



The  
**Kimball Farms**  
*Observer*



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Cancer Victim's Legacy, Page 5

June 2021

## ***Four Students and a Horse Win Study Grants***

Four Kimball Farms employees have been chosen to share the \$7,200 allocated by the Residents Association in the 2021 budget for Staff Education Grants. The grants are to help with the expenses of employees or children of employees who are continuing their education beyond high school. The recipients are Kierra Ellery, Aimée Green, Joelynn Lautenwasser and Jordan Rosier.

Members of the Grants Committee are independent living residents Tad Evans, Charlotte Finn, Moe England, Ralph Peterson, Lois Neumann, Elske Smith and Susan Dana, chair. After the applications were received and reviewed, the candidates were interviewed by pairs of committee members, and the decisions made in mid-May.

"This year's recipients are four very interesting young women with impressive resumé's, clear-eyed views of their goals and how they're going to get there," observed chair Susan Dana. "And it's also the first time, to my knowledge, that a horse has been part of an application!"

Jordan Rosier, who will graduate from Mt. Greylock high school this year, will begin pre-veterinary studies at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia, in the fall. Her horse, Vershire, will accompany her so they can join the college equestrian team. Jordan has been volunteering in a therapeutic equestrian program for children with

special needs, as well as being an excellent student. Her AP Calculus teacher has written that "Jordan is a dedicated student, a talented equestrian and a caring

person who gives back to her community." Her goal to become a veterinarian will require eight years of schooling.

Many of us know Kierra Ellery, a familiar, friendly face in the dining room. According to Lori Belknap, Mike Paglier's assistant in the Dining and Nutrition Department, she's also trained in many areas, as a



**Kierra**

dishwasher, cook/server and waitstaff for Pine Hill and the Pub. She also has a second job at Dunkin Donuts. Her supervisor there wrote, "I would rank Kierra as one of the best employees our company has had the privilege to employ. Optimistic, engaging and easy to get along with, Kierra is a true joy to have as an employee."

After graduating from Pittsfield High School, she started at Berkshire Community College in 2019 and plans to focus on nursing. Both she and her mother are attending college at the same time, Kierra says, and they "keep each other going as they work toward a better education and career path."

The COVID-19 pandemic put a crimp in Aimée Green's education plans, but she managed to make lemonade from the lemons supplied by the virus. Aimée works in many Kimball Farms areas, from security to the laundry, filling in where she's needed. A graduate of Lenox High School, she finished Berkshire Community College, studying Fine Arts, and moved on to MCLA (Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts) to work toward a degree in Fine Arts/Theater.

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**Jordan**

*(Grants, continued from page 1)*

When it appeared that her work in theater this year would be curtailed by virtual learning, she took a leave of absence from MCLA and signed up for cosmetology school. That sounds like a diversion from Visual Fine Arts with a focus on theater, but Aimée explains that the courses in special effects makeup and hairdressing will be useful as she returns to MCLA this fall to continue to preparing for a career in theater. Because she had a leave of absence, she is not eligible for financial aid this year. One of her professors commented that “Aimée showed great initiative, flexibility and leadership skills in her work ... thoughtful and assertive in the management of her [theater] team, communicating well with them.”

“This is the third year Aimée has been given a grant,” commented Tad Evans, who chaired the committee for many years, “and it’s been rewarding to see her progress.”

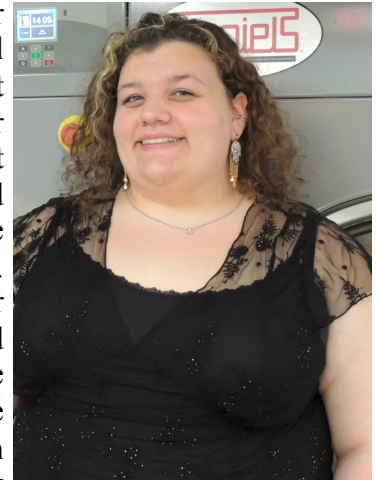
As a cook in the Kimball Farms kitchen, Joelynn Lautenwasser is rarely seen by residents, but her work is very appreciated. She and her husband (they were married last July) recently moved to the Berkshires to be near his father.



**Joelynn**

Joelynn has a degree in Food Service Management from Logan University in her home town of St. Louis, Missouri. Her goal is to become a Registered Dietitian, but to prepare for that program, she needed some additional science courses as prerequisites: microbiology, anatomy, physiology and advanced chemistry, for example. These online courses also come from Logan University, which has a history of affordable and highly rated online learning. Joelynn receives the materials she’ll need for each course packaged neatly in a briefcase-like box. For an anatomy course, the assignment involved dissecting a frog, which came freeze-dried in a plastic bag.

Joelynn took four courses in the fall semester, working at two jobs to pay her college costs. She is not eligible for financial aid from Logan because she already has a degree. Last semester, her husband took a second job so she would have more study time. In the semester which began in May, she will be taking three courses. She’s rated as an



**Aimée**

“exceptional” student by a Logan University professor, with an impressive grade point average. When she was a sous-chef in The Ballantyne Hotel’s restaurant, “The Gallery,” in Charlotte, North Carolina, her supervisor wrote that she was “a delight to work with, and I wouldn’t hesitate to hire her again.”

“We were all totally impressed by these young women,” said Susan Dana. “In our letter to them announcing the grants, we said that we knew that with the astronomical costs of higher education, our grants were a drop in the bucket. However, they all were very grateful for the help. “You can’t imagine what a difference this will make for me,” one of them said.

Thanks to all of the generous residents who contributed to the Spring Fund Drive. Your donations funded the grants that will support and encourage these outstanding women as they prepare for their chosen careers. We’ve asked them to keep us posted on their progress in the coming school year.

*Susan Dana*

## ***Gone Fishin’***

The Observer does not publish in July or August. We look forward to a fun summer for one and all. See you in September.



## President's Comments: Musicians Are Coming

June, my last column until September, and I am happy to report that there are no new restrictions on the horizon! There remains the need to observe social distancing and wear masks; when those practices change you will immediately be informed with messages in your cubbies and on Channel 1390. But for now, let me just list some of the good things that are happening.

Grab pen and paper and put these dates on your calendar:

On June 21 the Musicians of Ma'alwyck will present a mini-opera, *The Ship's Captain*. The production calls for three singers, each of whom will be from this year's Glimmerglass Opera Company, and three instrumentalists.



**Musicians of Ma'alwyck**

June 30 will feature music from operas by Auber, Bellini, Meyerbeer and Rossini.

Instrumentalists include violin, flute and guitar.

August 15 is the last definite musical event scheduled. This will be a Scottish program, based on poetry of Robert Burns, for two singers, violin, guitar and flute.

Each of these events will take place on the Parking Lot E lawn at 3 in the afternoon. More detailed information will be available shortly before each program.

Some of you will remember hearing the Musicians of Ma'alwyck last summer. They're based in Albany, New York's historic Schuyler Mansion, and have received high praise for their performances, many of which feature 18th- and 19th-century American music.

The Royal Garden Jazz Band will be back to perform in its inimitable musical style, date and time to be provided later.

Ozzie's Food Truck has already made one stop; another will be scheduled while the sky is blue and the sun is warm. Check 1390 regularly for time updates.

We hope there'll be trips to tell you about in the near future. Ann Cashen and her committee have come up with great ideas for outings and are eager to get started.

One of the tasks to be addressed in the fall will be establishment of a Nominating Committee and selection of officers and councilors for 2022. Kimball depends on resident volunteers for its activities to thrive. Speak up if you have some time to help. One spot that needs help right now is the Thrift Shop. Please call Michelle (7003) or Kissa (7156) if you can donate a few hours of your time.

Our reliance on volunteers leads me an opportunity to thank those residents who worked on our Spring Fund Drive; a full report on their efforts appears on elsewhere in this issue. Susan Dana and Arlene Potler were chairpersons, respectively, of the Staff Education Fund and Kimball Gives. Along with their committees they worked diligently to insure proper choices were made for both individuals and organizations who were recipients of your generous gifts.

The Display Case right opposite the Potting Shed is yet another example of Kimball volunteers at work. Sheila Smith and Lily Wayne, co-chairs of the committee responsible for its design and decoration, have created a garden party for us. Filled with elegant beribboned and flowered straw hats and picnic baskets, it's easy to picture ladies, parasols in hand, as their gentlemen companions carry the picnic baskets included in this spring fantasy. The Smith/Wayne dynamic duo received major support from resident floral designer and Administrative Secretary Sara Patella. Less visible but vital to the structure of the display were the clever pieces created by Reed Hand whose wood-crafting talents deserve major praise.

We are, happily, at a very different point in June 2021 from what we faced in June 2020.

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## ***But Is The Great Gatsby the Great Novel?***

Kimball Farms' newly formed Book Group, established by Administrative Secretary Sara Patella, has now made its way through a season of monthly meetings. Under Sara's guidance and with her essential help in obtaining books, we have kept attendance up to socially distanced limits. In April we discussed *The Great Gatsby*, by F. Scott Fitzgerald. The 1925 novel has just gone out of copyright, and adaptations of it are forthcoming. Our main focus was to discuss the present-day relevance of this Jazz Age classic after almost a century in print.

We found no distinct heroes, no unflawed characters this time around. Fitzgerald presented Jay Gatsby as guilty of the possibly forgivable crime of bootlegging, along with an obsession over a past love and a brief fling with adultery. Much more grievous in the author's perspective, and in ours, were the careless taking of a life, the casual cover-up, and two more deaths, all caused by selfish socialites Tom and Daisy Buchanan.

Even more striking to us today, in the midst of racial divides and hate crimes, were Fitzgerald's ironic references to Tom's fixation with the peculiar theories of white supremacy. In a more subtle way we saw the story's narrator, Nick Carraway, make some cruelly dismissive references to people of color. We also had to face the author's biased treatment of Jewish characters. They border on caricature, as do most of the people who show up, invited or not, at Gatsby's parties.

As the presenter of this episode, and a Fitzgerald enthusiast, I shared some recent notes from Wikipedia. There I learned that *The Great Gatsby* had great initial reviews and low initial sales. I also verified that the author himself is represented in both *Gatsby* and *Carraway*. There is much of Zelda Fitzgerald in Daisy, plus more than a hint of Ginevra King, an earlier love interest. I found evidence that Fitzgerald deliberately overloaded parts of the novel with the atmosphere of his own youth. Nick is immersed in sensations of grey tones, soft and bright colors, hot and cool weather, all described in excessive detail. Though not appreciated by every reader, such flights of poetic prose were to become

fodder for designers of stage and film. The book itself, however interpreted, continues to find its audience.

We found ourselves talking, thinking, disagreeing, in a mostly agreeable way. No one saw this book as the Great American Novel, but we recognized it as well worth the reading. We looked together at the last three paragraphs, one of us just racing to the finish. Returning to the theme of relevance, we looked at Nick's imagining of early Dutch sailors approaching the primal forested shores of Long Island Sound, where the Gatsby estate would be and "... for a transitory enchanted moment man must have held his breath in the presence of this continent ... face to face for the last time in history with something commensurate to his capacity for wonder." We judged this statement as outmoded, pointing out space flight with its views of Earth and moon. Perhaps we could have given more thought to the inclusion of women then and now.

Our discussion ended in considering, not solving, the paradox of Fitzgerald's last statement: "So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past." Sara suggested Ernest Hemingway's *The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber* as our next selection. As a group, however, we chose *The Old Man and The Sea*. Some of us think comparisons can be made between Hemingway and Fitzgerald. Some do not.

Mary Misch

### **(President, continued from page 3)**

I don't want to rain on anyone's parade but please, REMEMBER THAT THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC REMAINS STRONG; VACCINATIONS PROVIDE PROTECTION, BUT NOT IMMUNITY. DANGER FROM MUTATIONS REMAINS UNKNOWN. SOCIAL DISTANCING AND MASKING ARE NOT REQUIRED TO ANNOY YOU BUT TO KEEP YOU AND EVERYONE HERE SAFE. We haven't been lucky to be spared this disease; we've been spared because mostly all residents have followed guidelines.

Happy summer to each of you; keep smiling; notice something beautiful each day, and tell someone about it!

Dorothea Nelson



## ***LymphheDIVAS: a Breast Cancer Victim's Legacy***

The story of LymphheDIVAS began in 2005 in Philadelphia when our daughter Rachel, age 35, discovered a lump in her breast. She was diagnosed with triple negative Stage 3 breast cancer and immediately underwent surgery, chemotherapy and radiation. The treatment left her with a common side effect called lymphedema, which leads to a permanent swelling of the affected limb. Her doctor prescribed a compression sleeve to be worn for the rest of her waking life. It was coarse, thick, hot, medicinal, sweat-retaining, beige and ugly, and she despised it. She complained that no one could see her cancer but everyone could see that sleeve.

She wanted to know why it could not be like the compression garments she wore while competing in a triathlon, lightweight, breathable, with wicking capabilities and colorful. Her doctor said that there was no reason but that was what the industry had been making for 70 years. The industry was and is dominated by German and Swiss compression garment makers that generally made beige garments and bandages that felt and looked like her sleeve. Her doctor then suggested she make her own, and with that thought, LymphheDIVAS, "the medically correct fashion for lymphedema," was born. Rachel found Robin Miller and Kristin Dudley who were interested in working with her in developing this company.

Rachel researched and discovered a company, Invista (an offshoot of DuPont, in Wilmington, Delaware), with which she contracted to design the compression sleeve according to her specifications. By the end of the year, a knitting engineer there had developed the knitted sleeve and Invista agreed to temporarily be the supplier of garments to sell. The first colored sleeves arrived at the end of 2006. Products were going out the door by the beginning of 2007. LymphheDIVAS had won the business plan contest at

Drexel Business School and the company had six months in their business incubator.

Letters of appreciation began to wash into the office from women who thanked Rachel for the products that "saved their lives" and now they could "go out in public again."

Rachel said that she had gone into business to give women alternatives and if it turned out someone else provided this she would at least feel she had

accomplished her goal. This meant, besides providing compression sleeves that needed to be medically correct and fashionable, competing with large international companies that would not provide guidance for customers. When a customer called with a question or complaint, they were able to talk directly with Rachel.

Eight months after the introduction of the sleeves and a year after the announcement of their intention to offer colors, one of the large manufacturers announced their new product: lymphedema sleeves in colors.

By the middle of 2007 the cancer had recurred and although Rachel continued to work, the chemo and cancer were beginning to sap her strength. Howard and I began working in the office, which had moved to a spare room in her house.

By the end of the year, it was clear

she was dying and she called Howard to her bedroom and told him that LymphheDIVAS was "the most important thing I had done in my life," and as she lay on her bed she made him promise to try to carry on the business. Howard always said he knew something about medicine and business but knew nothing of manufacturing or fashion. He granted her wish to take over the company even though he thought that "maybe doing this might not be a good idea."

Rachel died in 2008 and Howard, who thought he

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**The author demonstrates her product**

*(LymphedIVAS, continued from page 5)*

would retire, was plunged into the world of a business startup at the age of 67 and began 50-hour work weeks, and our retirement funds were slipping away to cover operating shortfalls. The company founders had vision and fashion savvy but accounting was not their strength. During the first 18 months no one had bothered to balance the checkbook and some sleeves had gone out the door without being paid for. The accounting system had to be redone, a new lawyer needed to be hired, the freelance web developer was no longer servicing the web site, Invista was no longer willing to provide manufacturing services for sales and was charging too much for sales to be profitable anyway. We were based in Rachel's house, working the phone for orders, running off to Wilmington to get inventory and regular trips to the post office and FedEx to send off orders. As a clinical social worker I had few skills related to business, so my job in those days was to do the trimming of the sleeves as they came from the knitter in North Carolina and to package them and go to the post office to mail them.

Howard loved challenges. In fact, if you told him, "It can't be done," he set out to prove you wrong! Thus, not only was he able to find a new manufacturer in Rural Hall, North Carolina, but he balanced the books, hired new lawyers and in general helped the company grow.

The turning point was in 2009 when we hired Anna, a recent graduate in graphic design who designed our catalog and did other design work in addition to general production and sales. There was to be a meeting of the combined Young Survivors Coalition and Living Beyond Breast Cancer groups. Rachel had posthumously received an award from LBBC and Howard suggested to the groups that we would design a sleeve for the meeting, and if they would put it on their web site, we would donate money for each sleeve sold. Anna designed the pattern on the sleeve, her first attempt at fashion, and it has gone on to be one of our most popular prints and moved the company into the black, where it has stayed ever since!

By 2010 the company was doing well and had continued to grow but now Howard was 70 and had no exit strategy. Our son Josh approached us and said, "I'll take it over." He had suggested this in

2008 but at that time we were losing money and he had a real job in New York with a design company. However, now was the time and by mid-August he had replaced the office director and became half-owner and the new CEO.

Josh did have one requirement. He was recently engaged and said that he had always wanted to raise a family in the Berkshires but never knew what he would do for work, and now he knew: he wanted to move the company to the Berkshires. New worries: how could we afford a move? And what about the staff we had so carefully trained? How could we replace them in the Berkshires? However, Anna, our designer, decided to join us in the move.

The business continued to grow and we found even better staff here than before. We needed additional space to continue to grow, so in 2011 moved to 701 Housatonic Street in Pittsfield. As of this writing, the next move, in early 2022, will be to a new space in the Stationery Factory in Dalton!

Always listening to customers, Howard heard their request for a gauntlet (a fingerless glove) and a full-fingered glove. For three years he worked with the knitting machine company technician, who had sent him a letter stating that that "is ABOLUTELY NOT POSSIBLE." Fighting words for Howard. It took him another year, but HE DID IT!!!! The first seamless glove not "custom-made."

New obstacles got in the way, including the departure of the knitting machine manufacturer, leaving us with no machine to make the glove. We suddenly had to make a quick decision to buy one of the sophisticated flat knitting machines and its computer design system without knowing we had a product, or else give up. This required an investment of \$150,000 and getting someone to run the design system and machine. So Josh suggested a young woman, Vanita, who for the previous year had been our sales person and customer service rep. She had a degree in mechanical engineering and had had a job in Detroit working for GM designing bumpers. She decided on LymphedIVAS because she believed in our mission. When the job was suggested to her, she was heard to say, "OMG, I can use my degree."

With this we reintroduced industrial knitting into the Berkshires, ironically within a few hundred feet of the Central Block on North Street, which housed the

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*(LymphheDIVAS, continued from page 6)*

D.M. Collins knitting mill that had moved there. In fact, knitting and textiles had been a major industry in Pittsfield and the Berkshires.

LymphheDIVAS now has sales of over 35,000 items per year and employs 11 people in Pittsfield. Sales are primarily in the U.S. and Canada, but with distributors in Australia and U.K. we have expanded our product line to include gauntlets, full-fingered gloves and arm sleeves. We also have over 100 different prints/designs to choose from, with new designs added twice a year.

On August 26, 2011, we celebrated what would have been Rachel's 45th birthday, marked the event with a birthday sale at LymphheDIVAS and climbed Monument Mountain in Great Barrington. This had been one of Rachel's favorite hiking places. We reached the top with Josh and his wife Pam and their two dogs, Beau and Mazie. There, Josh received this email from one of our customers:

"If Rachel were alive I would thank her for taking her lymphedema into a pleasant experience for the rest of us who wear her colorful sleeves. It also gives me the opportunity to explain to people lymphedema as I see them stare at my arm probably wondering why a woman my age is wearing a tattoo or the like. Sadly, Rachel is no longer on earth; yet, I like to think she hears me. Every day I put on her sleeve, I say a prayer for her, a cure to breast cancer and more research on the disease, lymphedema."

Today LymphheDIVAS can be found in retail stores and on the web at LymphheDIVAS.com. We all hope that LymphheDIVAS compression apparel will continue to inspire breast cancer survivors everywhere to feel as beautiful, strong and confident as Rachel was.

*Judy Levin*

**Now and Then**

**To the delight and concern of many residents, this robin and her 5 chicks have set up housekeeping on top of the emergency phone in the entrance to Door B.**



**This was the barn on the 63-acre Kimball Horse Farm. The barn was torn down as part of the conversion of the Horse Farm as the site of the present Kimball Farms Lifecare facilities. The Horse Farm, in turn, was established on part of the site of Pinecroft, the extensive estate of one of Lenox's early "cottagers."**

***In Memoriam***

**Barbara Parker**

**August 28, 1926 to May 10, 2021**

**Jean Bussard**

**June 20, 1924 to May 17, 2021**





## Cityfolk Are Chameleons in Our Midst

*(This is an excerpt from my newly published booklet, *Lenox Vistas*. It is not for sale but I hope to have copies available in the Kimball Library.)*

The tour buses creep up the lumpy macadam, forcing two-way traffic to detour onto the margin of the narrow country road. On the curve at the crest of the hill, just before our house, the buses stop.

The view is a photograph waiting to happen. Scoured out by a glacier, then tamed by the hand of man, the valley has horses pasturing in the foreground, fields leading to the shining water of Parsons Marsh in the middle distance, and the Tanglewood campus at the horizon; beyond runs the ridgeline of October Mountain. In autumn the hills are aflame with color. Faces peer out of the bus's tinted windows. From outside they look like wraiths. Hardy souls pop out of the door, cameras at the ready. The idling engine wafts perfumes into the country air.

It was at such moments that my ex-neighbor – the one who used to live at the curve – would stand on his front porch and watch his toothless old black Lab waddle out to greet the out-of-towners.

“Here, killer!” he would holler in his best redneck drawl. “Don’t mess with them folks, killer!”

We are the Berkshires, proud of our cultural treasures, our lakes and hills. In season we have Tanglewood, Jacob’s Pillow, theater festivals, art museums and galleries, antique shoppes, golf, tennis, sailing, sightseeing planes, pricey inns and resorts, crowded restaurants and clogged roads. On Sunday afternoons at Tanglewood during concert season, the tour buses disgorge their occupants at the Main Gate and congregate in the designated lot, motors and air conditioning running in anticipation of the concert’s end. Most of these visitors are senior citizens, some appearing not quite sure why they are there. From Tanglewood they’re off to the restaurant, inn or next tourist shrine.

Culture and tourism: did two hungrier dogs ever feed from same bowl?

I’m cynical. No, I’m a year-rounder. I like it that visitors, sometimes by the thousands, spread their picnics and bodies out across the expanse of green of

the Tanglewood lawn, listening peacefully, or not at all, while music from the Shed wafts overhead. I like it that people are learning to love and share the art I love. I count second-homers among my fellow music lovers. They’re all good people, necessary for our tourism-based economy. But somehow – well, somehow they’re *not us*.

There’s a symbiosis at work here. Without the tourists and second-homers, our vaunted cultural attractions would lack for audiences, donors and board members – would go dead, that is, taking Main Street with them. We’re not innocent in this game. We locals know how to pluck a goose. We raise prices in the summer and stick it, tax-wise, to summer and weekend homes that send no children to our schools or otherwise burden our public services.

But I wonder about these shutterbugs who pop up like jacks-in-the-box, clicking off shots of a distant valley, a hundred musicians on a stage, or old houses like the manse where the spirit of Edith Wharton still writes, gardens and entertains Henry James. Do these people really see or hear what they came to see or hear? Do they read Wharton’s books? A recording will bring back the memory of a Beethoven symphony better than a photo can. But up they leap, smartphones raised high, like rows of trophies won at the track.

You’re in Norman Rockwell country up here, pardner. If Main Street, Stockbridge, looks like something he painted, it’s because he *did* paint it.

*Andy Pincus*

## Otherwise

Is there any point to think otherwise?  
When there really is no otherwise.  
Of course, I could have been a great artist  
Or ballet dancer or poet  
Or had six children who became  
Movie stars and politicians.  
I could bemoan the missed  
Opportunities to become a  
Professional golfer, opera singer,  
Or deep sea diver and  
A hundred other possibilities  
Or just accept that  
Being right here, right now, there is no  
Otherwise.

*Stephanie Beling, M.D.*

## Kimball Gives Allots \$4,575 to 6 Groups

It gives me great pleasure to report a change in the Spring Fund Drive results reported in the March 2021 Observer. After the books were closed on that fund-raising drive, more gifts came in. One anonymous gift of \$1,000 was dedicated to Kimball's Library; a separate substantial gift was provided for scholarships to be awarded to staff selected by Bill Kittler, at Sunset Nursing Home.

That good news left us with \$4,575.00 to distribute to selected organizations, less than we had hoped for but an important sum of money. While we sit back comfortably and safely and well cared for, there are others in our community who cannot say the same. Our available funds meant that some organizations we helped in the past, with reluctance had to be removed from our giving list.

Here are the final amounts that "Kimball Gives" is contributing to the following organizations.

Berkshire Immigrant Center	\$1,000.00
The Christian Center	1,500.00
Elizabeth Freeman Center	1,500.00
Railroad Street Youth Organization	<u>575.00</u>
Total	\$4,575.00

We thank those generous residents who contributed to the fund.

Arlene Potler, Chairperson; Nancy Curme, Ann Dorfman, Charlotte Finn, Moe England, Elske Smith, and Joyce Hovey, Secretary.

Arlene quotes Voltaire: "Every man is guilty of all the good they did not do."

*Arlene Potler and Dorothea Nelson*

## Getting Baby Started As World Traveler

After a long flight from NYC to the South Pacific with one- or two-day stopovers in Western Samoa, Fiji, French Polynesia and Sydney, we landed in Djakarta, Indonesia, and the Intercontinental Hotel, where a room had been reserved for us: me, my wife, Harriet, and our one-year-old baby with the adult

name of Lukas, named for a teenager in Austria (another adventure).

I was starting a year's work as a professor of English as a Second Language for the Indonesian Ministry of Education, evaluating their language teaching programs, reputed to be as ineffective as our own.

The hotel had added a new wing, still unfinished with no AC. Instead, a large window fan had been installed. With a year-round daily temperature of 87 degrees, the fan was useless. When we went to bed, I adjusted the fan from air flow out to in.

In the morning I discovered my child had transformed from baby to beet, more rounded than before and, yes, beet red from the bites of voracious insects delighted to feast on baby. The hotel physician said the bites would go away, and after much crying that the doc didn't have to deal with, they did, making Lukas immune forever to mosquito bites.

Traveling with small children, especially to exotic foreign lands, is not advised. Yet, other than minor mishaps just mentioned, Baby Lukas loved traveling. It filled his curiosity needs to the brim. His first word after birth in Austria, a pasture land of dairy herds, was "dow." Riding in a harness on my back up a jungle river in Sumatra, he waved to the hordes of brown children on the banks who were waving and screaming at the first and probably only blond white baby they would ever see. Scared my wife. To comfort her, I told her, "They only want to eat him."

The only truly life-threatening event occurred in the paradise of Bali, one of the gorgeous 4,000 islands of the country. We had reserved a room, actually a little fully-furnished grass hut, at one of the Bali resorts. We awoke one morning with Lukas tottering unsteadily around the room, looking like he was on drugs. The resort's doctor speculated that he had found a pill on the floor lost by an earlier occupant. The nonplussed MD advised us not to let him sleep and we took turns the next couple of hours holding and walking with him, crooning and cajoling him awake. He ultimately brightened out of his stupor and kicked whatever drug he had fed himself.

Our little world traveler grew up to be quite a man (you can Google him) and still loves to travel.

*Charlie Haynes*

## Laughter Helps Healing, and That's No Joke

*Anatomy of an Illness*, by Norman Cousins, published in 1979, is the first book by a patient that speaks to our current interest in taking charge of our own health. It started a revolution in the use of humor to boost the body's capacity for healing. He recounts that during his recovery from a chronic, progressive and painful disease, he discovered that just 15 minutes of laughter while watching old Marx Brothers and Laurel and Hardy movies provided several hours of pain-free sleep — something that medications had not been able to do.

Humor has long been recognized as a useful tool for maintaining good health and a sense of well-being. Today's medical research recognizes that this ancient strategy is physically and psychologically beneficial. Humor has an important role in the healing arts — and is indeed a therapeutic tool. Humor can help patients relieve the anxiety and tension of a stressful situation. It provides the sense of control over the uncontrollable. Bringing out the comical or absurd side of something that's frightening makes the threat seem less dangerous.

Until recently, the therapeutic uses of humor have been largely ignored by mainstream health professionals. Physicians, nurses and other health practitioners often take themselves too seriously and underestimate the need to alleviate the undue burden of anxiety and fear imposed on an individual during times of illness. However, more and more health professionals are now getting into the act. They are beginning to recognize that humor can reduce patients' anxiety, open up communication, give support and serve as a safety valve for patient frustration and anger. Several hospitals have in fact introduced humor into the healing process by establishing humor therapy rooms equipped with funny games, records, books and movies. It is widely acknowledged that positive emotions such as hope, faith, love, laughter and the will to live are vital to the treatment of critically ill patients. Remember, the healing process is two-sided. We must combine the best that medical science has to offer with the patient's own resources of optimism, faith and purpose.



Although humor may not be a cure for all ills, it has valuable benefits that have long gone unrecognized. Many research studies show that laughter has a profound connection with the physiological state of the body. Hearty laughter increases the heart rate and respiratory activity. Laughter, in fact, stimulates many systems of the body, including the immune system. It decreases stress hormones and increases immune cells and infection-fighting antibodies, thus improving your resistance to disease. Laughter often leads to coughing, which helps in cleaning of the lungs, and this may reduce the risk for pneumonia, especially in hospitalized patients.

A good laugh causes the brain to release certain chemicals called endorphins which produce a euphoric effect and often provide a great sense of pain relief. The perception of pain is also reduced because attention is drawn away from it. Muscle tension is decreased during laughter — just try holding onto something tightly, or even standing up straight, when the next belly laugh hits. This may explain why a headache caused by unconsciously produced muscular tension is often relieved following a humorous experience. Laughing also provides some good exercise. Muscles in the face, arms, legs, stomach and diaphragm get a good workout — remember the aching tummy that follows a great guffaw. No wonder Norman Cousins called laughing “internal jogging.”

Here are just a few more unique benefits:

- Laughter relaxes the whole body. A good hearty laugh relieves physical tension and stress, leaving your muscles relaxed for up to 45 minutes afterwards.
- Laughter lightens anger's tight grip. Looking at the funny side can put problems into perspective and enable you to move on from confrontations without holding onto bitterness or resentment.
- Laughter may even help you live longer. A study in Norway found that people with a strong sense of humor outlived those who don't laugh as much. The difference was particularly notable for those battling cancer.

*(continued on next page)*



**(Laughter, continued from page 10)**

Now that entire seasons of Johnny Carson, Lucille Ball, Sid Caesar and others are available on YouTube, and monologues of our late-night comedians are everywhere on the internet, perhaps we could all begin to enjoy these brilliant comedians and lighten up to get the benefits of laughter while still in good health.

*Stephanie Beling, M.D.*

## **Hearing Aids and Glasses, Who Could Want More?**

*(This goodie has been kicking around the web for some time but it's worth another spin.)*

To commemorate her birthday, actress/vocalist Julie Andrews made a special appearance at Manhattan's Radio City Music Hall for the benefit of the AARP. One of the musical numbers she performed was *My Favorite Things* from the legendary movie *The Sound of Music*. Here are the lyrics she used (If you **sing** it, it's especially hysterical).

Botox and nose drops and needles for knitting,  
Walkers and handrails and new dental fittings,  
Bundles of magazines tied up in string,  
These are a few of my favorite things.

*Cadillacs and cataracts, hearing aids and glasses,  
Polident and Fixodent and false teeth in glasses,  
Pacemakers, golf carts and porches with swings,  
These are a few of my favorite things.*

When the pipes leak, when the bones creak,  
When the knees go bad,  
I simply remember my favorite things,  
And then I don't feel so bad.

*Hot tea and crumpets and corn pads for bunions,  
No spicy hot food or food cooked with onions,  
Bathrobes and heating pads and hot meals  
they bring,*

*These are a few of my favorite things.*

Back pain, confused brains and no need for sinnin',  
Thin bones and fractures and hair that is thinnin',  
And we won't mention our short shrunken frames,  
When we remember our favorite things.

When the joints ache, When the hips break,  
When the eyes grow dim,  
Then I remember the great life I've had  
And then I don't feel so bad.

*(She received a standing ovation from the crowd that lasted over four minutes.)*

## **Birthdays!**

### **Fifteen residents celebrate birthdays in June.**

There is an 18-year spread between the youngest and oldest celebrant. **June** birthdays belong to:

**Dorothy Angeli, Donald Richter, Ellie Chandler, Nancy Gillespie, Christine Johnson, Audrey Giroux, Tad Evans, Marilyn Hunter, Dolores Morin, John Cheney, Doane Perry, Lynn Leavitt, Leo Goldberger, Cy Henry and Larry Greenapple.**

### **Twenty-three residents celebrate birthdays in July.**

There is a 20-year spread between the youngest and oldest celebrant. **July** birthdays belong to:

**Ann Dorfman, Margot Yondorf, Sheila Keator, Sally Block, Patti Frumkes, Bill Jones, Penny Noepel, Mary Taylor, Mary Buhr, Frank McCarthy, Andy Pincus, David Dery, Helen Fink, Carol Walker, Suzanne Martin, Annette Thoubboron, Diana Redfern, Dorothy Smith, Heidi Stormer, Priscilla Anthony, Gerald Drew, Miriam Bergman and Richard Freiberg**

### **Sixteen residents celebrate birthdays in August.**

There is a 16-year spread between the youngest and oldest celebrant. **August** birthdays belong to:

**Sheila Smith, Milt Fink, Donnie Stanley, Ursula Mahoney, Harriet O'Neal, Bernie Handler, Jean Green, Susan Wojtasik, Shirley Rubenstein, Hans Fehlmann, Fred Feuerbach, Dan Block, Jane Cullen, Alice Bomer, Lavinia Meeks and Mellie Johansen**

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

## Is This Stuff Confetti? A Pandemic Mystery

When the challenges of the pandemic are over, what do you think you'll remember? Certainly the loneliness and pain of separation from families, not being able to hug or even shake hands with grandchildren and friends, or the fear of exposure to the COVID virus.

But in addition to emotional memories, there are things that we'll remember: masks, certainly; jars of hand sanitizer, from purse-size to gallons; bright, shiny bracelets issued to staff and visitors every day; and trash — a lot of trash from the containers in which meals were delivered to our apartments.

And then there are these things:



Can you guess what they are?

In 1979, the author and illustrator David Macaulay wrote and drew illustrations for a book called *The Motel of the Mysteries*. The fanciful plot takes place in the year 4042 in the ancient country of Usa, which has been buried for centuries many feet deep under layers of detritus, which looks very like junk mail. An amateur archeologist named Howard Carson falls into a shaft in the surface and discovers what he is sure is an ancient tomb. He proceeds to draw totally incorrect conclusions about what he has found at the “burial site,” treating it as if it were King Tut’s tomb.

For example, we recognize instantly that it is a motel room, complete with “Do Not Disturb” sign hanging on the doorknob. Howard finds two skeletons, one lying on an altar-like platform (bed) holding a communications device (remote control), and

another skeleton in a “highly polished white sarcophagus in a small adjacent room which also contains a white, highly polished “sacred” urn. On the urn is a round, ceremonial artifact that is apparently meant to be worn as a crown by the priests at this sacred site.

Thanks to the clever illustrations, we have no problem identifying the treasures Macaulay describes in the bathroom.

To return to the white ovals in our photograph, here are some hints: they’re made of thin, white plastic. They’re commonly found on the floor, often appearing about meal time, and appear in almost every hallway of Kimball Farms.

The amateur archeologist in David Macaulay’s book might see them as ceremonial offerings to some sacred deity, or a new form of confetti, or perhaps a durable substitute for breadcrumbs scattered by new residents, like Hansel and Gretel, so they can find their way back to their apartments. Perhaps they’re hanging chads, left over from ballot counting in an election. We’d be happy to hear your explanations!

In truth, the white ovals come from the plastic bags in which meals are delivered. When the bags are made, the ovals are punched in three places in the bags, to make slots so that a large quantity of the bags can be put on three-pronged wire holders for storage, and easily removed, one at a time, when they are needed.

*Susan Dana*

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