crest-crowned thrill
the blackened chiming tern
the lilt-lackey
soaring falsetto up top skull
the crumb-tipping torgon
the bean eye
the smite
the deep-dive in constant molt
the ended brink
paired dorbs
the loose-tailed thrust
the turcotinga
the blue goose of heaven
in the region of hope
the upwind carrier
the alifere aliform
the branded plume
the snot digger
the twice-tufted rester

all in night-long sit
twigged
in unblink

dropping notes on your tongue,
Papageno.

Charlie Haynes

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

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President's Comments: a Look Ahead

Before starting this column I looked at earlier June comments from former presidents Susan Dana and Hank Fenn. What a happy picture they painted of summer life in the Berkshires! A life centered around abundant music, theatre, dance, food, shopping, visits with family and friends ... a world of so much pleasure that is now a memory, its replacement or continuation a work in progress.

The pleasure I can report now is that, as of this writing, we are COVID-19 free, a tribute to staff planning and, certainly, residents' willingness to accept behavior modifications. I can also report that it is hoped that in time a few changes can be made as the state progresses in its re-open strategy.

It is unclear at this time the impact that restrictions will have in areas of dining services, but I'm sure Mike and his team will work hard to get creative.

While visitation is still restricted, there are efforts underway to create outdoor social distancing areas. Please note that masks will still be a requirement.

Replacing the array of cultural events that dominated summer months is impossible, but Kimball staff will do its utmost to provide a diversity of programs designed to entertain small numbers of us from time to time. I cannot be more specific because the ripple effects of the plague that surrounds us change so quickly that we can only respond, not initiate new programs.

Our modest Earth Day celebration on April 22 was recognized in the Berkshire Eagle, thanks to Charlotte Finn's son Bruce, who was an audience of one listening to the Kimball rendition of *This Land Is Your Land*. It was anything but a pleasant spring day, but many residents donned parkas to emerge on their patios and lustily sing "This land was made for you and me."

And this precious land is in serious trouble. The Covid-19 virus has shown us how vulnerable we humans are, yet this pandemic pales in comparison to the crisis that climate change imposes. Just as we turn to scientists to resolve the riddle of saving us from the pandemic, we turn to them for guidance in saving us from the awful perils inherent in climate change.

I look at Kimball's small meadow and give thanks for the bluebird houses that are homes to new families, the new wildflowers and grasses that attract butterflies and bees and I sing, again, "This land was made for you and me," as I give thanks to residents like Dave Vacheron and Hank Fenn and Garry

Roosma, who cleaned and weeded and shoveled to preserve this small plot.

Whether because of or despite the changes the pandemic has created at Kimball, I am so aware of how resilient this community is ... and so appreciative of the many kind gestures displayed by its residents ... whether it's taking on outdoor tasks, or

designing and creating beautiful posters for our hard-working staff (thank you, Judy Glockner, Caroline Medina, Molly Pomerance, Lorraine Roman and Jean Rousseau) and, above all, remaining

cheerful and grateful for the blessings we can still enjoy.

Let's all hope for a germ-free, happy summer! And let's use the time, in part, to consider what we might do, together, to imagine new ways for us to connect with and support each other as we face challenges the pandemic has yet to unfold.

Dorothea Nelson



**Molly and Lorraine
putting up posters**

Send in the Burt Miller Clowns

The expression is “Wearing your heart on your sleeve,” but Kimball Farms resident Burt Miller uses the area around and on the front door of his apartment to proclaim his love of clowns and the circus through his collection of memorabilia in several media.

He’s drawn to images of circus clowns, particularly hobo clowns, because of childhood memories, and the idea of masks hiding reality (or not) resonates with him.

“I’ve always liked clowns,” Burt says, “and I’ve always believed the saying that ‘No mask can hide the face of a lonely soul.’”



Burt with some of his collection

As a young boy, Burt and his father were in the audience every year for the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey circus performances in New York City. From their usual seats in the third row, very close to the antics of the performers, young Burt was sure that one clown in particular recognized him from year to year. The year Burt was 10, his favorite clown looked frail and sad. And then the next year, “Herbie the Hobo” wasn’t there, leaving a grieving youngster behind.

The beginning of Burt’s collection was a porcelain figurine of a hobo clown wearing a doctor’s white coat, with a classic doctor’s bag at his feet. A small boy is sitting on his knee. The sculpture was a gift from a woman who worked in Burt’s medical office about 30 years ago, Burt remembers, and now is displayed on a table outside the door.

The small sculpture is dominated by the most spectacular piece in his collection, a life-sized bust of a hobo complete with costume and make-up

(there’s even a tear sliding down the clown’s face). The moment he saw the original, life-sized version of the clown at a gallery in Sarasota, Florida, several years ago, he felt he had been reunited with “Herbie the Hobo.” Burt yearned to own the full-size version of the clown when he first saw it, but he had to admit that its size would have created a space problem in the hallway of Kimball Farms, so he commissioned the bust from the artist.

Above the table hangs a handsome, framed lithograph, a behind-the-big-top scene featuring Emmett Kelly as Weary Willie: a hobo clown, surrounded by other clowns, splashing in a tub of sudsy water, while an elephant showers water from his trunk to rinse away the bubbles. The print is from *The Original Circus Collection Emmett Kelly* series.

A recent addition to Burt’s display is an oil painting of Emmett Kelly, which was an EBay purchase. The artist’s name is unknown.

A surprise but welcome recent addition to the collection arrived recently, delivered by the United States Postal Service. It was totally unexpected, but a special treasure because its theme combines both the circus and elephants. When fellow resident Jane



Braus received a letter recently from a friend in California, she noticed that the stamp on the envelope was one in a series honoring the Ringling Brothers and

Barnum & Bailey circus. The Forever stamp featured an elephant with its trunk extended the full width of the stamp, with the caption “5 big herds of Performing Elephants in 5 circus rings At One Time.” Jane rushed the envelope to Burt, who was delighted to acquire another treasure for his collection. Now he’s looking for a suitable frame to display this surprise addition.

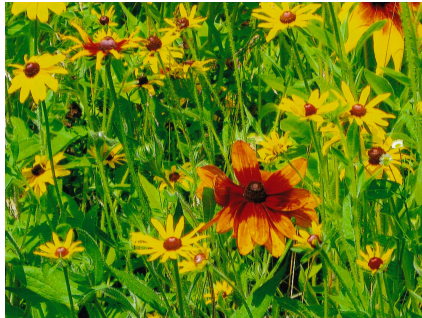
Susan Dana

Burt goes through the poetic hoops on page 5

Meadow Greets Spring

“What is so rare as a day in May?” This year I might add, a warm day, for it seems that polar air has been the constant. Spring is not to be denied and the signs increase each day. As I write, I watch two brilliant cardinals as they each claim the same territory. The brilliant flashes of red cheer my virus-imprisoned soul. I have discovered that the usual calls have changed and multiplied, and then I’m glad that I watch a bit of nature at work.

A few days ago, I received a number of phone calls by those who were out walking along the meadow area. The news they shared was that they had seen bluebirds. With that, I will give you a brief report on the present status of our Meadow; I use “our” because it is most important for every resident to have a sense of ownership in what the Meadow means in ecological value as well as the beauty it provides to those who pass by. One of our greatest cheerleaders is Thom Smith, who often features us in his column in the Sunday Eagle. Not only does he write about our meadow; he has often appeared with plants from his garden, including milkweed to encourage butterflies.



Last Summer

Mike Mele’s “Birdwatchers” statues are due to return soon. The birdboxes have been cleaned and repaired after the winter winds.

Gary Roosma, David Vacheron, Hank Fenn and Reed Hand have already been at work. We look forward to a visit by Ron Kujawski, who has given freely of his time to consult on our progress. Seed will be here by the end of the month. We have ordered a Berkshire Native Mix that will not only bloom this summer with successive pollinating flowers and colors; we will also set seeds for the coming year. By that time the meadow should be firmly established and need only a late fall mowing.

Establishing the meadow has taken faith, determination and support; we are making a place of natural beauty and providing source of pollinators. It has joined with similar projects throughout the

country, all of which are making a beautiful difference. Aside from those named above, the following persons are members of the advisory group: Jim and Helen McCarthy, Elske Smith, Molly King, Nancy Curme, Dorothea Nelson, Charlotte Finn, Gwen Sears, and Moe England.

Gwen Sears

Clowning Around

Starting when I was 5 or 6
My Dad took me to the circus every year,
Barnum and Bailey if you please

We fed peanuts to the elephants
Whom I also adore
Human as you and me

Then 3rd row watching the clowns
Made me laugh while my Dad smiled
But then sometimes I cried
And Dad gave me a hug

Shot from a canon- Oh my god!
But then he was right in front of me
Full of life with a great big smile
Seemed like I knew him
And he knew me

After a year or two we were pals
Or so it seemed
And then by the time I was ten
He looked sad and worn.

Not there the next year
So I could only shed a tear
And wish for him to reappear

Clowns are sad
As most of us know
So when you see one,
Smile and know it ain’t so

If you are as lucky as I was
To re-unite (Herbie Hobo was his name)
Believe in love at first sight
And note the tear that makes him dear
And brings to mind my Dad’s great big smile!

Addendum

When I was 20 I figured it out.
We live and die, we laugh and cry
That’s all there is, is it?

Burt Miller.

Library Lines: Score Your Literary Powers

It was the best of times; it was the worst of times.

Most readers will recognize the above quote as the first line of Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities*. This month's column will test our readers' knowledge of the first lines of other famous novels. Here are 20 quotes and you are asked to supply the name of the author and the title for each — give yourself one point for each correct author and one point for each correct title. A perfect score is 40. If you score 30 or above, I think you should be writing this column; 20 to 30 is excellent; 10 to 20 very good, but below 10, I think you should "brush up your Shakespeare." Good luck and a great summer!

1. Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.
2. Call me Ishmael.
3. It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife.
4. Mr. and Mrs. Dursley, of number four Privet Drive, were proud to say that they were very normal, thank you very much.
5. Whether I shall turn out to be the hero of my own life, or whether that station will be held by anybody else, these pages must show.
6. Through the fence between the curling flower spaces, I could see them coming. They were coming toward where the flag was.
7. Scarlett O'Hara was not beautiful.
8. I had the story, bit by bit, from various people and as generally happens in such cases each time it was a different story. If you know Starksfield, Massachusetts, you know the post office.
9. I am Sam; Sam am I.
10. Last night I dreamt I went to Manderley again.
11. I was born in the Year 1632 in the city of York.
12. He was an old man who fished alone in a skiff in the Gulf Stream.
13. For a long time I went to bed early.
14. It was a bright cold day in April and the clocks were striking thirteen.
15. Miss Brooks had that kind of beauty which seems to be thrown into relief by poor dress.
16. The mole had been working hard all morning Spring cleaning its little home.
17. Stately, plump Buck Mulligan came from the staircase bearing a bowl of lather.
18. The towers of Zenith aspired above the morning mist.
19. The cold passed reluctantly from the earth and the retiring fogs revealed an army stretched out on the hills, resting.
20. In the town, there were two mutes and they were always together.

Answers on Page 8.

John Gillespie

Birthdays!

Fifteen residents celebrate birthdays in June:

Nancy Gillespie, Connie Montgomery, Christine Johnson, Audrey Giroux, Jean Bussard, Doane Perry, Larry Greenapple, Donald Richter, Tad Evans, Cy Henry, Ellie Chandler, Marilyn Hunter, John Cheney, Elinor Leavitt and Leo Goldberger

Twenty-four residents celebrate birthdays in July:

Ann Dorfman, Margot Yondorf, Sheila Keator, Sally Block, Patti Frumkes, Bill Jones, Penny Noepel, Mary Taylor, Frank McCarthy, Andy Pincus, Dave Dery, Jim McCarthy, Alice Hoff, Helen Fink, Carol Walker, Suzanne Martin, Annette Thoubboron, Diana Redfern, Dorothy Smith, Heidi Stormer, Priscilla Anthony, Henry Scheck, Gerald Drew and Miriam Bergman.

Twenty-two residents celebrate birthdays in August:

Julian Lichtman, Sheila Smith, Milton Fink, Donnice Stanley, Ursula Stanley, Harriet O'Neal, Bernie Handler, Jean Green Marcel Tenenbaum, Susan Wojtasik, Virginia Gardner, Shirley Rubenstein, Hans Fehlmann, Ginny Fletcher, Fred Feuerbach, Dan Block, Margaret Wheeler, Jane Cullen, Alice Bomer, Lavinia Meeks, Barbara Parker and Mellie Johansen.

Happy Birthday to each of you!!

Kimball Gives Fund Aids Covid Victims

When residents sign up to serve on the Kimball Gives committee, they may think they've chosen an easy task. After all, how hard can it be to identify effective Berkshire County nonprofit agencies that help children, people needing medical services, shelters for battered women and homeless people, and food for the hungry, and then write a bunch of checks?

Most years, it can be a real challenge to make decisions: the needs are so great, and there are so many agencies who provide services. The committee usually chooses seven to ten agencies to share in the Kimball Gives donation (\$7,000).

Not this year. COVID-19 has made it easy to home in on two organizations whose work directly impacts the lives of the exploding number of people needing help to survive: the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts (\$2,000), and the COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund, (\$5,000).

The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, founded in 1982, has been a recipient of Kimball Gives donations for many years. It focuses on keeping hunger issues at the forefront of awareness, strengthening emergency food networks, coordinating purchases and donations of food and working directly with individuals through the Mobile Food Bank and the Brown Bag: Food for Elders.

The COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund for Berkshire County is a new resource, described by Berkshire Eagle reporter Jenn Smith in an April 14, 2020, article: "In less than a month, Berkshire United Way and Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation have raised nearly \$2 million for a collaborative COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund for Berkshire County campaign. The joint effort with Northern Berkshire United Way and Williamstown Community Chest is designed to raise new resources in support of local organizations at the front line of the coronavirus outbreak."

The process is simple: local nonprofit organizations submit grant requests, often in cooperation with other agencies, to a team of people from the four funding agencies, to meet special needs resulting from the effects of the virus. To keep the process flexible and able to respond quickly, applications can be submitted, and funds granted on a rolling basis, as

funds become available. As described in the Eagle, early grants provided Personal Protective Equipment for front-line workers; emergency outreach staff and hotlines; enlarged shelter capacity; and meals for children and low-income families.

The maximum grant is \$25,000, the amount awarded to Central Berkshire Habitat for Humanity to support mortgage and insurance payments for twenty-nine families. A similar amount was given to Louison House in Northern Berkshire to help staff continue support and housing for victims of a fire in March. A smaller amount (\$4,500) to the Berkshire Community Diaper Project purchased a six week supply of diapers for distribution sites throughout the county.

The news about the COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund really resonated with the committee (Arlene Potler, Ann Dorfman, Elske Smith, Nancy Curme, Moe England, Jane Braus, Susan Dana and Marvin Seline). We were impressed with the cooperation of the fund-raising organizations and with the creativity of the agencies as they identified opportunities to help people affected, the speed with which the campaign was set up, the speed with which the funds were distributed and the generosity of the community.

Thanks go to all residents for donations to the Spring Fund Drive, which funds the Residents' Association budget, including community outreach through the Kimball Gives committee.

Susan Dana, Kimball Gives Chair



In Memoriam

Marilyn Rossier

July 20, 1935 to May 12, 2020

Moody Brown

June 4, 1923 to May 15, 2020

Hey, the Feeder Is Empty

Tweet, Tweet, Tweet! Throwing out food every day on my porch and surrounding areas for our feathered friends (and sometimes for a squirrel or chipmunk who think they are birds) brings me much enjoyment to observe them. As many as 8 to 10 come at a time. They are all sizes and the bigger ones feel that they are privileged. Some of our feathered friends are a little pushy and fly and peck at one another to shoo each other away. I am beginning to realize that some have the not so nice traits of some humans. They want more than their share. But I get the biggest kick out of the squirrel who seems to say, "Hey, excuse me ... but the bird feeder is empty!"

Diana Feld

My Beef with Beef: Why I Don't Eat It

I don't eat beef – well, hardly ever. Not for my own health or taste, but for the health of the environment. Beef is by far the most environmentally detrimental meat. This adverse impact of beef is due to several factors. Cows contribute to climate change in several ways. These include burping out a lot of methane. Methane is a far more potent greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide and cows cause about 10% of the anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions. Moreover, raising cattle takes up a lot of land. Almost 30 percent of the world's ice-free land is used for livestock, either directly or to raise crops to feed the animals. Beef requires far more land than pork or chickens.

Much of the land used for cattle has become available by clearing of forests, particularly in South America. Destroying forests also means the destruction of carbon dioxide-absorbing vegetation. Side effects of that clearing includes the negative impact on indigenous peoples and the destruction of wild mammals.

Water usage is another negative environmental impact of beef. It takes an enormous amount of water to grow crops for animals to eat, to clean filthy factory farms, and give animals water to drink. A single cow used for milk can drink up to 50 gallons of water per day — or twice that amount in hot weather — and it takes 683 gallons of water to produce just 1 gallon of milk. It takes more than 2,400 gallons of water to produce 1 pound of beef.

Much of that water comes from groundwater, i.e., aquifers such as the Ogallala, which extends from South Dakota to Texas. By 2010, about 30% of the Ogallala Aquifer's groundwater had been tapped but is not being replenished by rainwater. Rainfall in most of the Texas High Plains is minimal, evaporation is high, and infiltration rates are slow.

As one might expect, there are great variations in the environmental impact, depending on the way the same food is produced. Beef produced on deforested land results in 12 times more greenhouse gases and 50 times more land than those grazing in rich natural pasture.

But don't we need cows for their milk? Children may need milk, but adults are just as well off with soy, almond or coconut milk.

Globally, animal agriculture is responsible for more greenhouse gases than all the world's transportation. Think about that the next time you consider having beef for dinner!

Elske Smith

Answers to quiz on Page 6

1. Leo Tolstoy, *Anna Karenina*
2. Herman Melville, *Moby-Dick*
3. Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*
4. J. K. Rowling, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*
5. Charles Dickens, *David Copperfield*
6. William Faulkner, *The Sound and the Fury*
7. Margaret Mitchell, *Gone with the Wind*
8. Edith Wharton, *Ethan Frome*
9. Dr. Seuss, *Green Eggs and Ham*
10. Daphne duMaurier, *Rebecca*
11. Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*
12. Ernest Hemingway, *The Old Man and the Sea*
13. Marcel Proust, *Remembrance of Things Past (Swann's Way)*
14. George Orwell, *1984*
15. George Eliot, *Middlemarch*
16. Kenneth Grahame, *The Wind in the Willows*
17. James Joyce, *Ulysses*
18. Sinclair Lewis, *Babbitt*
19. Stephen Crane, *The Red Badge of Courage*
20. Carson McCullers, *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter*

How Many Did You Get?