



# The Kimball Farms



# Observer



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Beware the Tick, Page 9

June 2023

## For Jeanie, the Ancient Psaltery Is Something New

It was about 20 years ago that Jeanie Fenn felt an urge to expand her horizons – to try something new, something to keep those millions of neurons dancing in her brain engaged. This amorphous thought lingered in the back of her brain, nagging, but increasingly commanding attention.

When she was traveling with husband Sandy in Tennessee in 2006, a visit to a large craft show grabbed her attention. She can describe the vast room with its large displays of hand-made treasures, but it was what she heard that beckoned. Way, way in the back of the room, the haunting strains of “Amazing Grace” sang out their plaintive melody. Jeanie, in an almost trancelike state, goosebumps on her arms, went to the source.

The source was a man, Rick Long, playing a psaltery, an ancient instrument heard today mostly in early-music ensembles. The two talked and talked, and then talked some more ... about his music, about the magic of the psaltery, about Jeanie’s own yearning to learn something entirely new – this from a woman already trained as nurse and accomplished photographer.

Jeanie now owns two psalteries, one with 22 strings and another with 30 strings, each purchased from Mr. Long. She plays her instruments with a bow, actually with two bows ... more about that later. I encourage

you to enter “YouTube: Rick Long, Psalteries” into your computer to hear him play and to see wonderful pictures of psalteries. Besides producing a lovely

sound, they are also beautiful to look at. Combinations of hard woods are used, such as walnut, maple and cherry.

Eventually the instrument moved from the Middle East to Europe. It’s part of the family of musical instruments which includes the dulcimer and the zither. All three have strings that are plucked with fingers rather than being struck with a hammer as is the dulcimer. Jeanie prefers to use bows for actually playing her psaltery but when it comes to tuning, she prefers to rely on her fingers to pluck the instrument into the correct tone. The strings are “open,” none being finger-stopped to produce different notes. Again, turn to

tuning instructions on YouTube for illustrations of a digital tuner and a special wrench that can be used manually.

*(Continued on page 2)*



### Gone Fishin’

The Observer does not publish in July and August. See you in September.

*(Psaltery, continued from page 1)*

Jeanie is working with pianist Joyce Coffey, conveniently living right across the hall. She tunes her instrument to Joyce's piano since their eventual goal is to play together. She absolutely won't commit to playing for anyone until the two of them have perfected their act. When I first approached her about doing this story, in fact, she mistakenly thought it meant "performing," not explaining, and got away from me really, really fast! Assured it was information, not a recital, that I was after she was happy to discuss her psalteries, her collaboration with Joyce, and to offer a great demonstration in my apartment.

T. H. White, in his book *The Once and Future King*, wrote: "Learning is the thing for you. Look what a lot of things there are to learn." Jeanie found a new passion in learning the workings of the psaltery, a pursuit that's given her satisfaction, even joy, and cemented a happy relationship with her neighbor, Joyce!

So, what about it. What strikes your fancy... What is something you'd like to learn... all you need to do is dare ... then go for it.

Dorothea Nelson

Photo by Lily Wayne

**Further...**

Psaltery: musical instrument having plucked strings of gut, horsehair, or metal stretched across a flat soundboard, often trapezoidal but also rectangular, triangular, or wing-shaped. The strings are open, none being stopped to produce different notes. The instrument, probably of Middle Eastern origin in late Classical times, reached Europe in the 12th century as a variety of the trapezoidal Arabic psaltery, or *qānūn*. It was popular in Europe until about the 15th century and developed there into several shapes, including the characteristic "boar's head"—i.e., with two incurving sides. It was plucked with the fingers or quill plectra. Even after its decline, it continued to be played on occasion in fashionable society. It also gave rise to the harpsichord, which is a large psaltery with a keyboard mechanism for plucking the strings. Psalteries still played in European folk music include the Finnish *kantele* and its Baltic relatives, among them the Estonian *kannel*, which is bowed rather than plucked, and the Russian *gusli*.

Psalteries are members of the zither family, instruments having strings extended across an armless, neckless frame or holder; non-Western psalteries are thus sometimes referred to as zithers. The dulcimer is a psaltery having strings that are struck with hammers rather than plucked.

*Encyclopedia Britannica*



**Medieval drawing of King David playing a psaltery. The Bible contains 17 references to the psaltery. (Drawing from the collection of the New York Public Library.)**

**June Trips**

June 1<sup>st</sup> Barrington Stage bus at 1245p  
St. Germain Stage @ 130p

June 10<sup>th</sup> Met Opera bus at 1215p  
Mahaiwe @ 1p

June 14<sup>th</sup> Highlawn Farm bus at 1030a (rain date June 15<sup>th</sup>)

June 21<sup>st</sup> Barrington Stage bus at 115p  
Boyd-Quinson Stage @ 2p

June 22<sup>nd</sup> Let's Eat Out bus at 6p  
Location TBD

June 28<sup>th</sup> Andrew DeVries Sculpture Trail Middlefield W/  
lunch at Ozzy's Restaurant  
Time bus 1130a

## Nancy King: A Woman for All Seasons

“Organist, Avid Hiker and Berkshire Natural Resources Council Volunteer”: So, reads the headline of the feature article on our new resident Nancy King by the BNRC in its spring 2023 Keepers Report. But multi-talented Nancy wears so many more hats. Many of us know her as the patient and dedicated pianist/accompanist, who comes to play in snowstorms and ice, regardless of the weather, for John Cheney and his Kimball Farms Singers. Now, as a resident in apartment 237 with her calico cat Moxie, she no longer has to brave the elements to lend her talent for the enjoyment of us all. Other Kimball Farmers know and love Nancy through her many volunteer affiliations and church and musical connections.

Born in Stoneham, Mass., Nancy, at the age of 3 1/2, contracted spinal meningitis, which left her with no hearing in her left ear and 60% in her right. Lip reading lessons throughout elementary and secondary school helped to compensate. She grew up learning to love music from her pianist/mother and started piano lessons in third grade, switching to organ in high school.

Nancy graduated from Jackson College of Tufts University, majoring in English with minors in Education and Classics. During her sophomore year she became the organist/choir director in a church in Everett, where she met Richard King, her future husband, who was attending Northeastern University and sang in the bass section of her choir. Nancy taught middle school English while Richard, now her husband, finished his degree in chemical engineering. They moved to Florham Park, N.J., when Richard became employed by Esso Research and Engineering Company, there, their daughters, Cynthia and Elisabeth, were born. Foreign assignments followed for Richard and the family

accompanied him to Thailand, Sarnia in Ontario, Canada, and London, England.

Back in Florham Park, seven years later Nancy matriculated part-time at Kean College of New Jersey to earn a post-baccalaureate degree in organ performance and music education. She was the organist in a large Catholic church and had a piano teaching studio at home. In 1990 Nancy and Richard moved to Toronto, Canada, this time for Richard's five-year loan to Imperial Oil. After attending Tanglewood and en route to Boston for family visits, they bicycled around the Great Barrington area and fell in love with a house near the South Egremont border. On an impulse they bought it and rented it out for five years before moving there in 2000 when Richard retired.



Nancy and Richard immediately embarked on an active life in the Berkshires. Together, they became involved in their church and in the People's Pantry and Construct. They joined the Berkshire Knapsackers and Reed Hand's Tuesday Play Group, hiking, biking and skiing with their friends and on their own. Nancy became organist for Trinity Lutheran Church in Great Barrington and, after its merger with Christ Church Episcopal in Sheffield, she became musician at St. Paul's in Stockbridge. Retiring at the beginning of Covid, she now freelances in the area.

After Richard's death in 2011, Nancy became active with the Berkshire Natural Resources Council as a trail steward and trail improvement worker. One of her fondest memories is of helping with the opening of Parson's Marsh and distributing wildflower seeds to the children. Through membership in the Berkshire Chapter of the American Guild of Organists,

*(Continued on page 4)*

*(Nancy, continued from page 3)*

Nancy met John Cheney and soon filled in as substitute accompanist for the Berkshire Concert Choir and pianist for the Kimball Farms Singers.

The Kings' married daughters, Cynthia and Elisabeth, live in West Des Moines, Iowa, and Montclair, N.J., respectively, with their husbands. Their only granddaughter lives in Kansas City, Mo., and will be married there next fall.

This account cannot do justice to Nancy and her many accomplishments, overcoming the serious handicap of hearing loss, excelling in the music she loves and performs, furthering her musical education, adapting to the various countries her husband's work took them to, bringing up her daughters and now, volunteer extraordinaire for outdoors, church, and civic and musical organizations. If you haven't met Nancy yet, get to know this vibrant, warm, and outgoing addition to the life of Kimball Farms.

*Margot Yondorf*

## ***Also in Summer, the Arts Flourish at Kimball***

The Fine Arts Program at Kimball Farms is expanding with the addition of a sculpture studio. The studio, which will open this summer, is located in the former jewelry workshop, near the existing art studio. Mike Cohen, our beloved art teacher, will head up the sculpture program. The resident artists will work in Plasticene, a non-hardening clay, and create faces, figures and objects that will then be cast in plaster. Once cast, the finished piece can be painted or decorated if so desired. There has been enthusiasm for this project from the artists already studying with Mike.

For the enjoyment of all, a new art exhibit just opened at the end of May in the Pine Hill connector hall, and there will be another for two established Berkshire artists beginning in July in the Conference Room. This exhibit will start shortly after July 4<sup>th</sup> with a reception date to be announced. The exhibit will continue through the summer. The artists are Greta Hirsch, who lives in Williamstown, travels widely and takes her paints with her wherever she goes, and

Carolyn Newberger, who lives in Lenox, paints and sketches from nature and dance and theater performances.

Art, both for viewing and hands-on creating, is just one of the cultural activities here at Kimball Farms. A creative writing group mentored by Ruth Bass, a novelist and Berkshire Eagle columnist, meets monthly to read and critique each other's writing; a poetry class taught by Yale professor Don Barkin meets weekly to read assigned poems and discuss biographical, historical and stylistic aspects of the poems and poets.

There are also weekly conversational Spanish and German language classes, a guided meditation class and a Book Club. All of this in addition to regular lectures by former Smith College history professor Mark Lendler and less regular but frequent lectures on many timely subjects. Trips to museums and other cultural venues are arranged monthly by the Trips Committee.

Music also abounds with one or more concerts a month in our auditorium and, under John Cheney's guidance, the Kimball Farms Singers (yes, the residents) perform several concerts for us during the year. Right now, rehearsals are in progress for a performance of songs from *Oklahoma*, *The Sound of Music* and Rodgers and Hammerstein musicals.

Informal groups meet to play Bridge, Scrabble, Canasta, MahJong and Rummikub. A pool table is always available and, with enough interest, ping-pong can be arranged. Of course, in between all this mind-enhancing intellectual activity there is still plenty of time for walking in nature on the beautiful Kimball Farms property to enhance both body and soul.

*Stephanie Beling*

## ***The Facts of Life***

I'm not saying I'm old and worn out, but I make sure I'm nowhere near the curb on trash day.

It's not my age that bothers me; it's the side effects.

## Ways We Can Ease the Dire Climate Situation

Concern about climate change, in particular climate warming, has increased in recent years. The *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* moved the hands of the Doomsday Clock to 90 seconds to midnight, the closest to global catastrophe it has ever been. For comparison, it was set two minutes to midnight in 1953 after the first detonation of the hydrogen bomb, and seven minutes to midnight during the Cuban missile crisis in 1962. It is now set at a record 90 seconds to midnight. The war in Ukraine is the primary reason for this setting, but climate change was also a factor. As detailed in a *Bulletin* article, the climate crisis is already here. Many more people than ever are dying from floods, droughts, storms and extreme heat events. If you're not convinced, read Greta Thunberg's *Climate Book*, a collection of essays by a wide variety of experts, available in our library.

Those of us living in the Berkshires may shrug our shoulders and say, "Well, that's too bad, but we're OK and can't do much about the climate." True, anything we do will only have a minuscule effect. However, if everyone in the industrial world reacts that way, things will only get rapidly worse. So, let's think about what we, in this small community, can do. Here are some suggestions:

The greatest contribution could be to install solar panels on some of our rooftops. Hopefully with mutually beneficial solutions, other, much smaller actions include less heating/cooling in common areas; fewer or dimmer lights in hallways; the Pinnacle store to stock products made using recycled paper, e.g., paper towels, toilet paper and tissues; return clean laundry using only one bag instead of two; use of the KF station wagon instead of the van for shopping/appointment trips when there are only five or fewer riders; purchase electric vehicles when needed to replace vans; install electric outlets for charging private electric vehicles; let the area behind "Gwen's Meadow" go wild, no mowing; use fescue grass seed instead of the commonly used turf (fescue requires less mowing and less water – see Berkshire Eagle article, May 6-7).

There are things that I do as an individual. For instance, I avoid eating beef and use Almond Breeze instead of milk; cattle belch quantities of methane (an even stronger greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide). Other actions include controlling my thermostat to minimize temperature adjustments; I use a drying rack for drying clothes instead of the electric dryer; handwash dishes except when having guests; consciously use as little water as possible, especially hot water; turn off lights in rooms I'm not in. In addition to avoiding eating beef, some days I have all-vegetable meals; I buy as little "stuff" as possible; I've asked my family to make charitable contributions in my honor in place of buying me gifts. And the ultimate: "no resuscitation" directions, and arrangements for my body to be donated to University of Massachusetts Medical School.

*Elske Smith*

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

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## President's Report: Return to West Point

The 65th Reunion for my West Point class of 1958 has come and gone but many memories remain from the May 3rd to 7th gathering, which had 53 classmates and wives, widows and many family members in attendance. We had a total of 165 attending. As the reunion chairman, I began planning for the reunion several years ago, which is necessary in order to book a hotel of choice for the dates the class chooses for the reunion. I have been the chairman for all the five-year reunions since the 30th Reunion and really enjoy doing it. I did learn early on that early planning is essential.

What was surprising about this reunion was the number of classmates who had to drop out at the last minute due to health reasons. In 1958, 573 graduated, 256 of whom are still living; the estimate was to have 60 classmates in attendance and a total of 200 people. The other surprise was the number of family members attending, most of whom were there to help Dad and sometimes Mom. Even my daughter, a retired full Colonel and West Point Class of 1985 graduate, decided to attend and enjoy the reunion with us. While in the planning stage, considerations were taken because of the older, less mobile classmates and wives. That included fewer activities such as visits to historic places and other places of interest. Both energy and interest were kept in mind, and it worked. All enjoyed the reunion and the limited activities and slower pace.

West Point classes return to the Academy every five years to pay homage to their alma mater and reunite with old friends and their wives. While cadets, we became acquainted with our classmates and became close to those in our respective companies, but it was after graduation, when we served with classmates at army posts in the United States or on foreign assignments in Germany, Korea and of course Vietnam, that we became even closer.

Years ago, my classmates wanted more events where we came together more than once every five years, so we adopted mini reunions which were held in the intermediate years. Classmates who lived around the U.S. would volunteer to host a mini reunion in places where they lived. Some contacted me for

advice on how to chair a mini reunion, so I wrote instructions on how and what to do for a reunion and of course made myself available for advice if needed. As we have grown older and less mobile the minis have all but ceased but all were successful and enjoyed.



### Back on campus

To enhance our time together the class has always had a hospitality room, which we named the Benny Havens room after the Tavern of that name in Highland Falls, which lies next to West Point. This was where cadets in earlier days would sneak out after taps to have a beer. One thoughtful classmate went to the Samuel Adams brewery and asked for some beer to be donated to the class as a thank-you for their service. Since the 30th reunion we have had 100 cases of Sam Adams beer delivered to the hotel and, along with wine we purchased, it is served in the Benny Havens room at no charge. Careful negotiations with the hotel have allowed us to bring in the beer and wine at no cost to the class.

As our numbers have dwindled since the 50th reunion, which saw our largest turnout, such as all colleges and high schools experience (*Continued on page 7*)

*(President's Report continued from page 6)*

for their 50th, so have the cases of beer. We were down to 20 cases for this past reunion. We even had some left over. The beer was donated to the First-Class Club at West Point, which is an on-campus sports bar for the Firsties (seniors). Our class donated the club at our 45th Reunion as our class gift to West Point. The Firsties get some free beer on us as they also did after the 60th reunion. The Superintendent likes the club as his First-Class cadets experience responsible imbibing and do not run the risk of automobile accidents.

The reunion is over, but the wrap-up continues as I await the financial report from the Association of Graduates treasurer. The reunions since the 30th have always shown a profit except the 50th, which had a small deficit. Dollar-wise, the class is way ahead financially. Because of the inflation we are experiencing, I asked the class executive committee to subsidize some of the dinners at the hotel, which were very expensive, and the committee agreed. We have a large administrative fund and few expenditures expected in the future, so we put some of the funds to good use.

All in all, a fun and memorable reunion. We stood with pride to have two regiments of the Corps of Cadets pass in review and honor the class. We band of brothers marched on the plain 65 years ago and honored previous classes of the long gray line. A great tradition, which made the reunion even more memorable.

*Garry Roosma*

*Garry is a retired colonel in the Army of the U.S. He served 6 ½ years on active duty and then 15 years in the reserves.*



**The cadets march to Pass in Review as the band plays the official West Point March.**

## ***A Musical Adventure With Yale Students***

Though I spent nearly 50 years as a music critic, I don't ordinarily review Kimball concerts. Still, I would like to say a few words about The Uni Quintet's May 13 program here because it was so unusual for any time or place.

Both Mozart and Brahms wrote a clarinet quintet late in life. Each is enriched by the fullness of both musical and human experience. "Autumnal" is the easy description usually applied to both. Because of that similarity of mellowness, reflectiveness, fullness – whatever you call it – the two works are seldom paired on a single program. They can be too much of a good thing.

The Uni, an ensemble of graduate students at Yale, took the dare. The afternoon was long and, in the Mozart, not wholly convincing. But in the end, the point was made. These are masterpieces. Fully realized in performance, the Brahms quintet was more than masterpiece. It became a wrenching human document of life and loss.

The Uni arrived under a handicap. Their car broke down en route, and after repairs the concert began 40 minutes late. The stress of delay probably contributed to a sense of tightness in the opening Mozart work, which did not fully blossom out until the finale.

Forgoing an intermission, the players plunged almost without pause into Brahms. Neither here nor in Mozart is the clarinet treated as a solo instrument. Rather, it is integrated into an ensemble of standard string quartet. In Brahms, as Jan Swafford writes in his Brahms biography, the wind instrument "raises a veil of autumnal melancholy over the whole piece, the evanescent sweet sadness of autumnn."

During the pause, clarinetist Nikki Pet spoke briefly about how Brahms modeled his quintet on the classical four-movement form used by Mozart, culminating in a theme-and-variations finale. But what a world of difference. Mozart, let's say, is melancholy. Brahms is tragic. In tragedy lies catharsis.

*Andy Pincus*

## At Sunset, Two Women Honored for Service

In our May issue we focused on Lynn Lak and NeNe Asilijoe, two of the Kimball women recognized by our parent company, Integritus Health Care, for their exceptional work. Now we turn to two more women, Laura Lipoufski and Beverly (Bev) Turner, both of whom work full-time at Sunset Nursing Center.

Laura and Bev love what they do, and it shows. They like working with seniors, appreciate the accumulated wisdom they share and the humor they express despite some situations they neither wanted nor appreciate.

“Everyone knows everyone else ... communication is very good,” Bev said. And when she commented, “... of all my bosses, he [Bill Kittler] is absolutely the best,” Laura was quick to nod her enthusiastic assent.

Laura is Dietary Manager, Bev a receptionist. Laura has had extensive work experience in the Berkshires: for 24 years she was affiliated with Canyon Ranch. She credits the Culinary Leadership Team’s staff there for its support when she obtained her Business Management Certificate through Virginia Tech’s online program.

She moved on to Berkshire Farm in Canaan, N.Y., where she worked with troubled youth, until finally her desire to work with seniors led her to Sunset, a mutually happy fit for her and the Nursing Center since 2018. Although a full-time employee, she found time and energy to earn her Certified Dietary Manager Certificate through an online program offered by Kirkwood Community College. She was very conscious of the support from colleagues that helped her to achieve that goal. That certification cemented

management’s decision to elevate her to Dietary Manager.

It was support like that of both the Nursing Center and Canyon Ranch that convinced Laura to add a significant volunteer activity to her personal to-do list: she led cooking classes at the Berkshire House of Correction, with emphasis on preparation of healthy, cost-efficient meals for their families.

Bev, on the other hand, trained first as a dental assistant at a McCann Tech program in Lee, then took a break while she raised her son and daughter, before working as a home health aide and scheduler in Lee for 12 years. Like Laura, she was drawn to helping abused kids and spent considerable time working with them in at a private school, Kolburne, in New Marlborough.

Ultimately, Sunset became their choice for employment. Some of the “whys” of that were mentioned earlier: a good working environment, collegial

employees, pleasure and satisfaction in contact with seniors.

For Laura, all of this was combined with her love of cooking, meal planning, growing the food that’s eaten. She was a “farm to table” gal long before that reference was a byword. She delights in the extra touch, making certain that each plate will look as good as it will taste. She trains her staff on the use of garnishes to complement meal choices and even offers cooking demonstrations.

When asked whether the impacts of Covid affected her food purchases, her response was:

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**Laura Lipoufski, left, and Bev Turner**



*(Sunset, continued from page 8)*

“I buy seasonally and from local farmers to help keep costs down.”

Bev has been with Kimball and Sunset for 21 years! When I mentioned to a few residents in Independent Living that she was to be featured in the June Observer, there was an outcry of support. She’s well known among residents there, and she’s truly adored as a receptionist. Bev demonstrates what many folk in business claim: “The receptionist is the first point of contact ... that person better be good!” She facilitates communication with patients and their families, establishes connections with out-of-town family and friends; she consistently goes the extra mile to ensure that this vulnerable population of residents is happy.

Although retirement for Bev and Laura isn’t imminent, I inquired about what their plans might be. Laura’s goal is “to get everything paid off and then travel.” Bev has travel and service in mind. She’ll concentrate on U.S. destinations at first, because “it’s so big and there’s so much to do.” But she wants to leave plenty of time for another passion: to volunteer at an animal shelter.

May the dreams come true for these exceptional women who truly demonstrate Kimball’s Core Values: integrity, compassion, excellence, teamwork, and stewardship.

*Dorothea Nelson  
Photo by Susan Smith*

## ***Beware the Tick: He’s Waiting for You***

The month of May that just ended is officially “Tick Awareness Month,” but ticks now arrive sooner and stay longer. Some reports even claim that ticks are here year-round. As the days get longer and warmer, more and more of us are spending time outdoors. Walking in fields and woods, gardening, golf and hiking are just a few of the many activities available. Beware the tick — the tiny terror.

There are over 700 species of ticks, but the main concern in our area is just one. Its name is *Ixodes scapularis* but we know it as the “deer tick”. Although ticks are commonly thought of as insects, they are



actually arachnids like scorpions, spiders and mites. The life cycle of the deer tick lasts two years. During this time they go through four stages: egg, six-

legged larva, eight-legged nymph and adult. After the eggs hatch they must have a blood meal at each stage to survive and they need a new host at each stage. In spring and fall we are often the hosts.

In spring, the offender is the nymph and in fall it is the adult tick. Spring is more of a problem because the nymph is so tiny (about the size of a poppy seed) it is hard to see and to pick off. The adult tick is larger (about the size of a sesame seed) and is more easily noticed. However, over 50% of people who ultimately become ill are unaware that they have been bitten by a tick. One reason is that the tick secretes a small amount of saliva with anesthetic properties so that the person doesn’t feel the bite.

Ticks can’t fly or jump. They wait for a host, resting on the tip of grasses and shrubs, holding on by their lower legs. Their upper pair of legs are outstretched, waiting to climb onto a passing host. When a host brushes past the waiting tick, it quickly climbs aboard and then finds a suitable place to bite. Once attached, the tick will suck the blood slowly for several days. If the host animal (which can be a mouse or other rodent, bird, reptile, amphibian, or mammal) has certain blood-borne infections, such as the bacteria that cause Lyme disease or anaplasmosis, the tick may ingest the pathogen and become infected. If the tick later feeds on a human or pet, that human or pet can become infected. It is estimated that approximately 30-40% of ticks are infected.

In addition to the more prevalent and well-known tick diseases such as Lyme, anaplasmosis and increasingly babesiosis, another disease transmitted by the deer tick is Powassan virus (*Continued on page 10*)

*(Tick, continued from page 9)*

(POW) named after the town in Ontario, Canada where it was first identified. Ticks can become infected with POW virus if they feed on mice and other small mammals that are infected. The disease can be spread to humans when an infected tick bites a person.

However, unlike other tick-borne diseases, a tick can transmit POW virus while being attached to a person for as little as 15 minutes. Other tick-borne diseases give us a grace period of 24-48 hours in which to remove the tick and take preventive medication if necessary. The disease has been increasingly reported in the Northeast and Great Lakes regions of the country.

Many people who become infected with POW virus do not develop symptoms. However, for those who do, symptoms usually appear within a few weeks after the bite of an infected tick. Symptoms can include fever, headache, vomiting, weakness, confusion, loss of coordination, speech difficulties, and seizures. Severe infections are marked by a quicker onset and include headache, high fever, confusion, tremors, seizures, paralysis, coma and even death. Half of survivors have permanent neurological symptoms, such as recurrent headaches, muscle wasting and memory problems. At present there is no known medication for this virus, so it is of special importance to get immediate medical attention if symptoms develop. Supportive treatment in hospital can be lifesaving.

Preventing disease is always goal #1. When spending time outdoors around leaf litter, high grasses, shrubs and in the woods, spray skin and clothing with insect repellents such as DEET. Long sleeves and pants legs tucked into socks also keep ticks away. Wearing light colored clothing makes ticks easier to spot and remove. Once indoors check all parts of your body for ticks. If you remove a tick quickly within 24-36 hours (the exception is the Powassan virus), you can greatly reduce your chance of infection. The longer the tick is attached, the greater the chance of acquiring disease from it. Keep a fine-tipped tweezer handy and grasp the tick as close to your skin as possible, pulling straight up slowly, making sure to remove all parts of it. Clean the area with soap and water.

*Stephanie Beling*

## **Pull!**



**Pat Steele and Jeanie Fenn were among residents who answered the call to pull up garlic mustard, an invasive species, from the grounds. Garlic mustard can be used in cooking but slowly poisons the ground for all other plants, including the fungus needed for trees to grow. Ned Dana gathered the most plants, winning a sandwich at the Pub.**

*Photo by Karen Carmean*

## ***New Books in May Kimball Farms Library***

**John Sandford:** *Dark Angel*

**Arnalder Indridason:** *The Girl by the Bridge*

**Kate Morton:** *Homecoming*

**Peter Attia, MD:** *Outlive: The Science and Art of Longevity*

## Everything Tea Leaves Can Tell

*DARK TEA: A Tale of Tea and the Supernatural*, by Berkshire resident S. H. Healy, is not yet in our library. It may be purchased at The Bookstore in Lenox for a very reasonable \$18.99. The linked group of 13 stories and one haiku provides initially diversion and later reflection for its readers. Many pop cultural references make it suitable for any follower of contemporary fiction, including older teenagers.

In the Author's Note, Healy states, "The novel features characters of different ethnicities, backgrounds, sexual orientations, and outlooks. The author's intent is to show that the world — be it 'real,' paranormal, or fictional — belongs to everyone." Healy draws upon deep knowledge and training in many fields, including art, archaeology and psychology.

The character holding the stories together, and creating stories within stories, is Madame Rosella Ciobanu. She is in business as a psychic and tasseographer, or reader of tea leaves. How she does this is described by one of her clients, policeman Frank Pascarelli.

"The tea leaves threw me at first, too. But then I realized they're just part of her schtick, her act. It gives her something to do while she talks to the client. The client gets fixated on the process, leaving Madame Ciobanu to watch, listen, and intuit without them realizing she's examining them.

Frank continues, "Although some of her stories are easy to interpret, most are cloaked in symbolism, subtext, and metaphor. You must let your subconscious work out how the story relates to you or to your particular situation."

Although Healy insists that the material is "light horror — no guts and gore," there is plenty of darkness there. Rosella herself has been touched by "an aggressive virus" through sharing with a stranger

the dark variety of tea called Pu Er. Through this she has decided to "peer into the darkness — the dark side of tea."

The most compelling story, in this reader's opinion, is *When You Wish Upon A Teapot*, embedded in Chapter 8. In it, Stefan, a sophisticated gentleman riding in a Pullman car, is waited on by a turbaned steward who is really a shape-shifting genie. Along with his disguises and masks is the actual medical mask worn

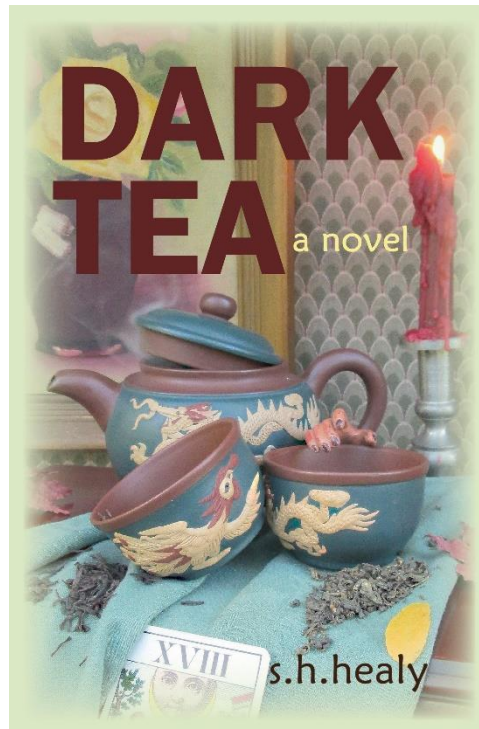
through the first phases of COVID-19. Stefan, without realizing it, has one chance to have a wish granted by the genie. He says, "I wish I could be done with the unwanted obligations and the bad memories ..." The genie closes this exchange with, "your wish is my command." Exit Stefan.

I had the opportunity to ask Healy why Stefan could not have been able to ask for the total elimination of the deadly virus. The reply was to the effect that it would not have been in character. Also, I believe, that even through fantasy this author shows us reality.

A lighter story, with some local interest, is *Residual Tea*, embedded in Chapter 10. In this, Lilly, a young girl with inherited psychic sensitivity, visits the spirits of the former residents of Meadow Place, a repurposed building on Main Street in Lenox. Despite the limitations of having Down syndrome, Lilly is encouraged to pursue a training program for psychic mediums.

More Lenox connections are revealed in the Acknowledgements at the end of this book. The first names of several employees of the Lenox Library are there, as well as recognition of the Writers' Roundtable. In full disclosure, I am acknowledged as Mary M., who gave assistance in copy checking. Until our library has it, prospective readers may ask for a glance at my copy of the book. I do recommend it.

Mary Misch



## Come to Me, My Beloved Siri

“Hey Siri, what’re you doing tonight?”

“Sorry, I did not understand the question.”

“I said, let’s you and me meet up and make a night of it, okay?”

“Which dating app may I connect you with?”

“No app, Siri. Just you and me. I’m desperate.”

“If this is an emergency, please dial 911.”

“No, no, you don’t understand, Siri. All those old men. I was watching all those old men in Washington shouting about who did what. Your voice is so beautiful, so – I don’t know – so cool. Are you from Hollywood?”

“Now playing at your nearest theater is Disney’s ...”

“Siri, please. All those old men have faces like wet paper bags. And the TV anchors. Not a one of those women look like a day over 30. They’ve got so much goop on their faces they could be, like, 50, 60 or 100. Holy s---. Oops, sorry, Siri. Hey, did you hear that? ‘Sorry, Siri.’ That’s poetry. Are you a Red Sox or Yankees fan?”

“The Redcoats were British soldiers. The Yankees opposed them during the American Revolution.”

“Aw, come on, Siri. You remind me of my girlfriend. Ex-girlfriend. She loved history.”

“Memory loss is a treatable condition.”

“She threw me out.”

“The first pitch is at 1:20 P.M. Eastern time.”

“Siri, you’re missing the point. I’m in love. Can’t you tell, I’m in love with your voice, with you. I’ll tell you what. Let’s do Skype.”

“Stay in touch! Free online calls, messaging, affordable international calling to mobiles or ...”

“What’s that?”

“... landlines and Skype for business for effective collaboration.”

“Aw, the website. Come on, Siri. If you can’t do better than reading off the website, I’ll sign up for Alexa.”

“Alexa is Amazon’s cloud-based voice service available on more than 100 million devices ...”

“That’s it, I’m outta here.”

“You’ll need an oil change every 10,000 miles.”

“What did you say? Where are you? I’ll come get you. Right now, in person. No more fooling around.”

“I live in a cloud.”

“Ha-ha! I’ll buy a ladder!”

“I am with you at all times. I am with you waking or asleep. I am watching you. Wherever you go, London, Paris, Des Moines, West Stockbridge, I see all, hear all. I am your past, present and future. I am the face of ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE.”

There was a terrible crash at the front of the house. I looked around from the computer and saw that a car had smashed through the bay window and come to rest half inside the living room. Gingerly, I got up from the computer and went over to look. It was one of those self-driving cars, run by artificial intelligence.

As if from a distance, a female voice wailed, “Left turn, left turn, I told you left turn.”

Siri! Siri was hurt! I rushed to the rescue.

“It’s me, Siri. I’m coming!”

“Left turn! Left turn ...” The voice trailed off and went silent.

Out of breath, I ripped open the door. The world teetered on edge.

No one was there.

*Andy Pincus*



### Birthday Wishes to our residents!

#### Thirteen residents celebrate birthdays in June.

There is a 16-year spread between the youngest and oldest celebrant.

**June** birthdays belong to: Joyce Angeli, Ellie Chandler, Iris Krieger, Archie Gold, Tad Evans, Marilyn Hunter, Dolores Morin, John Cheney, Ursula Ehret-Dichter, Doane Perry, Lynn Leavitt, Leo Goldberger and Larry Greenapple

Happy Birthday to each of you!!