

My wife can do almost anything

by Phil Crossman

My wife can do almost anything, really, almost anything. I mean mechanical stuff, electronic stuff, and carpentry stuff, plus all sorts of things that involve thinking, like philosophical and ethereal stuff. Further, she's a marvelous painter and runs her own very successful gallery. She also knows (she reminds me now and then) what's best for me which is a real plus since I have little sense myself; enjoys doing laundry, is an accomplished seamstress and, very important, she can cook. One thing she cannot do, however (the only thing I've discovered so far) is throw a flatbar, toss really; she can't toss a flatbar. A flatbar, for those of you who are unfamiliar, is a steel pry tool/nail puller, kind of a mini-wrecking bar, about 16 inches long. I was on our roof a few years ago shingling; something she could have done herself as she reminded me, were she not busy simultaneously doing several of the other things she can do. I needed my flatbar and had left it on the ground near the bottom of the staging. I called down to her and asked her to toss it up to me. She retrieved it and curled her mouth up on one side; her brow furrowed, and she put her hands on her hips as she regarded first the flatbar and then me on the roof. It was the only time I've ever seen that particular expression cross her face. I'd never seen it before, and I've never seen it since. If I never do again it will be too soon and, in that event, I will not press my request. She held the flatbar by the straight end, looked up at me as if to gauge the trajectory, and took a couple of softball pitcher type practice swings, creating an arc from behind to front of about 180 degrees. Then she held it by the other end, the one with the right-angle bend and did the same thing. Typically deliberative, she repeated the procedure trying one method then the other. Because the sun was setting, I urged her on and, clearly pressured and unsettled, she opted for a toss holding the angled end. With her tongue held to starboard by her teeth and with, as I say, an odd expression, she let it fly.

We used to have a cat. On that day it was preening itself on the doorstep off to port. Its name was Alice and it could not catch a flatbar with any more aplomb than my wife can toss one.

PS: Don't leap to conclusions. The cat was not hit by the flatbar but it was very close. Alice lived, subsequently out of range, a long and contented life.

THE LAND OF FRUITS AND NUTS

by Steve Carroll

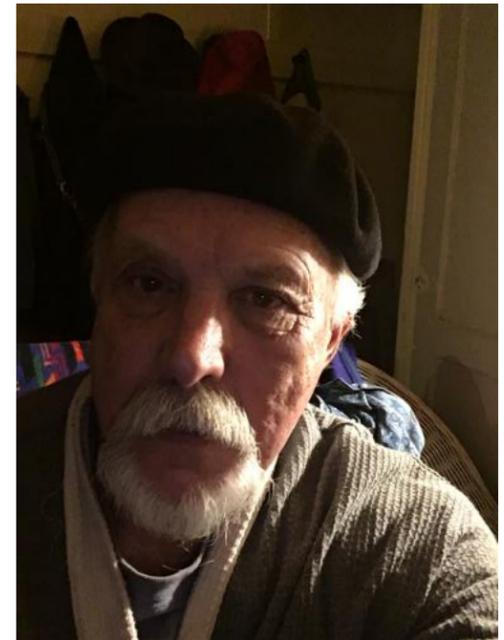
Los Angeles: last week against my better judgement, I reluctantly agreed to accompany my wife on a journey clear across the country to visit her 27 year old son who happily resides on the 14th floor of A downtown LA high rise. Loving every minute of this mad lifestyle he thinks nothing of jumping onto the Ventura freeway and racing over to Malibu or Santa Monica for a \$40 lunch which would include a sandwich, wine and tip after of course dropping \$70 to fill up the tank with \$6.50 a gallon gasoline. He has definitely drank too much of the California cool aid, because when I suggested we do something about the insanely high fuel prices he replied well it's all because of those dam Russians and we shouldn't be buying gas anyway. We should all drive electric cars. And how much are those I queried . oh, you can get a new one for only 50 grand .. Well I said. You can buy a hell of alot of gasoline for \$50,000. But what about the environment he shot back. The Wales are big enough to take care of themselves, I've got to figure out how I'm going to pay for all this stuff. We've all got to sacrifice for the good of the planet. Listen son this old planet will be spinning around long after we're all gone, so I suggest you stop paying attention to these foolish politicians and start saving for a rainy day. Well gramps it never rains in southern California. Ok honey, I think it's time we got back to good old Maine where all the sensible people live.



Milan Pavich WRFR DJ

by Ron Staschak

Milan is an amazing man. As I was interviewing him, I felt I was in the presence of genius. Milan has numerous interests and his show, Hard Bob Lounge-Wednesday 1-3, is amazing. The intertwining of music and history is incredible. Listen in. You will be hooked.



1)What do you do at the radio station?

I am presenting a 2 hour show called Hard Bop Lounge feature jazz of the early 1950's to late 1960's. The show focuses on the history of hard bop, or East Coast, jazz and showcases the talents of some of the finest musicians in American music.

2) How long have you been volunteering?

I started the show on Dec. 22, 2021. The Wednesday 1pm time slot is perfect for me.

3) Why did you decide to volunteer/why did you want to have a show?

When COVID drove us all inside, I used my time to assemble a couple "vintage" stereo systems in my home, rebuilding speakers and finding great online deals on amps, Bluetooth connections, and headphones. Modern stereo equipment is great, but it's hard to match the sound of 1970's floor-standing speakers for revealing the detail in quality jazz recordings, such as Blue Note's extensive catalog.

4) Other than the show you host, what is your favorite show?

I love DH Chuckie's show and the Professor Bop and Uncle Paul's Closet. We have the best jazz lineup on the Midcoast.

5) Is there a question should have asked you?

How do you like Rockland?

I find Rockland to be a stimulating and enjoyable place for retirement. I'm hoping that WRFR and live music outlets will thrive and attract new, young and diverse residents.

6) What is the last great record you had heard for the first time?

The last great record I heard for the first time was "The Elmo Hope Trio" and I featured it on last week's show. One of the pleasures of doing this

show is that I am constantly finding and playing lesser known recordings from great jazz artists.

7) What I the last great book you have read?

The last great book I read was "Citizens" a history of the French Revolution by Simon Schama. He's my favorite living historian.

The People of Ukraine do not want to be Invaded

by Nathan Davis

Some recent commentary, in this publication, on Rockland Metro, and elsewhere, has expressed ambivalence towards the Russian invasion of Ukraine. In the current political climate and in times of war generally, ambivalence can be an unpopular position, and I am glad that The Buzz and Rockland Metro are unafraid to host unpopular opinions. This particular ambivalence seems to be driven by past American imperialism and hypocrisy as well as the government of Ukraine's failure to blossom into an unblemished exemplar of civic virtue and liberal democracy. All true, all undeniable. Also all irrelevant to a moral accounting of Russia's invasion, which deserves nothing but condemnation. Indeed, judging the invasion as a consequence of great power rivalry misses the central, fundamental point: the people of Ukraine do not want to be invaded, occupied, and murdered by Russia, and they have every right to resist by lethal force and rally the rest of the world to their aid. Trying to explain away the invasion as a result of American or NATO imperialism centers our goals and actions, pushes those of the people of Ukraine to the moral periphery, and thereby engages in the very imperialism that critics claim to deplore. So, yes, think critically about American history, but also think clearly about the Russian army murdering civilians for the sake of Vladimir Putin's imperial ambitions.

Metro Show on the War, with Russian Ukrainian American Sergei Breus

We had a great conversation on the Metro Show last week with Russian Ukrainian American Sergei Breus from Blue Hill. We did it on Zoom, which is turning out to be a great way to do a combined radio and TV show, which is what the Metro Show has become with the help of Craig Mathieson, chief volunteer of Maine Coast TV.

But to get back to Sergei, he is a carpenter and builder in Blue Hill, where he moved from the Soviet Union hoping to get a job in oceanography, which he had studied in Leningrad, but failing that he started his own business, which has been quite successful. Before coming to Maine he had lived in Kiev, which he says is a beautiful city. His father is Ukrainian, his mother Russian.

Sergei does not like this war, he does not like Putin, but he blames the conflict on the policy of the West which has pushed NATO and its nuclear missiles closer and closer to Moscow, ignoring the interests and concerns of the Russians, and creating a situation as intolerable for them as would be a Russian military alliance with Mexico for us. Would we invade Mexico to stop that? You bet!

Bottom line: this war, which is existential for Russia and of relative unimportance to our global interests; this war, which is a disaster for both the Russian people and the Ukrainian people and which is of relative insignificance to us, except as a clickfest for the corporate media and a huge boon for the U.S. military industrial complex which is suddenly seeing orders for billions in weapons: this war which could very well end with a nuclear exchange and the painful death of most of the people on earth; this stupid, unnecessary, tragic war could easily be ended today if only the West would agree that Ukraine would not become part of NATO.

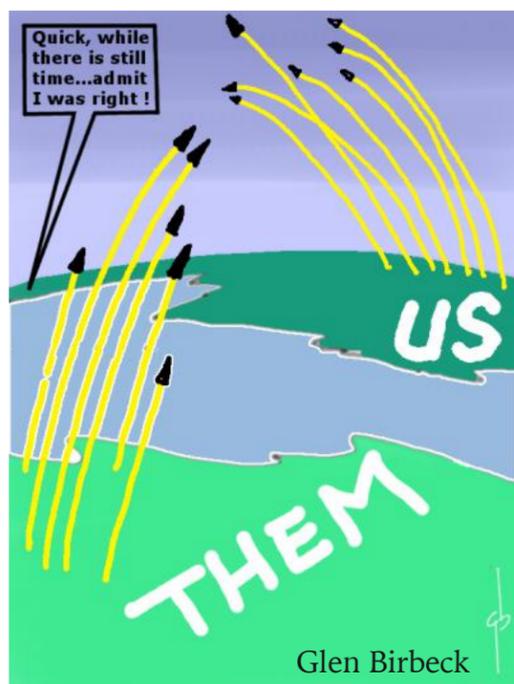
There is more to it, of course, but what matters is that it could easily be settled by compromises that would be hugely beneficial both to the Ukrainians and the Russians. Compromise? Don't I mean to say appeasement? How horrible! Better that millions should die. Millions of Ukrainians and Russians that is. We are, fortunately, quite far away.

Join us next Wednesday at 5 for the Metro Show and tell us why Sergei and I are wrong, or tell us about something else entirely. We will be on Zoom and you are invited to join: Meeting ID: 587 980 7193, Passcode: eT60TP

A clickable link can be found on the wrfr.org website by going to the Metro Show under Programs/Shows.

And of course you can listen to the show on WRFR, 93.3 fm or streaming at wrfr.org. Or watch on cable channel 7 or mainecoast.tv

Joe Steinberger



Glen Birbeck



Dear Buzz,

I must take issue with Steve Carroll's commentary of March 18 blaming Russia's invasion of Ukraine on the expansion of NATO. Missing from Carroll's piece is any consideration of the kind of government the people of Ukraine (or Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, the Baltic countries, etc.) actually want.

Yes, Germany was the easternmost NATO country in 1991. The aforementioned countries were at that time either reluctant pieces of the Soviet Union, or governed by Soviet-puppet communist dictators. People in those countries consistently (and often at the risk of their lives) "voted with their feet" by fleeing to western-style democracies.

When I spent nine months in Bulgaria (a new member of both NATO and the European Union) in 2018-2019, I met a few older Bulgarians nostalgic for the certainties of communism. But they were vastly outnumbered by people under the age of 50 invested in building a democratic future that includes freedom of travel, speech, and free enterprise. They aren't happy that low-level operatives of the old regimes retain an outsized political and economic presence, but they do look to the democracies of Western Europe and the United States for inspiration.

And as dismal as our own track record has been in Vietnam, Nicaragua, Iraq, and elsewhere, NATO still stands for most of the right things. It has expanded because the people of Eastern Europe want it to. Vladimir Putin is murdering Ukrainian civilians because he doesn't like it. Excusing him is inexcusable.

Hank Garfield

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WEEK ONE HUNDRED-SIX

COVID-19 RANDOM NOTES WHILE SHELTERING IN PLACE

by Phyllis Merriam

After I thought my head would explode upon reading Steve Carroll's piece in *The Buzz* about Putin's War in Ukraine, I reminded myself of the First Amendment to the US Constitution of the rights of citizens to free speech, I calmed down – to some extent.

Then I thought, well, this person hasn't a grasp of history, especially Russian and Ukrainian history, and is unable to differentiate between his beliefs and evidence-based facts. And what about the children? What about the children? He's not alone. Millions follow Tucker Carlson's every word as gospel truths. Russian state TV carries Tucker's every word in translation. Even as Putin's War leaves Ukrainians massacred, their homeland devastated and more than 10 million citizens of a new democracy brutalized and displaced, Putin-Apologists' adhere to accepting this slaughter. Cognitive dissonance is hard at work – even in our mid-coast.

Sunday was the spring equinox with mild temperatures that brought out many walkers to enjoy the Harbor Trail. I even saw a bee flying around our yard.

Mango noticed an errant, sluggish fly in our living room and became hyper-alert, scanning its every move. He quickly dispatched it by catching it and eating it. Clever cat.

Yesterday, I was enjoying the sunshine when the porch began to rumble. I looked up to see two copters heading northeastward. Just very small tastes of what Ukrainians fear every day. Never mind the constant air raid sirens, thousands running for underground shelters with their children, cut off from heat, water, food, medicine, and any help while they try to survive an apocalypse.

Today, I found a way to securely transfer funds to a Ukrainian aide group of young people who receive and distribute food and medicine to frontline soldiers and civilians. Photos of the organizers before and after the war show the emotional tolls.

The obvious racist and paternalistic overtones from white male Republicans hammering Supreme Court Justice Nominee Kentanji Brown Jackson dominate the hearings. She has the qualifications, demeanor and patience to be on the SCOTUS.

The first female Secretary of State Madeleine Albright has died at the age of 84. She had a huge collection of pins she would wear during her diplomatic career to "send" diplomatic messages, and wrote a book, "Read My Pins." On one occasion she infuriated Putin when he asked her what the three monkey pins she was wearing meant. Madame Secretary Albright responded, "They mean Hear No Evil, Speak No Evil, See No Evil. I wear it because I think your policy in Chechny is evil."

