



The

Kimball Farms



Observer



Volume 27, Number 3

Forward, March!

March 2020

Cultural Attractions Lead Wish List

We want more trips to the theater. We want regular OLLI courses. We want a successor to Professor Ferraro.

We want less congestion in the dining room.

We want the Pinnacle open longer hours. A new seamstress would be welcome, too.

These are a few of the items on Michelle Rosier's looking-into list as a result of the seven focus groups she held in late January. Each attracted a full house of 10 to 12 residents and left her with cultural and practical needs to consider.

"I tried to pick everybody's brain about why there seems to be a drop-off in attendance for trips," Michelle told The Observer. One woman told her, "We're just too old." But many others "were interested in doing theater type trips as opposed to the types of trips we're offering. So we'll look at that."

It could mean more trips to Jacob's Pillow and to Barrington Stage matinees.

"OLLI was a big thing. People were very disappointed that we didn't have OLLI here last fall." The fall semester was missed because of a scheduling conflict. But, Michelle reported, the classes are returning in April, and going forward, "we anticipate that we should be able to do spring, summer and fall barring any unforeseen conflicts." Winter has to be skipped because of snow-season parking problems.

Not so easily solved is finding a current-affairs lecturer like Vinnie. Michelle will soon begin a search for a speaker.

In response to requests for adding hours to the Pinnacle Store operation, a trial will begin March 2 with the store remaining open on Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons until 3 p.m. Freshly brewed coffee will be available and purchases may be made during this time. "We will evaluate the usage over a 4- to 6-week period to see if the additional hours are being used by residents. Store hours on Saturday will be taken into consideration for a future possibility."

In-house music was an issue. The consensus was for more popular and a little less classical. And some concerts will be scheduled on Sunday afternoons before dinner instead of evenings.

Book and poetry discussion groups were on some residents' minds. Others wanted more movie outings to a theater, a return of the 92nd Street Y showings, a list of Berkshire volunteering opportunities, and a list of car services to places like airports. All will receive scrutiny.

"Everybody" was pleased with existing exercise opportunities, but a return of the mindfulness meditation class and an additional tai chi class are wants.

And a group of new residents, mostly single women, felt "intimidated" by things like going to dinner alone. It's like starting a new school and trying to fit in, Michelle said. Social worker Jackie Tripicco is starting a group so newbies can meet to discuss experiences and support one another.

Michelle is preparing a fuller report on the suggestions made. It might be in your hands by now.

Andy Pincus



**2016 trip to the
Pittsfield Carousel**

Good Luck Strikes Again for Raffle Winner Charlotte

Resident Charlotte Finn isn't shy about her good luck: "I often win things," she proclaimed after her name was announced as the winner of the Knitters Group afghan raffle at the Valentine's Day party on February 14 in the Kimball Farms auditorium.

The afghan was knitted by 12 members of the Knitters Group of 100% Merino Superwash wool. It's made up of 20 different 12-inch squares, with a cabled border. A mathematically inclined knitter has estimated that the afghan contains about 97,000 stitches.

Proceeds from the raffle tickets totaled

more than \$460 and will be donated to the Elizabeth Freeman Center, which provides emergency shelter and services to abused women and families throughout Berkshire County. Many thanks to everyone who bought tickets, and especially to receptionists at the main desk and in the Pinnacle Store who took charge of the ticket sales.

The party was festive and fun. Bonnie's Bells, the bell ringers group, opened the program of love songs with "Bicycle Built for Two," followed by a sing-along led by the Kimball singers directed by John Cheney. The program of love songs ranged from the old ("Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree") through Elvis Presley's "Love Me Tender."

The raffle was held just before the last song, and John was chosen to draw the winning ticket from the "elegant" container (a plastic bucket). A beautifully arranged display of Valentine sweets and treats was soon reduced to crumbs. Many thanks to Michelle Rosier for her thoughtful and delicious arrangements for the Valentine's Day celebration.

Susan Dana

On Track to \$23,300

The co-chairs of the Residents' Association 2020 spring fund drive (Marilyn Rossier and Susan Dana) hope that the goal of \$23,300 will have been reached by March 15. At this writing, we're on track for success, with donations of \$8,030, and we are very grateful for your support.

About 25% of the Association budget supports resident activities: Art in The Halls, supplies for art classes, bridge games, the residents' computer, the Kimball Farms Library, Music Committee programs, and the Potting Room.

The remaining 75% goes to help others, with donations to the Staff Education Grants; the Town of Lenox Library and police, fire and ambulance departments; the Lenox Memorial High School Scholarship Fund, the holiday Adopt a Family program organized by the Lenox Community Center; and the Kimball Farms "Kimball Gives" committee.

Residents who volunteer to serve on the Kimball Gives committee explore, evaluate and then choose among many Berkshire County charitable agencies which work on behalf of children and adults. In 2019, donations went to Central Berkshire Habitat for Humanity, the Food Bank of Western New England, Volunteers in Medicine (VIM), Berkshire Immigrant Center, Tapestry Health, 18 Degrees (formerly Berkshire Children and Families), and the Elizabeth Freeman Center.

It's not too late to make your contribution. Any and all donations are gratefully received. Your check, made out to the Kimball Farms Residents' Association, can be put in treasurer Mike Brown's mailbox, #266. Many, many thanks for your support.

Susan Dana

Book Club Forming

Notice to all interested readers:

There will be a sign-up sheet in the hall starting Monday, Feb 24, for those interested in a Kimball Farms Book Club, scheduled to meet in the conference room once monthly beginning on Wednesday, March 18, at 2:30.

Marilyn Hunter

From Teenagers to Seniors: Meet Fay

Newly appointed Marketing Outreach Coordinator Fay Parker has worked with adolescent girls for the last 13 years, but now it's time for a change, with a new demographic at Kimball Farms. The goal of her position is to increase the awareness of community business leaders and professionals of the advantages of a continuing care community for people over 65, generating referrals to Kimball Farms. Fay will also be spending a few hours a week assisting Activities Director Nene Asilijoe in the Pine Hill and Life Enrichment Program activities.

"Most of my career has been working with teenagers," Fay said, "even acting in loco parentis, at Miss Hall's School, but it's time for a different experience. I'm looking forward to meeting many residents."



Fay's family (she has two brothers) moved to Lenox from Pittsfield when she was in fifth grade. She went to Lenox schools and then attended Bethany College in West Virginia where she earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in English.

And she still lives in Lenox, now with her husband, Terry Moore, owner of the Old Mill restaurant in South Egremont. "Tanglewood is my love," Fay said when asked about favorite Berkshire places. She has been a volunteer for many years, and last summer worked in the Glass House shops. "All the patrons were wonderful," she said. "Last summer the favorite purchases were raincoats and sweatshirts to cope with the weather."

And when she's not at Tanglewood, Fay's favorite place is outdoors, cross-country skiing or just walking. "I often walk the perimeter of Tanglewood,

and through town on Cliffwood Street and Undermountain Road. I'm outside as much as possible," she reports.

When she has to be indoors, Fay is an enthusiastic reader. She's recently finished *West with the Night*, the memoir by Beryl Markham, which she highly recommends.

At Miss Hall's, a boarding and day high school for girls in Pittsfield, Fay was primarily involved with Horizons, a unique program for 11th-grade students, connecting them with off-campus, volunteer community service opportunities. Combined with an innovative classroom component, Fay recounts, the students at Miss Hall's, who come from all over the world, are exposed through Horizons to the wider world: "Prospective parents are impressed with the opportunities for their daughters to be exposed to arts and human service programs through Horizons' network of community organizations."

"I think there are many similarities between my role with the Horizons program and Kimball Farms' goals in creating relationships in the community," she continued, "and I'm looking forward to this opportunity."

Susan Dana

Trips

Sunday March 1,	Bus at 1pm
Clark Art Museum "Free Day"	
Wednesday March 11,	Time TBD
Hyde Collection, Glens Falls, NY	
Thursday March 12,	Bus at 5:45pm
"Let's Eat Out" Café Adam, Great Barrington	
Friday March 13,	Bus at 6:15pm
Berkshire Symphony Concert, Williams College	
Saturday March 14,	Bus at 12:15p
Met Opera in HD, Mahaiwe	
Wednesday March 18,	Bus at 9:15am
Spring Bulb Show, Smith College	

President's Comments: Volunteering's Rewards

Many residents refer to Kimball Farms as a cocoon. That word defines us as "being enveloped or surrounded in a comforting way," not a condition many of us sought during our long years of living "cocoon-less."

No one wants to give up comfort and safety, but a lot of our residents have expressed a wish for a life apart from Kimball, providing connection with what keeps this area ticking beyond our walls. With that in mind, we've sought out information about some of the myriad opportunities in and around Lenox for volunteers.

The list of agencies, museums, schools and organizations that need help is long and varied. Not surprisingly, several of our residents are involved. There are too many options to include in this article but I'd like to mention a few.

From Dave Vacheron we learn: "I always planted flower gardens at my homes and liked using the flowers for arrangements. My wife Nan and I volunteered together at Tanglewood and The Mount and then years ago joined the flower arranging committee at Shakespeare & Company I will continue on the committee as we have a close-knit group who enjoy working together."

Another long-time volunteer is one of Kimball's newcomers, Joyce Hovey. For 25 years she's been an English as a Second Language (ESL) tutor through the Literacy Network of South Berkshire. It is, she says, "a real learning experience" and she wonders "who is helping whom!" Susan Dana and Andy Pincus also donate their time and skills to this endeavor.

One of the most pressing global issues facing us today is climate change. A local chapter of the national Citizens Climate Lobby (CCL) welcomes help.

Yet another group that can always use a helpful volunteer hand is the Humane Society. They operate Catwalk Boutique on Church Street in Lenox, a store run by volunteers; proceeds of all sales are given to the Humane Society. Lily Wayne is a dedicated volunteer with this group.

This is by no means a comprehensive list of volunteer possibilities. Public schools are grateful for seniors who will work one-on-one with children, providing them a willing ear, help with the three R's which, despite exponentially increasing technology dominant today, remain a vital part of learning.

You don't need reminders that there are museums in need of guides. I won't even mention Tanglewood because its huge presence is a volunteer capital in this region. Ask Carol Walker about her 40 years as a volunteer there; she'll regale you with some novel experiences and so very many joyful ones.

If there is anyone here who finds life on the empty side and the days dreary, consider the words of T. H. White:

"The best thing for being sad is to learn something. That's the only thing that never fails. You may grow old and trembling in your anatomies, you may lie awake at night listening to the disorder of your veins, you may miss your only love, you may see the world about you devastated by evil lunatics, or know your honour trampled in the sewers of baser minds. There is only one thing for it then — to learn. Learn why the world wags and what wags it. That is the only thing which the mind can never exhaust, never alienate, never be tortured by, never fear or distrust, and never dream of regretting. Learning is the only thing for you. Look what a lot of things there are to learn."

Dorothea Nelson

A Mystery Explained

As I posed Doane and Karen in front of the Pinnacle Store for their *Observer* photo (page 5), Doane suddenly asked, "Why Pinnacle?" Nobody knew. A rush trip to the Library produced the answer. From the Local History shelf Librarian Barbara Parker brought forth a 1995 essay titled *Kimball Farms — Origin of Names for*, by Harry J. Cooney. It gives the origins of a number of the names applied to Kimball Farms locations. W.D. Curtis, who built the Curtis Hotel at the corner of Main and Walker Streets, lived on the Pinnacle Farm, at the crest of Hubbard Street just east of the Route 7 bypass. The property still exists a few hundred feet beyond the bypass as a large open field with a small red barn and a white house at the back.

Ned Dana

World Travels Lead Back to Kimball

Two outgoing and energetic people, Doane Perry Karen Carmean, moved into Apartment 149 early in January, next door to where Doane's mother, Helen Perry, used to live. Karen began life in San Francisco and grew up in Tacoma, Washington. Doane spent his childhood in eastern Massachusetts.

Doane grew up in Hingham, the son of Tod Perry, manager of the Boston Symphony. On summer visits to Tanglewood, he remembers riding horseback on what is now Kimball. He went on to Exeter and then to Yale. After graduation he taught at Anatolia College in Greece and went to graduate school in Berlin.

Doane entered the Peace Corps and was in Uganda, where he gathered prehistory from his students from all over Uganda. He became a leader in the Boston Area Returned Peace Corps organization and Vice Chair of the National Peace Corps Association Board, and is still collecting movies of and about Peace Corps. He says he is an "explorer of people." Mountains, too; he climbed Kilimanjaro.

Back in the United States, he taught social studies at the United Nations' International School, in Newton, and at LaSalle College. He was president of the Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Association. He consulted on cable and telecommunications and joined IDC (International Data Corporation) and DEC (Digital Equipment Corporation).

Karen came east to study at Vassar. In high school she spent a year as an exchange student in Switzerland and traveling to visit families in Europe. She also worked with Native American children, recruiting them to a migrant school and working at a Native American office of the Office of Economic Opportunity. She graduated with a major in history

and after a "grand summer" in Florence, Italy, she became a teacher in Weston, outside of Boston.

Karen is an organizer and thinker in systems, particularly as they pertain to people. She helped teachers transition out of teaching into fields where they found work and did program and organizational development for a group of schools.



**Doane and Karen with pheasant sculpture
(donated by Meta Ukena)**

The digital world discovered her. She became a manager of training and development for DEC. Then, for 20 years she was disabled and unable to sit, and got involved in Cambridge politics, tree care, climate, poetry and art.

Karen and Doane's is a blended family. He has a son, Tod, a PhD from Harvard working in renewable energy, and a step-daughter, Betsy, working in the schools in Rockland County, New York. Together they have a son Curt, a MD PhD in

immunology at Yale. They also had a blended business, a bed and breakfast. At one time they owned two – one in Cambridge and one in Richmond. Their faces light up when they talk of the joy of meeting people from all over the world who came to stay with them. They are Quakers.

Doane is a photographer with a wonderful record of his travels. Karen is a painter in oils. She likes to paint with non-toxic materials. Karen's mother was a painter, too, who died in 1972 as a result of suicide. Karen believes that this pain is important to talk about and wanted her history shared with you. Active in the community, Doane is on the West Stockbridge Select Board and both are in the Guild of Berkshire Artists. (They are keeping their West Stockbridge home.) Happy to be here, Karen says she is here for physical, social and intellectual security. Doane says they are experiencing "early-onset Paradise."

Marilyn Rossier

Spring Will Soon Be Here. Let's Think About Falls

Hello and Happy Spring (almost)! By way of introduction, I am Dr. Tom Consolati, an internist at Suburban Medical Associates in Lee. For the past decade or so, I've had the pleasure of serving as medical director of the Walker Street Campus of Kimball Farms as well as the Nursing Care Center on Sunset Avenue. In addition, I've had the distinct honor of caring for many of you as your primary care physician. In all of these roles, I work closely with the entire clinical team of both campuses, and we meet regularly to discuss various health-related issues important to the Kimball Farms community.

I'm writing to you now to call attention to a problem we've been working on for years: falls. You may not realize it, but we meet monthly to review falls and try to discern trends and opportunities for prevention. Unfortunately, the number of falls that occur on our campus and, more importantly, the severity of the injuries sustained as a result of those falls, has been essentially stable over the past few years. Further, we've noticed an alarming rate of falls occurring outside of residents' apartments and outside of the buildings of our campus. As winter breaks and all of you become more active both inside and outside of our facilities, the rate of falls typically increases. The clinical leadership team would like to present some ways to mitigate your chance of falling and becoming injured.

First, there are some easy (and well proven) ways to lessen your fall risk in your apartment. It is important that the walkways in your apartment are well lit and free of clutter. Make sure you have a working night light and walkways are free of scatter rugs, coffee tables, electric cords, small objects, etc. Also, work to ensure commonly used objects are within easy reach to avoid bending over, reaching and using step stools. Rocking chairs, chairs with wheels, and beds at increased height promote falls as do slippery/silky bed clothes and bed linens. Finally, the warm water of a shower often makes people feel dizzy. A shower chair can provide a rest and prevent a fall – let us know if you need advice on how to acquire one.

Second, when traveling outside of your apartment or outside of the building, there are several habits you can develop to help keep yourself safe. Be sure to take any assistive device such as a cane or walker

which has been prescribed for you. Ideally, a walker with a basket can help keep your hands free to aid your balance. When leaving the building, be sure to take advantage of escorts to help get in and out of cars and navigate curbs, doors, etc. When possible,



use elevators rather than stairs. Clothing is crucial. Bifocals are particularly dangerous as are shoes without proper backing such as slippers and flip-flops. Make sure all

your clothing is comfortable and fits properly.

Third, there are some simple lifestyle changes that can greatly lessen the likelihood of a fall. First, take advantage of the strength and balance classes offered on campus. Everyone stumbles from time to time. Those with good leg strength and good balance catch themselves; those without leg strength and balance keep on tumbling! Pay attention to all prescribed and over-the counter medications. Many can cause fatigue, cognitive dysfunction and dizziness. If you experience any of these symptoms, talk with your health care provider.

A special word about alcohol. Alcohol, in and of itself, greatly increases fall risk. When outside of the building, the risk is exponential. When traveling outside of the building, you may exert yourself more than usual causing significant fatigue, you are likely to have to navigate curbs and uneven ground, you may be traveling at night when vision is difficult, and you are likely moving in and out of cars. Each of these things further increases fall risk – add a few drinks and it's easy to see a fall waiting to happen.

I hope this is helpful and I wish you all a happy and healthy spring. Please let a member of the clinical team know if you have any questions or need any assistance.

Thomas Consolati, MD



Lots of Advising, Less Consent

(First of two parts)

It began sometime in 1960.

Allen Drury, a staff reporter in the New York Times D.C. office, published a novel he'd been working on for years, adding a few hundred words each day. When he reached well over 700,000 words, he sent it to an agent, who sent it to Doubleday, who published it. It won the Pulitzer Prize that year.

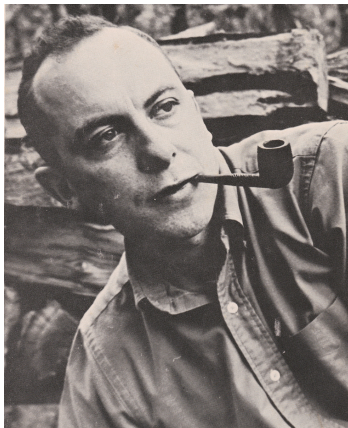
Drury had been wooed by a number of Broadway producers but distrusted them all. He had read the reviews of William Gibson's play *Two for the See-Saw* and decided Gibson might be the one to adapt *Advise and Consent* for the stage. He called Gibson and offered him the job.

Gibson, who was at that time writing what would be a highly successful stage adaptation of his own earlier *Playhouse 90* drama, *The Miracle Worker*, was thus unavailable.

However, Gibson told Drury that he had seen a recent *Playhouse 90* production called *Project Immortality*,

thought it was beautifully written and whoever wrote it might be a good prospect for *Advise and Consent*. Gibson gave Drury my name, told him he could not tell from "Loring" whether I was a man or a woman, and sent him on a search for me. I managed to clarify that for Bill Gibson much later.

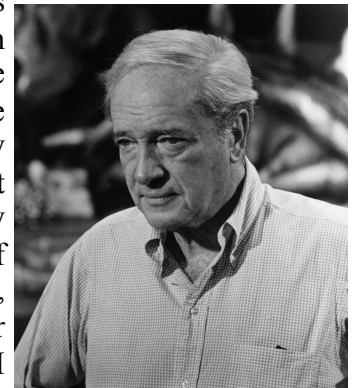
Drury found me, asked me to read his book and then meet with him in the lobby of a nondescript hotel in New York's Murray Hill district. A few days later, we met.



Allen Drury

Allen was a tall and essentially shy man, very businesslike. We discussed his book, then I left. Later, my agent called to say that I had been selected to do the adaptation, and Drury had imposed on an established Producing Team to use me, or he would take the property elsewhere. Soon, I was contractually tethered to the Fryer and Carr production company and we were off to an erratic and extraordinary ride.

I'll skip the protracted meetings with lawyers, Drury's editor at Doubleday, and the less-than-thrilling confidence of Fryer and Carr, with their newest partner, John Herman, exhibited toward this untested playwright. I was fortunate to get Franklin Schaffner, my Studio One director and friend, to be signed on as the play director. And I wasn't present for many meetings where a cadre of other talents were signed, including the costumer and the scenic designer. I was home, rereading the novel until I could usually give the page number when asked for a moment within the 600 pages.



Frank Schaffner

When I had totally absorbed the novel, I had become fully appreciative of its strengths and concerns about its limitations. The strategy going forward was to make up a list of questions for Drury, probing the histories, motivations and characters I would be writing: some were murky to me, especially the women in the story. And we invited Allen to come to our home for a work session followed by Dorothy's excellent dinner.

The work session was a failure. Drury had created his characters as a pastiche of the many real political creatures he had been reporting on for the *Times*. He could add nothing to my understanding or inner life of his characters. I realized then that what I was writing was not an Ibsen drama but a melodrama.

As part of my research, I moved into Allen's house on a bank of the Potomac. It was not a relaxed few days; I found him a man somewhat alienated from the D.C. scene, quiet and ungiving of personal details.

(continued on next page)

(Mandel, continued from page 7)

Years later, Allen had come out as homosexual, moved with a partner to Tiberon, California, to live a happier life. What bothered me about Allen, which eventually caused a problem, was this: he had been given a six-month vacation from the *Times* and a promotion to Political Columnist. Allen accepted it all, but secretly negotiated with *The Reader's Digest* for more money and never told the *Times*. This led to a series of negative reviews in the *Times*, for the book, the play, and Preminger's film, which they called "slickly meretricious." A newspaper publisher friend once told me, "Editors have long memories."

Through his connections, I met and spent time with many senators and congressmen, became a fixture in the office of Senator Ted Kennedy, and got to know the correspondents who covered the Hill. Heady stuff.

Music & Entertainment

Tuesday March 3 7:30pm
Royal Garden Jazz Band

Monday March 9 7:30pm
Education Committee Program

Wednesday March 11 7:30pm
PHS Chamber Orchestra

Monday March 16 7:30pm
Euclid Quartet

Tuesday March 17 10:00am
Annual St. Paddy's Day Party

Monday March 23 7:30pm
Education Committee Program

Saturday, March 28 7:30pm
Francesca Anderegg, violin
Matthew McCright, piano

Movies – mostly Saturdays and Wednesdays at 7:30pm

March 4, 7, 10(Tu), 14, 18(We), 21, 25, 27(Fr)



By

Stephanie Beling, M.D.

Stress: a Little Goes a Long Way

Yes, there is good kind of stress and it has a name – hormetic stress. The word “hormetic” and its close relative “hormesis” were new to me but not the concept of stress in small doses making you more resilient, robust and able to adjust to omnipresent change. The term hormesis refers to the beneficial effects of low doses of stressors such as strenuous exercise, food limitation, heat or cold stress, free radicals from oxidative metabolism, and even phytochemicals from our healthy fruits and vegetables.

In 1887, German physiologist Hugo Schulz discovered that disinfectants in large doses killed yeast, but in small doses actually stimulated yeast growth. The mechanism of this phenomenon appears to be an ability to become stronger or more numerous to maintain balance in a challenging environment. Since the original publication of these findings there has been extensive research into the benefit of hormetic stress on health and longevity.

This research extends across species from fruit flies, worms, sponges, mice, rats, dogs, monkeys and on up to humans, all with the same results. Subjecting the body to manageable stress with ample time for recovery prevents or delays illness and extends life span. How does this work?

Laboratory tests following a bout of strenuous weight lifting would show an increase in inflammation and oxidative stress, cortisol levels would be high and tiny tears would be found in muscle fibers. These would all be signals for the muscles to repair themselves and with adequate rest they would come back stronger than before. That is the basis for improving with exercise.

(continued on next page)

(Stress, continued from page 8)

Food restriction is another major stress but for many of us it's not one that we experience very often. Yet calorie restriction, skipping meals and intermittent fasting have many benefits, including reducing belly fat and increasing insulin sensitivity. Blood sugar and fat levels improve, your waistline shrinks and lifespan is extended. It's not just about promoting leanness but giving your cells a chance to clean themselves up by eliminating or recycling the accumulated waste.

Another "good" stress, quite popular in Scandinavian countries, is exposure to heat and cold. We're familiar with the images of people going from a hot sauna to a freezing lake and extolling the feeling of energy and well-being that follows. These benefits occur because the immune system cells are activated at higher body temperatures (up to 104 degrees) and studies have shown that there is an increase in antioxidant activity after ice bathing.



I once sat in a hot tub at 104 degrees for about 15 minutes followed by a knee-high walk through 20 feet of ice water based on the same health promoting idea and concluded "hot tub yes, ice water walk no." I've thought about this a bit more and have decided that there is no possible health benefit that would induce me to jump into a freezing lake or even take a cold shower.

Another hormetic stress near and dear to my heart is eating colorful fruits and vegetables. The reason that it is considered a stress is that the colorful pigments, called "phytochemicals" with names like sulphorophane, anthocyanin, phenolic acid and the like, are there for the benefit of the plant – to ward off pests and predators. These are natural pesticides that won't kill us but rather promote an adaptive response that results in the anti-inflammatory, anti-cancer, anti-diabetes and overall health-promoting benefits of the brightly colored plant-based diet. Other stressors such as sunlight and irradiation have shown the hormetic effect in small doses. It is

becoming increasingly apparent that Nietzsche's observation that "what doesn't kill you makes you stronger" has its basis in science.

A word about the stress that may not be so good for you. This will differ from person to person and the harm comes if the stress becomes chronic with all the negative effects of too much of the stress hormones adrenalin and cortisol. It is usually caused by "the small stuff," the cumulative effect of minor daily annoyances — the unexpected bill, the paperwork accumulation, a phone call that didn't come or one that did and caused consternation. It can be slow-moving traffic, being ignored by the wait staff at a restaurant, not being able to book a theater ticket or plane reservation on a specific date.

Smart phones and balky computers take a toll on many and, if all this (and lots more) gets to you, it becomes the chronic stress that causes harm. These minor upheavals can be turned into hormetic stress (the good kind) by recognizing them as opportunities to practice mindfulness, meditation, breathing exercises, taking action when needed, and other techniques to get the stress hormones under control. With enough practice with the small stuff we will be better prepared if and when we have to deal with something more serious. It is comforting to know that some of the less pleasant things we endure will actually make us stronger, healthier and overall more resilient to face life's challenges.

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

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Library Lines By John Gillespie

Prolific in Print, Prolific on Shelves

Last month's column introduced five popular authors who have at least six different titles on our library shelves. This month, we will present several additional authors, again both prolific and widely read by our residents.

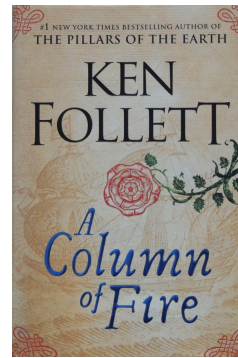
Danielle Steel, (b. 1947), the queen of literary "soaps" or, more politely, "domestic dramas," is the fourth best-selling author of all time, with over 800 million copies of her books she in print. She has written about 150 novels. Much married (five times), she works on several books at the same time. Each book takes a total of two to three years to complete but she manages to have several books published every year. Her first novel, *Going Home* (1972), is the story of a divorced mother and contains many themes that she still uses. In her latest novel, *Blessings in Disguise*, the heroine must cope with problems involving three very different daughters from three very different fathers.

John Grisham (b. 1955) is known as the supreme master of the legal thriller. As a young lawyer, he was inspired to write his first novel when he witnessed a case in which a father planned revenge on his daughter's rapists. The result was *A Time to Kill* (1988). He gained worldwide acclaim with *The Pelican Brief* four years later. He usually writes a book a year. His output includes *The Firm*, *The Runaway Jury* and *The Client*. There are about 300 million copies of his books in print worldwide. He has said that "I would never have written my first story had I not been a lawyer. I wrote only after witnessing a trial." Appropriately, his favorite author is John le Carré.

Jacqueline Winspear is the creator of the *Maisie Dobbs* series, which now numbers 15 titles. Each features the psychologist and investigator Maisie Dobbs. The first title, *Maisie Dobbs*, was published in 2003 and deals with the title character's childhood, her life during World War I, and postwar life when she becomes a private investigator. Her first case seems routine but later involves a murder.

The remaining 14 volumes in the series continue chronologically and are filled with suspense and mystery. The latest installment, *The American Agent* (2019), is set in the early days of World War II. An American correspondent is found murdered in her London flat and Maisie investigates.

Ken Follett was born on June 5, 1949 in Cardiff, Wales. After college, he became a newspaperman and, to supplement his income, began to write fiction. He achieved success when *The Eye of the Needle* was published in 1978 and sold over 10 million copies. Since then he has published about 50 books. Many are spy thrillers (e.g., *The Key to Rebecca*, *Code to Zero*) but others fall into different



categories. For example, the *Kingsbridge* four-volume series is set in a small English village at different times in history; e.g., the first volume, *The Pillars of the Earth*, is set during the 12th century and deals with the building of the town's cathedral. His *Century Trilogy* tells the story of five families from different parts of Europe (Germany, Russia, England and Wales) and the U. S. and their story from World War I through the Cold War. The last title is *Edge of Eternity* (2014).

Lee Child (born James Dover Grant in 1954) is a British writer now living the New York. He is best known for his Jack Reacher novels about an ex-military policeman who now wanders the U. S. taking odd jobs and getting into trouble. The series begins with *Killing Floor* (1997), in which Jack is stranded in a Southern town where he must prove himself not guilty of murder. The latest entry in the series is *Blue Moon*, in which Jack becomes involved with street gangs. The 25th volume in the series, *The Sentinel*, is slated for publication later this year.

Louise Penny (b.1958) is a Canadian writer of mystery stories set in the province of Quebec and featuring Chief Inspector Armand Gamache and the residents of the town of Three Pines, a village a few miles from Montreal. The series begins with *Still Life*, in which a beloved resident is shot in the heart with an arrow and Gamache investigates. The series ends (so far) with *All the Devils Are Here*, which will be published in September.

On Top of the World with No Getting Down

Ah! Sweet September days, hydrangeas putting forth their blossoms of many hues and varieties, azure skies lighting up the foliage, and cool blanket nights. Time for a look around Berkshire County, but wait! Let's go to Vermont – a new territory for our sons ages 9, 8, 4, and three months. We had moved to Pittsfield from Longmeadow just five months before, and summer with new neighbors, a new culture and a new infant had been busy indeed.

We parked the station wagon within sight of the Bennington Monument, so that Dad could keep an eye on the sleeping infant in his car bed while Mom and the three boys bought our tickets for the elevator to the top of the monument, where we would see 360 degrees of Vermont. We planned that upon our return, Dad would go with them for a second tour, and I would be with the baby.

Dad spent time with the x-word puzzle, the sports page and looking to see when we waved from the top. Too much time had elapsed since he spied us going into the monument. He left the baby in the car bed and spoke to the ticket vendor, who allowed that the elevator had “some difficulties.”

“Some difficulties!” The elevator did not make it to the ground floor upon our descent but instead vacillated between up and down. We four had left other people up above and descended to get Dad for trip No. 2. Once only I had voice contact with the ticket vendor, who suggested that I keep pushing the “down” button. At last the elevator moved up and the door opened, and there were 10 irate potential passengers.

“No, no, don't get in – it's broken!”

“Yes, we will – the stairs are blocked!”

So the little one was jammed into a corner holding his mom's hand, and the loaded elevator nicely went down – and stuck four feet above the ground level. Meanwhile, Dad had engaged a worker and together they tried to rescue our family and the other upset people. They managed to get the door open four feet above the ground and we each in turn skooched through the opening – into Dad's waiting arms.

We asked the vendor about her still selling tickets and she said the mechanic was coming from Montpelier, two hours away! We thought we were owed a refund but the ticket vendor stated, “You saw the view, no refund.” Ah! Sweet September Days.

Patricia Moynahan

Birthdays

Twenty-five residents celebrate birthdays in March. There is a 20-year spread between the youngest and oldest celebrant. March birthdays belong to:

**Paula Byrde, Adelene Quigley, Lucia Scala,
Joyce Hovey, Lily Wayne, Janet Appleman,
Lois Brown, Elizabeth Myers, Maureen Quinlan,
Stephanie “Stevie” Skowron, Mike Brown,
Patricia Nesti, Jane Westenberg,
James DeGiacomo, Patricia Moynahan,
Suzanne Denat, Stephanie Beling,
Lorraine Feldman, Trudy Pomerantz,
Martha Stewart, Ronald Stewart, Dori Bell,
Henry Kirshner, Charles “Dick” Moffatt and
Claire Lowery.**

Happy Birthday to each of you!!



In Memoriam

Howard Levin
July 6, 1940 to Feb 5, 2020

Walk the Dog Walk, Talk the Dog Talk

“Boxsoktik!”

It was 5 p.m. in summer, the best time of day in the best time of year. Tuffy, the chow chow, and I would go out and stand under the oak looking down the driveway, waiting for Kate to come home from the store. When she drove up, the tail started wagging and Tuffy bounded down to the garage to meet her. Some days, she would bring home corrugated boxes for recycling.

“Boxsoktik!” I’d shout. Joyously, Tuffy took a box from her hand and pranced around the lawn, shaking it until it sometimes tripped him or fell over his head, and we all went inside, a reunited family.

But why “Boxsoktik”?

Well, many years before Tuffy joined us, Kate and I were driving to Maine from a hiking trip in the White Mountains of New Hampshire. Just before the border, we came to scenic Cupsuptic Lake.



Tuffy

The name intrigued us (or at least me). It wasn’t long until we were drinking our coffee out of cupsuptics. Other household items became afflicted. There were rugsuptics on the floor, for example. How could there not be boxsoktiks for cereals and the like? (The name, by the way, is pronounced *box-sock-ticks*.)

Dog lovers will recognize the syndrome. You develop a private language with your pal, beyond the tired old “fetch” and “goo’ boy.” A few more samples:

Loosatonic! In the woods, the command marked the dog’s release from the lead, allowing him to run loosatonic, or even swim in the Housatonic if we were anywhere near.

Lezzgoo! Related to the above. Often accompanied by jangling of keys. Walk time. “Let’s go!”

Launch the lunch! In his later years Tuffy became fussy about eating his crunchies. To encourage appetite, I’d get down on all fours, lower my face toward his dish and make chomping noises. It wasn’t long till a furry face, jealous, pushed mine aside and crunched away. I launched the lunch.

Furry nozzle. Our first dog, a beagle named Browser, wanting out in the early morn, stuck her nose into Kate’s side of the bed. Half-asleep, Kate tried to say she’d been wakened by a furry muzzle. Only it came out as “Furry nozzle.”

Where’s Kate? That’s what I asked the Samoyed, who came two dogs later, after a bout of loving between us. He walked over and stuck his furry nozzle into the nearest trash can.

Whoozit? Someone was at the door. The dog – any of the six we had over the years – was snoozing or in the next room. There’d be a race to the door to see who could check out the caller first.

A precaution: “S” and “R” were necessary in the vocabulary between Kate and me. The mere whisper of *squirrel* or *rabbit* was enough to send a lightning bolt to the door to get out. Alternatively, if there was an S or R in the yard, we could furtively go to the door, open it and shout the magic word. Dog ran. Squirrel or rabbit ran, faster.

Waumbek. Halfway up Mount Washington, a trail on the western face passes Waumbek Tank, which holds water for steamer trains plying the Cog Railway. Halfway up on foot, Kate and I paused and drank from canteens (no water bottles yet in those days). The beagle rushed up to the overflow trough from the tank and slurped away.

To this day when I’m thirsty I think: *Waumbek*.

Anybody who can’t be identified is a *whoozit*.

And Amazon shipments, of course, arrive in *boxsoktiks*.

Andy Pincus