



# Rockland Buzz

## All-Volunteer Journal

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The Old School Fellowship Education

### What Makes America Great?

by Stephen Carroll

First I can tell you what it's not. It's not Donald Trump, or all the politicians in Washington. It's not Jeff Bezos (Amazon), or Tim Cook (Apple), the Walmart family or any of America's elite ruling class. What makes this country great is the millions in the struggling working class. The person at the convenience store that greets you every morning and hands your coffee with a smile, the truck driver, delivery person, or service tech that makes sure you have what you need. These are the men & women, young & old, black, white or brown working sometimes two or three jobs just to make ends meet. They are driving the old car, paying too much for the shabby two bedroom apartment and are taking their kids to school everyday. These are the people who truly make America great. You see them everyday at the grocery store, coffee shop, the waitress working for tips and the seniors living on Social Security. It seems to me the wealthiest in our society have the least to give, where the poorest give the most.

The police officers, fire fighters and rescue personnel that risk their lives everyday. The minimum wage workers, trying to squeeze every nickel, and the homeless who have absolutely nothing. These are the Americans that elected Donald Trump and are now supporting Bernie Sanders and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez. This is what the establishment in Washington and their lap dogs the mainstream media, the Washington Post, the New York Times, CNN and MSNBC fails to understand, while they spend hours droning about subjects no one in America cares about. What matters most in this country is defending the needs of the working class, not the billionaires.

Until our elected representatives learn that it is health care, a living wage, increased Social Security, free college tuition, and the environment that mean the most to those people that sent them to represent their interests.

Nancy Pelosi (who's net worth exceeds \$100 million) beats the impeachment drum as the homeless population in San Francisco (Nancy's home state) continues to grow. Michael Bloomberg the billionaire wanna be President spends millions on TV ads when those same funds could end the homeless population in America. Congress recently approved another \$200 billion on Military spending when those same funds could pay for health care, better roads and improved public transportation. The disenfranchised working class cries out for help, but none is coming from Washington. The Elite class care nothing about the dancing peasants. "Let them eat cake" was the battle cry of the French revolution. History shows us this is how it all begins, when the separation between the upper and lower class becomes extreme revolution begins, and the revolution is beginning in America and those like Bernie Sanders and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez are leading the march.

Despite what those inside the beltway think, our next President will represent the people, whether that is Donald Trump, Bernie Sanders, Tulsi Gabbard, or Elizabeth Warren. Pay attention Washington a big storm is brewing. The Great American middle class demands to be heard. So each day in your travels, be kind to the person that brings your coffee or your dinner. The person that fills your oil tank or delivers your mail. These are the people who make America great.

**Steve Carroll** is a frequent, and much appreciated, contributor to the Buzz. Steve grew up in Rockland and went into radio. With the local radio apocalypse, he started an appliance repair business, which is how he has made his living these many years. This winter he has driven off to Florida in his service-van-cum-camper. He writes:

"I am traveling throughout the west coast of Florida in my converted camper van, a 2012 Ford e-150 passenger van. I have equipped it with a full size bed, kitchen and seating area as well as water and refrigeration. It is actually quite comfortable. I stay at Walmart's, cracker barrel and ihop restaurants all open 24 hours and an occasional truck stop. I have a planet fitness membership good for any club in the country. Good for my daily workout and shower. This is the second of my winter adventures. Not for everyone but I enjoy being on the road traveling and experiencing new places and people."

We are hoping to have some reports from Steve on life in the southland.



### My Dream Come True: Snowed in, in Maine

by Glen Birbeck

For ten years I've avoided winter. Not just the weather, the snow, the ice, the sleet, but also the season. We in the northern Hemisphere forget that when its winter up north the southern half of the planet is enjoying summer.

I avoided winter by flying south in the middle of autumn. When I landed in Quito it was Spring. I had leaped over all that slush. Actually Ecuador avoids a lot of the seasonal by being on the equator, thus its name. Down there summer isn't hot, winter isn't cold. Seasons have more to do with rain than temperature. The only snow is high up on the slopes of the volcanoes.

This year I didn't fly from the cold - I embraced it. The schlepping thru airports twice a year got old. I thought hunkering down in the cabin in the woods might be less hassle overall. I never bought real estate in Ecuador. To the extent I'm anchored anywhere its to the rocky soil of the pine tree state. Winter isn't so bad I thought. Lots of people thrive in it. And it's pretty too. After a snow storm the world's in a cocoon of white like a schooner on jacks in winter.

My fingers and toes don't like winter much. They get gloves and those thick socks. Then there is cabin fever. And the car and its all important tires. And the plowing and the darkness. I had forgotten about the darkness. The lack of sun must be a major input to the emotional part of winter.

Without a job to drive to and from daily I need stuff to keep me occupied. For this winter I resurrected an old hobby, Ham Radio. I spent my Christmas money on a radio, a high frequency transceiver. Its not the latest but it has enough bells and whistles. After trudging thru the snow for a day I have an antenna up in the yard. Its strung between trees and just high enough that the signals are coming through ok. Africa, Europe and South America. Of course the USA and Canada are conspicuous on the Ham frequencies. After kludging a circuit to connect the radio to the antenna I was ready. My first couple of contacts were into the Midwest, PA and NC. All three said I had a strong signal. That in spite of the fact I was only transmitting with 15 watts. I was holding back, the new radio can output 100 watts but I didn't want to ask too much of the antenna connection. This was in Morse Code. Also called CW, for continuous wave, my favorite mode of communication.

Most amateurs would be on voice, single side-band, a little further up in frequency, but I'm old school in my taste. Pounding on a brass telegraph key connects me with the pioneers like Marconi. They came up with the idea of wireless telegraphy more than a hundred years ago. Marconi has long since passed but there are plenty of old people on the air. I've talked in Morse code to hams 90 years old. I read somewhere that sending and receiving code was good exercise for old brains. To me the dits and dahs, the sound of the letters, are like words in another language. The tone and repetition and cadence.

For the US Navy I listened to Russian shipping in the Atlantic. That was in the mid 60's. Those operators sent fast, 50 words per minute. It was a challenge to copy them but I managed. I never was able to send that fast. Maybe now in retirement I can get that sending speed up. There are hams who send much faster, 100 words per minute - but they have computers helping them I suspect.

So these days instead of sitting on a raised sidewalk above the cobble stones in Vilcabamba nursing a beer, I sit above the door yard talking to a guy a thousand miles away and watch the plow push and scrape. Makes for a change doesn't it?



FRIDAY, JANUARY 24:

- Public Planking Party at The Apprenticeshop, 655 Main Street, Rockland, 5:30 to 8 p.m., to celebrate the completion of the hull on the Dublin Bay 24 under construction on the shop's ground floor. Refreshments, music and wooden-boat conversation will all be on hand. The event is also the annual "thanks" to the community for its support. The party is free and open to all.

- Friday Open Mics, in Warren, Saint George River Cafe, 310 Main Street, second and fourth Fridays, at 6:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 25:

- Yang Gang Hang at at Maine Street Markets, 435 Maine Street in Rockland, 1 to 3 pm. All those who are curious about Presidential candidate Andrew Yang are invited to attend and to meet other Yang curious and Yang supporters over coffee or lunch.

- "Following Your Dreams" with Billy Mitaritonna, 7 p.m. at Strom Auditorium at Camden Hills Regional High School, Rockport. In a program hosted by Bill Green, Mitaritonna will share his "underdog" story for all ages meant to inspire people to follow their dreams. He will sign copies of his book, "Last of the Redmen: Memoir of a St. John's Walk-on," about his time on the basketball court. Admission is free;

SUNDAY, JANUARY 26:

- Sunday Salon: Temporality, from 3 to 5 p.m. at Center for Maine Contemporary Art in Rockland. Artists Nathan Kroms Davis, Grace DeGennaro, Danica Phelps, and Julie Poitras Santos will discuss the process of time in their work, which is hanging in CMCA's current show, "Temporality | The Process of Time."

- Sunday Jams in Rockland, Sail, Power, & Steam Museum, 75 Mechanic Street, 1:30 p.m.

MONDAY, JANUARY 27:

- Free Adult Art Classes at Rockland Public Library, 11 a.m. Catinka Knoth leads the free Monday classes – with a focus on drawing in color – open to all, with materials provided. This week: penguins and winter sports figures.

- Silent Book Club at Thomaston Public Library, from 5:30 to 7 p.m. The club offers a half hour of low-key, optional socializing, followed by an hour of reading in companionable silence. There is no required reading, so bring a book or ask the librarians or book club members for a recommendation.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 28:

- Tuesday Jams in Thomaston, Federated Church, 8 Hyler Street, at 7 p.m. Folk, country, blues, gospel. FMI: 273-2914.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29:

- Tech Tools at Rockland Public Library: Exploring Goodreads, Wednesday, January 29, at 10:30 a.m. Adult Program Coordinator Shane Billings gives an overview of the features and benefits of Goodreads, an app that helps users keep track of the books they've read and find suggestions for new ones. He will also describe the Goodreads Challenge, a way to set a goal for your reading in the New Year. Call the Library at 594-0310 to pre-register.

- COPD Education and Support Group to Meet, Wednesday, January 29, noon to 1 p.m. (last Wednesday of every month) at Pen Bay Medical Center, 6 Glen Cove Drive, Rockport. The free drop-in group provides education, support and local resources.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 30:

- "Creating Japanese-Inspired Gardens in Maine," at Rockland Public Library on Thursday, January 30, at 6:30 p.m. Lee Schneller Sligh will explain some of the core principles of Japanese garden design. Sligh is the author of "The Ever-Blooming Flower Garden: A Blueprint for Continuous Color." She majored in Chinese language and literature and worked as a Japanese technical translator for ten years before starting her garden design and build business in the midcoast in 1995.

- Thursday Karaoke in Thomaston, Threshers Brewing Company, 1 Starr Street, 7 p.m.

- Thursday Jams in Warren, Saint George River Cafe, 310 Main Street, 6 p.m. and Friday Open Mics, second and fourth Fridays, at 6:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 31:

- Center for Maine Contemporary Art, Rockland. "Temporality: The Process of Time," to February 23. "[On]Now Exhibition: Simulacrush," to April 5.

- Farnsworth Art Museum, Rockland. "Andrew Wyeth's World War I" and "Slab City Rendezvous," both to February 9. "Andrew Wyeth: Witches, Ghosts and Mischief," to March 1. "MAINE: The Farnsworth Collection," to March 14.

- "Katharine Cobey: A Different Voice," to April 12.

**Around Town** is compiled by Chuck Gifford.

An expanded listing is online at [wrfr.org](http://wrfr.org)

Please submit calendar items to [gowrfr@gmail.com](mailto:gowrfr@gmail.com)

Our thanks to The Free Press for sharing its calendar.

# Free Money

by Joe Steinberger

Crazy ideas sometimes turn out to be good ones.

The idea of free money is, in one sense, absurd. If there were unlimited free money, money would be worthless. But the idea that a limited amount of money, perhaps 10% of GDP, could be raised by taxation and distributed equally to the entire adult population is a radical idea which maybe sounds crazy at first, but it is not absurd.

I have become increasingly convinced, though not closed to further consideration, that such a system of income redistribution, often called UBI for universal basic income, is a very good idea. It may be the tonic we need to save civilization.

What is destroying us is the inexorable concentration of wealth and power in the hands of a successful few. This has been going on, in varying degrees, since the Pharaohs in Egypt. Democracy, government "by the people, for the people," is a means to protect the interests of the people against this concentration of power, but we are seeing today how thoroughly it can be undermined.

Such a system of income redistribution would create a floor of security below those tens of millions in our country who are now staring into the abyss, staring at homelessness and hunger, at degradation and scorn.

Such a system, being equal and universal, would create no stigma and it would leave people free to decide how to spend the money. That trust in the people, even poor people, is the key. We have been doing poorly in our long war on poverty. We have seen that if people cannot help themselves we cannot help them: we cannot manage the lives of our poorer citizens if they cannot manage their own lives. To help them, let's give them resources and trust them to know best what's best for themselves.

Some readers may know that Presidential candidate Andrew Yang has made what he calls the "Freedom Dividend" of \$1000 per month the centerpiece of his campaign. The "Maine Yang Gang" is inviting the "Yang Curious" to meet others who are curious, and to meet Yang supporters at Maine Street Markets at 435 Maine Street in Rockland at 1 to 3 pm on Saturday, January 25. I will be there.

All readers should know that the Buzz and WRFR are entirely and religiously non-partisan. As volunteers, we are free to express our views, but none of us speaks for the Buzz or WRFR, and everyone in our community is invited, indeed implored, to contribute their own views to our free and open mix.

Write something for the Buzz about your favorite idea or your favorite candidate. Do a radio show and help people understand your point of view. That is what the Buzz and WRFR are about: the civil discourse, mutual respect, and freedom of expression that is essential for democracy to work.

## Contribute yourself to The Buzz & WRFR

We are all volunteers, and you are invited to join us.  
email [steinberger@ghi.net](mailto:steinberger@ghi.net) or call Joe at 596-0731

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