



Rockland Buzz

Getting to Know Each Other

Issue 150, February 7, 2020, Rockland, Maine



The Old School Fellowship Education

Ft. Myers RV Show (a lesson on inequality in America)

by Stephen Carroll



Last weekend, on a whim, I attended the big Ft. Myers Florida annual RV & camper show. I spent several hours viewing acres of fancy overpriced Motorcoaches, class C campers and converted high top vans along with many camper trailers and park model homes. Of course, the reason most people attend these shows is not that you intend to purchase a half-million-dollar motor home, you just want to see how the other half (actually it is only 1%) live.

Imagine a giant motor coach listed at a half-million on sale "show special only \$299,995". I have sent alone some pictures so you can also see inside these luxury campers, with soft leather seating, deluxe full-size appliances, granite countertops even a laundry center and a slide-out bedroom. All for more than the average person would spend on a new home. Lifestyles of the rich & famous.

As I viewed these \$100,000 plus homes I began to reminisce about my early camping experiences when I was just a child. In the '50s & '60s most families were doing well. They could afford a good home and luxuries like a boat or a camper. They had the income and the time to travel. A new interstate highway system had just been developed and families could vacation, visit the National parks and stay in either roadside motels or the many affordable campgrounds popping up all over the country.

Children like myself growing up in the '60s fondly remember these good times and now in retirement wish to bring back those good memories. Unfortunately for the vast majority of those in America, this vision will never be realized. Retirement funds were spent on high priced colleges for their children. The factory dad worked at for decades closed and his job was outsourced to China, or maybe unforeseen circumstances caused the loss of the family home. Now there is no money, no home and for many life is spent moving place to place sleeping in their car or worse on the street.

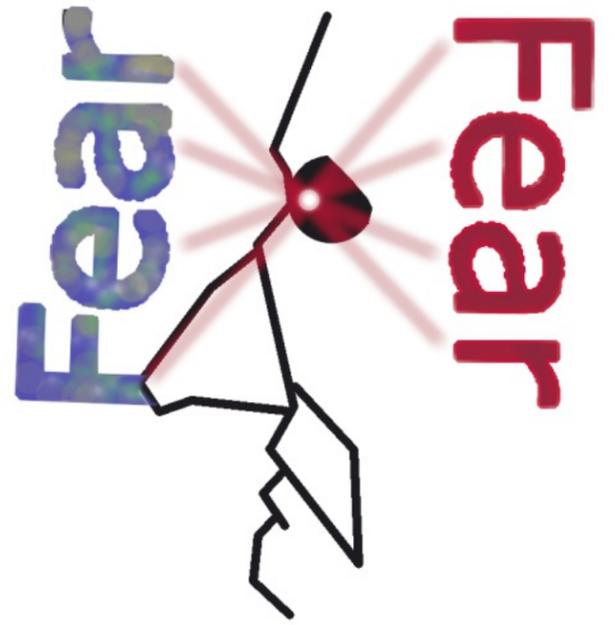
As I travel throughout the south in my converted camper van, I see scenes like these everywhere. (the picture of an elderly gentleman sleeping in his car was taken one morning as I awoke and glanced outside). This is the new great divide now occurring in America. The scene I see every night traveling from place to place is our new reality. Adding insult to injury many communities are even passing ordinances to prohibit overnight parking, just pushing these destitute souls away instead of assisting. Hundreds of good people with nowhere to live and now nowhere to go. Shame on U.S.



Escape the News Cycle (without leaving the USA)

by Glen Birbeck

During my time in Ecuador, when escaping the Maine winter, I encountered all sorts of people. Not just nationalities, something that means less and less in our "connected" world. The Asian and the African at home both have dishes pointed at the sky. They can watch the same media. If they do, and absorb what they see into themselves, they can easily get agitated. USA people (they call themselves Americans) with this 24 hour news



induced agitation, are sometimes driven to leave their country, the USA. They explain to me over a beer on the sidewalk in Vilcabamba why they moved. The political left or the right in the states have made it impossible for them to live there.

What? I think to myself, something doesn't make sense. I think about how it is for me, my experience in rural Maine, the half a year I usually spend here. I don't like a lot of what I hear on the news. But would it drive me to leave the country? If it gave any indication that it was about to, I'd turn off the media feed. Hard to do for an addict, but possible. Then all I'd have to deal with would be the day to day reality...which is fairly calm.

In truth, the raw material for the 24/7 news cycle is 99% absent from local reality. When Punch hits Judy in DC (Donald and Nancy) it has zero effect on my life. When a refugee from the USA lands in Vilcabamba they should feel instant relief. I can assure you that Ecuadorians do NOT obsess with what goes on in Quito...unless the price of gas goes up. No, the newly arrived gringo still watches CNN off a satellite, still surfs the web to learn of the terrible doings of the left or right. In truth he still gets excited about it, not as much though. When I suggest they could have detoxed and stayed in the states simply by turning off the news feeds and conspiracy web sites I get a blank expression. Yes, and a heroin addict can simply quit the drug. I think the new transplant is able to calm down a bit because the locals and foreigners in the village are calm. They are not talking about what Nancy and Donald did. They're talking about who's organic veggie's are better. Vegetables ARE something we internalize. We want our sprouts and greens to be non toxic. Is the 24/7 news cycle toxic? Does the continuous bile pouring from speakers and screens contain toxins? What we ingest changes us. What you eat, you are. What you watch and listen to feeds your model of the world. If that nourishment is contaminated it will affect the mind, the reality model each of us carry.

It is time for Marshal McLuhan to write another book like "Understanding Media". That seminal work, published in 1964, dealt with the effect of media on the mind and, by extension, on society. He said, "We shape our tools and thereafter our tools shape us". The computer is the universal tool. The internet is just one of the jobs it does. McLuhan died in 1980. He would have found these intervening 40 years quite interesting. He is famous for his statement that "The medium is the message" In his day the media were newspapers, television and radio. Today those are still here, but the internet dwarfs them all.

Nearly everyone will agree that in only 25 years the internet has shaped us, mentally. The news goes from one crisis to another. Even the weather person joins in. You can see them in near ecstasy reporting a massive snow storm approaching. Salt, sugar and msg are added to food. Fear and apprehension are added to news, and even to weather forecasts. Is there a path leading out of this? Yes, but, sorry, its a path that leads us back to square one...the individual. Humans need to be shorn of some of these ancient and archaic behaviors. When we lived more in nature, when we were some predator's favorite meal, fear aided survival. Now it may lead to our destruction.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7:

- U.S. National Toboggan Championships, at the Camden Snow Bowl this Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Team registration is sold out, but there's plenty of room on the sidelines to cheer on the gliders. The toboggan chute will be open from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday for fun runs at \$5 per person. CamdenSnowBowl.com has details.
- Poet Jason Grundstrom-Whitney at Thomaston Public Library, 5:30 p.m. He reads from his first book of poetry, "Bear, Coyote, Raven," nominated for a Pushcart Prize and a National Book Award. The poems welcome the reader into the shape-shifting world of Bear, who sometimes gets his paw stuck in a back-street dumpster; Coyote, who shows people how to trick themselves; and Raven, who travels to the far north to bring back another story. The reading is open to all and refreshments will be served.
- "Rio Bravo," 6:30 p.m. in Thomaston Public Library's Friday Night Films. February's Westerns opens with the story of a gunslinger who kills a man in a saloon. Sheriff John T. Chance (John Wayne) arrests him with the aid of his former deputy and now town drunk, Dude (Dean Martin). Before long, the gunslinger's brother, a wealthy land baron, hires gunmen and threatens to bust his brother out of jail. Chance decides to make a stand, enlisting Dude, old Stumpy (Walter Brennan), and baby-faced cowboy Colorado Ryan (Ricky Nelson) to help.
- Friday Open Mics, in Warren, Saint George River Cafe, 310 Main Street, second and fourth Fridays, at 6:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8:

- Great Thunder Chicken Drum at HOME in Waldoboro, from 1 to 3 p.m. The huge drum will be at HOME: Honoring Ourselves & Mother Earth, at 17 Friendship Road, next to Narrows Tavern. Children and adults are invited to bring rattles or hand drums, join the drum circle, and play to welcome the full moon.
- Casting Call for Original Musical, at Riley School, 73 Warrenton Street, Rockport. Children ages 13 to 17 audition at 2 p.m. and adults at 3 p.m. The producers are looking for singers for an original musical by Annie Laurita. Minimal rehearsal commitment through May. June and July will require M-W-F evenings and some Saturdays. Performance dates are July 31, August 1 and 2. Prepare 16 bars from any musical and bring sheet music. To sign up, email AnnieLauritaProductions@gmail.com.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9:

- "How Buildings Speak: Architecture as Media," 1 p.m. at Cushing Public Library. Judith Bing and J. Brooke Harrington explore the way architecture communicates its purposes and values. Buildings "speak" in visual terms legible to most observers – with provocative exceptions. The presenters are Associates at the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies at Harvard University and visiting scholars at the Aga Khan Documentation Center at MIT, in Cambridge. They live in Cushing. Their free talk is presented in the runup to the 33rd annual Camden Conference livestreamed to the Hutchinson Center in Belfast, Strand Theatre in Rockland, and Hannaford Hall in Portland.
- Sunday Jams in Rockland, Sail, Power, & Steam Museum, 75 Mechanic Street, 1:30 p.m.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 10:

- 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: Chinese New Year – Year of the Rat.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11:

- The Tempest at Watts Hall in Thomaston, presented by Ashwood Waldorf School's seventh and eighth graders on Wednesday, February 12, at 6 p.m. and Thursday, February 13, at 10 a.m. The public is invited and the performances are free of charge.
- "Windows into Eternity: Exploring Iconography," 6:30 p.m. at Camden Public Library. Artist Kathryn Oliver Oliver will talk about the symbolic world of Iconography in the mystical tradition of the East and how it has inspired her artistic journey.
- "Stepping Up to the Plate" at Rockland Public Library, 6:30 p.m. Midcoast Women hosts the program in its Collective Voices storytelling series, about how every game or training session is an opportunity to face a challenge. Storytellers will be Kristina Kelly, National Soccer Player of the Year; Anne Williams, an ice hockey skater with Parkinson's; and Anna Goodale, Olympic Gold Medalist. Susanna Liller, author "You are a Heroine," will moderate. The event is free and open to the public. Learn more at midcoastwomen.org.
- Tuesday Jams in Thomaston, Federated Church, 8 Hylar Street, at 7 p.m. Folk, country, blues, gospel. FMI: 273-2914.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 12:

- Author of "Journey from Life to Life" at Camden Public Library, Thursday, February 13, at 6:30 p.m. Dr. Krishna Bhatta will discuss his new book, which attempts to demystify the underlying principles of life and death. Through his book and presentation, Dr. Bhatta offers insights into the nature of the human soul and its journey and answers the question "Can I plan for the next life too?" He is an author, surgeon and inventor, practicing as chief of urology at Northern Light Eastern Maine Medical Center in Bangor.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13:

- Rockland Public Library's Creative Art Crew: Salt Dough Hearts, Thursday, February 13, at 3:45 p.m. Join Mary Jane to make salt dough hearts and paint them to give to your Valentine. The free program is for all ages. Creative Art Crew meets second Thursdays of the month.
- Eat, Speak, Love", The Millay House's Poetry Slam and Spoken Word Open Mic at Fog Bar and Café, Rockland. The evening begins with an open mic from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.; sign-up sheet available at 5:00. The evening's featured poet, Travis Gauvin, reads from 6:30 to 7:00. His poems talk about love, self-doubt, the human mind and spirit, mental health, the process of admitting you're your own worst enemy, and "pizza and beer money – that little bit of money we spend ... even when we're behind on our rent." The competitive Poetry Slam sign-up begins at 7:00 and the Slam runs from 7:30 to 9:00, when prizes will be awarded. The evening ends with an extended open mic from 9:15 to 10:15. The event is free and open to the public.
- 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, FEBRUARY 14:

- Rockland Public Library Holds Annual "Love Your Library; Your Library Loves You" Open House, on Friday, February 14, from 4:30 to 7 p.m. The free open house will feature hot food and soups, drinks, and desserts. Jazz duo Bill Barnes and Dave Briggs will provide music in the Reading Room. Steve Athearn will share his talents as roving juggler throughout the building. Local artist Susan Beebe will lead an art activity for kids. Those with a Rockland Public Library card may put their name in for door prizes, which will include an iPad and gift cards for local grocery stores and other businesses.
- The Blue Café re-opens Friday night, at the Camden Opera House, 7 p.m. Boston-based duo Cold Chocolate will perform in the intimate space on the third floor. Admission is free.
- HAPPY 18th BIRTHDAY WRFR!!

Around Town is compiled by Chuck Gifford.

An expanded listing is online at wrfr.org

Please submit calendar items to gowrfr@gmail.com

Our thanks to The Free Press for sharing its calendar.

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We are all volunteers, and you are invited to join us.

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Blue Highways w/ Bruce Swan

9 a.m. - 11 a.m. Sundays on WRFR

Music that will celebrate and explore the road less traveled. Roots, Folk, Blues, Rock, and Americana, music from artists local and afar; familiar and not; old and new. Please join your host Bruce Swan every Sunday at 9:00 AM.

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