THE BERRY CENTER

News *from* The Berry Center

Fall 2022

IN THIS ISSUE

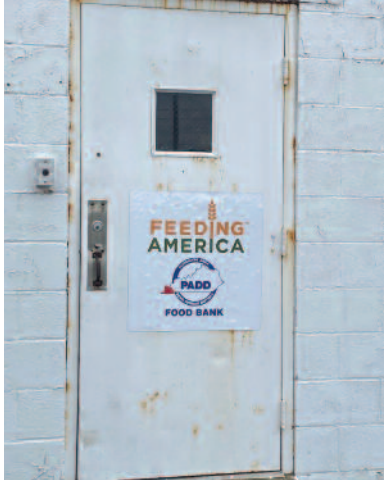
Tad Myre of the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels

Western Kentucky was struck by devastating tornadoes on December 10, 2021.

INTERVIEW WITH THE HONORABLE KENTUCKY COLONEL TRUSTEE TAD MYRE

Interview by Loren Carlson, Director of Advancement

In 2021 I met Tad Myre, an attorney representing a charitable organization in Frankfort, Kentucky, which is run by a farmer and friend of The Berry Center. As Tad learned more about The Berry Center and our programs he suggested we would be a good candidate for a Good Works Program Grant from The Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels (HOKC), of which he is a trustee. Our first grant from HOKC was to purchase a farm truck for the Wendell Berry Farming Program Sterling College. Then, when the devastating tornadoes struck western Kentucky we were able to apply for relief funding through HOKC to help Our Home Place Meat supply healthy local beef to those in need. We are honored to partner with HOKC because they understand the importance of supporting organizations doing good work every day in communities across Kentucky.



Left: Beth Douglas, Director of OHPM, delivers hundreds of pounds of fresh local meat from Henry County farmers to Mercy Chefs in Paducah, KY. Center: Feeding America PADD in Mayfield, KY is still working to feed those trying to rebuild after the tornadoes struck western Kentucky. Right Generous support from the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels allowed OHPM to donate thousands of dollars worth of meat to Feeding America PADD in Mayfield, KY.

Here are a few highlights from my interview with General Myre.

Q: What inspired you to become a Kentucky Colonel and how long have you served?

A. Becoming a Kentucky Colonel is only possible by gubernatorial appointment and is typically bestowed on an individual in recognition of his or her good civic or charitable works. I received a certificate a few decades back and am not quite sure what I did to deserve it. Such an appointment does not mean that one is a member of the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels. To be what we call an "active Colonel," one connects to HOKC by making a charitable contribution to our Good Works Program. My first association with the organization came a different way, via my legal representation of HOKC for many years. Several years back, I was asked if I would be willing to serve on the Board and, after some thought, decided to accept that honor, relinquishing my role as HOKC attorney. I have been on board since 2018 and have enjoyed every minute of it.

Q: What made you want to get involved with The Berry Center?

A. Well, everybody has heard of Wendell Berry and the Berry Center. I certainly had. It was at that Frankfort meeting that I first met you and Mary Berry and that encounter inspired me to get up there, pay you all a visit, buy some good books (and a Berry Center baseball hat) and eventually attend the May festival. You all do such wonderful and essential work and are positioned to carry Wendell Berry's philosophy and values forward for future generations.

Q: We must take care of people in emergency situations but your goals seem to be working on the root causes of problems in our state. We at TBC share that goal. How are you using philanthropy to support cultural change?

A. HOKC doesn't really hold itself out as a change agent so much as an organization that assists other charitable organizations, some of which are themselves change agents. Poverty, substance abuse, housing, food security, domestic violence, are just a few of the ailments that have afflicted Kentuckians for decades and we do our best to stanch the bleeding, but at the same time try to raise up cultural organizations, museums, community organizations and the like, and we are always looking to partner with like-minded organizations. HOKC is blessed with an incredible staff and board that keeps abreast of the needs of Kentuckians through geographic diversity across the Commonwealth. Much of our knowledge comes from the very organizations we support; we are constantly learning from them. Our active Colonels consist of some of the most generous individuals you'll find, and we try to honor them with good stewardship of that generosity, learning about and responding to the needs of Kentuckians and donating (might we say reinvesting?) virtually every dollar we receive from them through the Good Works Program. Our grantees and donor base together keep us inspired, active, alert, and knowledgeable, and we try to reflect that culture of generosity through our time and treasure.

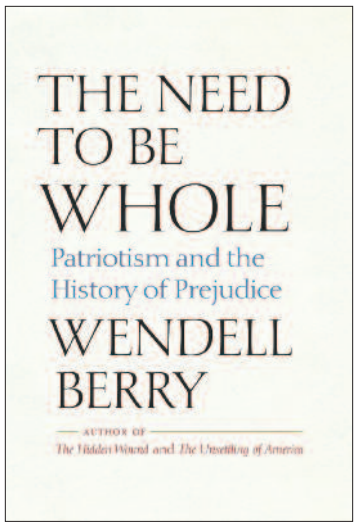
The Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels

THE AGRARIAN CULTURE CENTER AND BOOKSTORE

We here at The Berry Center (and I know many of you as well) have been eagerly anticipating the fall release of two new books by Wendell. You can help support the vital work of The Berry Center by pre-ordering your copy from The Bookstore at The Berry Center at www.berrycenterbookstore.org.

Coming October 4th

The Need to be Whole: Patriotism and the History of Prejudice

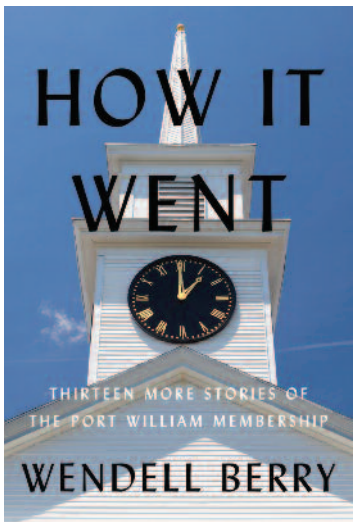


"Wendell Berry has never been afraid to speak up for the dispossessed. *The Need to Be Whole* continues the work he began in *The Hidden Wound* (1970) and *The Unsettling of America* (1977), demanding a careful exploration of this hard, shared truth: The wealth of the mighty few governing this nation has been built on the unpaid labor of others.

Without historical understanding of this practice of dispossession—the displacement of Native peoples, the destruction of both the land and land-based communities, ongoing racial division—we are doomed to continue industrialism's assault on both the natural world and every sacred American ideal. Berry writes, "To deal with so great a problem, the best idea may not be to go ahead in our present state of unhealth to more disease and more product development. It may be that our proper first resort should be to history: to see if the truth we need to pursue might be behind us where we have ceased to look." If there is hope for us, this is it: that we honestly face our past and move into a future guided by the natural laws of affection. This book furthers Mr. Berry's part in what is surely our country's most vital conversation."
Order your copy through this link.

Coming November 8th

How It Went: Thirteen More Stories of the Port William Membership



"For those readers of his poetry and those inspired by his increasingly vital work as advocate for rational land use and the right-size life, these stories of Wendell Berry's offer entry into the fictional place of value and beauty that is Port William, Kentucky. Berry has said it's taken a lifetime for him to learn to write like an old man, and that's what we have here, stories told with grace and ease and majesty. Wendell Berry is one of our greatest living American authors, writing with the wisdom of maturity and the incandescence that comes of love.

These thirteen new works explore the memory and imagination of Andy Catlett, one of the well-loved central characters of the Port William saga. From 1932 to 2021, these stories span the length of Andy's life, from before the outbreak of the Second World War to the threatened end of rural life in America."
Order your copy through this link.

—Virginia Berry Aguilar
Director, Agrarian Culture Center and Bookstore

THE ARCHIVE OF THE BERRY CENTER

2022 MARKS THE 50th Anniversary of Kentucky Humanities. An affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), the council was established in 1972 (as state councils all across the country were being likewise established) when Kentucky was invited to participate in developing federally funded humanities councils for the purpose of granting money to support projects at a local level which would inspire, spark meaningful civil discourse, and educate citizens about their states' history, people, and culture. From the beginning the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) granted federal funding directly to state governments for their arts councils which then became state agencies. Unlike arts councils however, in order establish humanities councils, an agency had to start a non-profit, apply for federal grants for financial support and match this funding with private dollars raised. The Council therefore, is an affiliate of the NEH, and is not a state agency.

Thus began the Kentucky Humanities Council, now named Kentucky Humanities. It has grown from its initial 15-member volunteer board to a 23-member volunteer board, people drawn from all over the state, who are elected for 6-year terms, and are unselfishly devoted to the work of the Council, giving freely of their time and resources. They raise funds to support the programs that mean so much to them and they participate eagerly in gauging the success of each of the programs they put forth.

Relationships and partnerships have been the hallmark of this vital organization. Study of the humanities—history, philosophy, and religion, modern and ancient languages and literature, fine and performing arts, media and cultural studies as well as other fields augment our knowledge and understanding of the world as we are encouraged to consider and appreciate the differences between cultures and communities around the world, to think creatively and critically, to ask questions. The humanities have been considered integral to an education since ancient times when young men were prepared for active citizenship through a course of general education emphasizing humanities subjects. They knew then that study of the humanities was foundational to civilization, as it dispels prejudice and encourages understanding in interpreting the human experience as individuals and societies.

From its inception in the early seventies, when the University of Kentucky gave Kentucky Humanities office space, a telephone, and a typewriter (This particular partnership continues to this day and is unique among state councils.), partnerships have increased in number. Under the leadership of its current executive director, Bill Goodman, Kentucky Humanities has expanded its reach, programming, influence, and support in the development of appealing programs that are state-wide but also include local projects in the humanities. Though much was sidelined during the Covid pandemic, the Council, nevertheless delivered through the CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) Act and the American Rescue Plan, grants, including a generous grant to The Berry Center (TBC) to support the Archive's programming—the Distinguished Lecture Series and development of self-directed tours at TBC.

When I asked Bill Goodman, the executive director to appear as a guest lecturer for the Distinguished Lecture series, he graciously agreed. I expected that his lecture would be about his work at Kentucky Humanities and their 50 years of involvement in telling "Kentucky's Story," and it was, but I was thrilled to hear him also speak in his introduction, at length, about the necessity for education in the humanities—particularly Kentucky history—in our public schools. His compelling comments, I believe, should be heard by everyone who cares about public education.

In 2019 the General Assembly passed Kentucky Standards for Social Studies, "Educating for Civic Life in a Democracy." The text of the standards includes this statement: "America's history is vast and complex from past to present. It is the story of people, places, events, ideas, and documents which shaped the nation today. The preparation of young people for participation in America's democratic society is vital."

The Berry Center farm in Henry County, Kentucky.

"How could a young person in Kentucky," Mr. Goodman asked, "grow into a well-rounded, thinking, literate human being without learning something of the history of our state?" His concern about this led directly to his program, "Think History"—a podcast featuring interesting and informative 90 second narratives about persons and events from Kentucky's past. It appears on 88.9 WEKU FM and Murray's WKMS FM daily. You can also listen here: https://www.weku.org/podcast/think-history

The Berry Center is pleased to have received over $21,000 in support from Kentucky Humanities to combat the effects of the COVID-19 crisis to grow and adapt our programming to a hybrid in-person/virtual model such as the Distinguished Lecture Series. This program seeks to inform the audience, particularly Wendell Berry Farming Program students and the public, of issues in local culture to encourage thinking deeply about the people and events which have shaped it today. We were established by Mary Berry because people in all parts of agriculture had forgotten a program whose principles "worked once and for a long time for the people it was meant to help," and how it could work again, with a little imagination. Self-directed tours which also are being developed with the support of Kentucky Humanities, will educate visitors about the legacy of agrarianism, three great agrarians, and Kentucky's agricultural history in the twentieth century—one of Kentucky's stories which, but for our work, would be overlooked. We want our visitors to think beyond what surrounds us today—industrial agriculture—to think critically about what is and is not inevitable. We want them to be exposed to the part of Kentucky's Story told here and consider what might be possible.

Mr. Goodman's lecture for the Josephine Ardery Distinguished Lecture Series, which includes examples of his podcast segments, is on YouTube. Search for "The Berry Center Bill Goodman."

Michele Guthrie
Director, The Archives at The Berry Center

Andy Lane and Doug Wharton instructed our Grassfed Beef Workshop for Chefs at Foxhollow Farm in August.

OUR HOME PLACE MEAT

It feels like I was just writing an update for our Spring Newsletter and it shouldn't be time to connect with you again, but here we are. This year we were awarded $31,000 from the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels and with the additional money we raised from our members, we donated over $40,000 worth of Rose Veal to western Kentucky tornado relief. Our commitment to helping Kentucky heal and making sure people have quality meat available still stands. Unfortunately, we aren't just offering relief from devastating tornadoes. The destructive flash flooding that washed through eastern Kentucky at the end of July allowed another tragic opportunity for us to rally our resources and feed the good people of the opposite end of the state.

As a native of Hazard, Kentucky, I know firsthand the hollers that were destroyed by the floods. It hurts my heart to see anyone suffering, but to see the community suffer that raised me, (and did a mighty fine job, if I might add!) the hurt went just a little deeper. Recently, I had the opportunity to start delivering meat and the first drop off was in Perry County to A.B. Combs Elementary School, a school that had been closed four years ago, but that is now housing two schools (Robinson Elementary and Buckhorn School) that were flooded and/or destroyed in the flooding. I attended Robinson Elementary school many moons ago and it lifted my soul to make a difference to the people who made such a difference to me. My second drop off was in Letcher County at CANE Kitchen that is not only preparing and serving three meals a day, seven days a week, but also running the free farmers market sponsored through The LEE Initiative. Our donation can and will be used in both regards.

The Berry Center and Our Home Place Meat have set a goal of raising $40,000 so we can provide meat to those in need. So far The Norton Foundation has

granted $20,000 toward our eastern Kentucy relief efforts, The Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels have granted another $10,000, and over $2,000 has been raised by our Berry Center members. This puts us well on our way to meeting our goal but we still your help! If you visit berrycenter.org, you can donate to our mission of bringing healthy and quality meat to our neighbors and friends in eastern Kentucky.

On a more positive note, Our Home Place Meat recently hosted our Hand Hewn Grassfed Beef Workshop for Chefs, sponsored and held at Foxhollow Farm. Andy Land and Doug Wharton are the same friends of Hand Hewn Farm in Fresno, Ohio that hosted and led us in our hog killing in January. This workshop focused on teaching chefs how to break down and get the most out of a whole Rose Veal animal. As it turns out, we didn't just have chefs sign up for the class, but we also had butchers and hunters. This medley of participants allowed for an unexpected collaboration of approach, techniques, and recipe ideas. All in all, this was another successful, inspiring, and delicious event. Our next Hand Hewn Hog Killing is currently scheduled for January 27-29, 2023 in New Castle, Kentucky. Keep an eye out for tickets for sale on ourhomeplacemeat.com!

—Beth Douglas
OHPM Marketing and Communications Manager

FEATURED FARMER: JOSEPH FISCHER

Interview By Beth Douglas
Director, Our Home Place Meat

Mary Berry and I recently sat down for a conversation about the state of Our Home Place Meat and The Berry Center's agro economic plan for Henry County. Part of that plan is growing the number of farmers in our program and allowing them the ability to afford to farm well. Joseph Fischer is the son of Our Home Place Meat Founding Farmer Jason Fischer and the transition of the contract from father to son is exciting to us. We strive to encourage and support young farmers and having Joseph gives us hope for our farmers and the future of Henry County farmers.

Our Home Place Meat farmer Joseph Fischer and some of his cows on his farm in Campbellsburg, Kentucky.

Tell us about your family's farming history.

My family has been farming for many generations. Since I was a kid, I've been helping out on the farm. I stayed busy helping my dad's and grandad's dairy operation until 2017. My dad and I also grew tobacco for many years until the last crop we raised in 2019. Since then we've focused mainly on hay and cattle production.

What does your farming operation look like now?

I manage a herd of 35 head on my farm with some help from my dad and his farm. I also produce a lot of hay on some neighboring farms I'm thankful to have. I still help out my dad and grandad with their beef herd. All of the calves I produce go to Our Home Place Meat.

If money were not an issue, what would your farming operation look like?

I'd be feeding a lot of cattle. I would probably buy enough acreage to keep me busy and I'd be helping out and providing meat and food to those who need it.

What does it mean to you to be an Our Home Place Meat Farmer?

It really means a lot. I like being able to discuss what helps, and what doesn't help so much for raising beef for the program. The program has really helped us out and I hope I'm able to continue to produce a plentiful quality animal for the program.

ROSE VEAL STEAK TARTARE RECIPE

Remember how I said that the Rose Veal butchering event was delicious? Trust me, it was. Our second day lunch was steak tartare featuring Rose Veal sirloin steak. This recipe is very basic and is a blank canvas for your creativity. Feel free to add ingredients and put your own spin on it. It sounds boujee*, but with a few simple, quality ingredients, you too can impress your family and friends. Or just eat it and not share. It's that good!

*An abbreviation of the French "bourgeois." A critical term used to describe people, things, and places that are definitively high-class.

—Beth Douglas, OHPM Marketing and Communications Manager

ORIGINAL STEAK TARTARE (ALLRECIPES.COM)

INGREDIENTS

1 pound finely ground or chopped Rose Veal Sirloin

1 teaspoon brown mustard

½ teaspoon hot sauce (or to taste)

1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce

1 teaspoon brandy*

1 pinch salt (or to taste)

Ground pepper to taste

1 egg

INSTRUCTIONS

In a medium bowl, mix together the beef, mustard, hot pepper sauce, Worcestershire sauce, brandy, salt, pepper and egg until well blended. Arrange the meat in a neat pile on a glass dish, and cover with aluminum foil. Refrigerate for 30 minutes to allow the flavors to blend. Serve as a spread on crackers or toast.

*Whiskey can be substituted for the brandy if you do not have it.

May 9, 2022 — The Wendell Berry Farming Program was on the road for the May Intensive. Ed Frerickson created a stellar itinerary for a field excursion combining Agroecology, Pasture Systems Management, and Animal Science courses. First stop on May 9: Adolphus, Kentucky, to visit with Debbie Apple and Greg Brann. Debbie's River Cottage Farm offers a variety of pasture-finished products. Greg worked as the State Grazing, Land, Soil Health Specialist for 23 of his 40-year tenure with NRCS. Among a host of other learning experiences with Greg, students participated in driving the flerd (a combination of a flock and a herd) of 350 animals down the road. Leah Bayens managed to snap a photo of this particular classroom moment that looks like a scene from an epic movie. The WBFP is indeed a unique hands-on education. (Featured: Julia Farner, Aarron Phillips, Ed Fredrickson, Sarah Ditton, David Beckman. Photo: Leah Bayens)

WENDELL BERRY FARMING PROGRAM

August 22, 2022 marked the commencement of the second year of study for the Wendell Berry Farming Program's (WBFP) second cohort. Dr. Leah Bayens, Dr. Ed Fredrickson, Rick Thomas, and visiting faculty Jonathan Shepherd will guide students through a full slate of courses this fall: Animal Science, Crop Production Systems, Literature of the Rural Experience, Restorative Forestry, and Small Business Management.

These learning opportunities will take students into the fields and forest of The Berry Center Farm, in and around Henry County for literary-inspired excursions, and, from time to time, in a typical indoor classroom setting. They will be applying their physical strength, mental agility, and emotional awareness with one another and with community members as they fell trees, tend animals, assess pasture health, make financial plans and projections, and flesh out senior capstone projects. Indeed, many good things are ahead.

WBFP participants will be building on the good work they took up last school year. The selections below provide a window into their experiences and the insights they gleaned.

Shannon Boyd
Director of Student Life and Operations

Dr. Leah Bayens Dean
Wendell Berry Farming Program

April 19, 2022—Welcome to Work Program at the Berry Center Farm, where it's your job to hold and weigh newborn lambs. Yep, you read that correctly. The team briefly placed each lamb in a hanging scale before letting them scamper back to mom. (Featured: Ed Fredrickson, Julia Farner, David Beckman, Sarah Ditton. Photos/Caption: Sally Rother)

"How can we make creek protection and restoration something that benefits small farms and communities in the short term and in the long term? I believe that this happens through a lifetime of learning a place. Learning the community and being a part of the community.

I believe that the solutions to these problems lie within us, within members of the community who have come to love a place. In understanding what a place can so generously give when taken care of and protected from harms both natural and man-made, we discover a sense of duty to it. The solution is to be immersed in a place."

—Excerpt from WBFP student Holley Meadows's "Landscape, Food, and Culture" final "A Place on Earth" project (Photo: Rick Thomas)

April 19, 2022—WBFP Alum Lizzie Camfield gives a talk on the art of making sourdough bread, one of her many passions. Everything from feeding the dough to carving the design on top is done carefully, and judging by the end product—beautiful homemade bread—it is clear why! Students gathered around Rick Thomas's outdoor cob oven for the grand reveal, then headed (a bit too early) for the cutting board. (Featured: Lizzie Gorbandt, Sarah Ditton, Paul Borntraeger, Ivy Beach. Photo/Caption: Sally Rother)

Sabbaths 2008, IX

As if suddenly, little towns
where people once lived all
their lives in the same houses
now fill with strangers who
don't bother to speak or wave.
Life is a lonely business.
Gloss it how you will,
plaster it over with politic
bullshit as you please,
ours has been a brutal
history, punishing without
regret whatever or whomever
belonged or threatened to belong
in place, converting the land
to poverty and money any
way that was quickest. Now
after the long invasion
of alien species, including
our own, in a time of endangered
species, including our own,
we face the hard way: no choice
but to do better. After
the brief cataclysm of "cheap"
oil and coal has long
passed, along with the global
economy, the global village,
the hoards who go everywhere
and live nowhere, after
the long relearning, the long
suffering, the homecoming
that must follow, maybe
there will be a New World
of native communities again:
plants, animals, humans,
soils, stones, stories,
songs, all belonging
to such small, once known
and forgotten, officially unknown
and exploited, beautiful places
such as this, where despite
all we have done wrong
the golden light of October
falls through the turning leaves.
The leaves die and fall,
making wealth in the ground,
making in the ground the only
real material wealth.
Ignoring our paltry dream
of omniscience merely human,
the knowing old land
has lighted the woodland's edges
with the last flowers of the year,
the tiny asters once known
here as farewell-summer.

—Wendell Berry

"2008, IX" from *This Day: Sabbath Poems Collected and New 1979 - 2013* (Counterpoint, 2013)

LETTER FROM MARY BERRY

Dear Friends,

"What we need is here."

So ends my father's poem called *The Wild Geese* and so began our work at The Berry Center. To go to work on the problems that we have in our rural community and in rural communities everywhere we must believe this and to believe it requires knowing what we need. This is work of membership and not of experts. If we don't come from the love of a particular place and particular people then we are open to the exploiters. Our history in Kentucky teaches us what happens when the local culture and landscape is not valued as much as what can be taken from it. Eastern Kentucky has been nearly destroyed by greed and now I fear for the rest of our Commonwealth.

While our work at the Center goes well, our county is dealing with threats that we didn't see coming but should have. If what is precious is always subject to sale to the highest bidder then we will always be under threat.

There is what my father has called a "gold rush" going on from out-of-state and foreign solar companies offering land owners in our county high prices to lease land for huge solar farms. As you might imagine, they are targeting the best farmland in our county. This is potentially terribly divisive to our community and puts more of our farmland at risk. Farmland that, if being used to feed our nearby cities, might be properly valued. But instead, we are asked to sacrifice what is precious for more "cheap" energy for other places. "Cheap clean" energy for the use of an exploitative industrial economy but not cheap at all for the land and the people of rural Kentucky and ultimately not cheap or clean for anyone.

Is it possible to establish solar power with more appropriately scaled technology and for a community or a household's own use?

One of the best farms in our county is under option by Angel's Envy, a bourbon company owned by Bacardi International. Once again people from other places are telling us that money is more important than the long-term value of a good farm. And indeed, the good farms that neighbor this farm. Principally, Joseph and Abby Monroe's good farm that shares the longest contiguous property line with the proposed site of 25 rick houses and a bourbon Disneyland. What of the worries of what whiskey fungus might mean to an organic farm that two young people have purchased? What of the concerns of a community that is historically agricultural and whose planning and zoning has favored agriculture in its comprehensive plan?

And so, our planning and zoning commission was asked to change the designation of most of the farm from agricultural to light industrial which they did. Maybe the lawyer and the experts would say that they had a difficult time making their case and convincing the members of the commission. I don't know. But I'll have to say that from my perspective it was a done deal. The hearing started with two commissioners clearly impressed at the amount of money Angel's Envy is promising to spend in Henry County and ended with a commissioner editorializing about the end of farming in order to make the motion that the commission approve the zoning change. The very good testimony from those opposed to the change seemed to make no difference. The fact that there was only one community member there who spoke for the proposed change and the courtroom was full of people opposed made no difference.

That this is the way things go in a democracy is not a surprise to me. To hear from experts from a great and wealthy corporation that they will bring to Henry County what we need is not new. In this case what we need is tax dollars and tourism. We are told to prefer an absentee owner of a too large nonessential enterprise over our friends the Monroe family and the hope they represent for the long-term good health of our community and our economy. We must not confuse local need with local greed.

My father said this in his testimony before the commission: "During the last fifty years I have taken part

in opposition to at least six large projects, backed by plenty of money and power, and all of them were rejected. The example best suited to the present occasion would be the Louisville international Jetport, proposed in the early 1970's. In that instance as in the others, the opposition had no support from any public institution. In every case, it was the opposition of the local people that made the difference." When communities will stick together, they can defeat what some call "inevitable" big changes.

The agriculture that my father grew up in was weakened by the time I started farming as an adult in 1981 but was still strong. Many of our friends and neighbors lived by farming. The farms in our county looked good. Our small towns, still supplying much of what farmers needed, were fairly prosperous. The prejudice against country people and rural places certainly existed and we felt it often but we knew who we were. We could resist sales talk. We were harder to embarrass. The stability of the farm communities was made possible by the Burley Tobacco Co-op that paid a parity price for a high value crop. It kept in place an agriculture that suited our marginal land. It kept farmers from working against each other and brought about an economy of cooperation not competition. The problem of tobacco is clear. But the lesson the co-op teaches is also clear. A good farm economy is the only way to keep farmland, farm people, and their communities intact.

Because we don't have such an economy, we are losing farmland and farm people more and more quickly. This in spite of years of a local food movement. Too few people are talking about the necessity of conserving farmland and building a population of people who know how to use good land. Between 2001 and 2016 Kentucky has lost 260,000 acres to development. Can we not imagine a time when we might need our good farmland? How much imagination does it take to understand that we will need it and start planning for that time?

We, in fact, need it now. How many of the problems that worry us today would not be improved by better land use in this country? In this world? From climate change to our social justice problems, we see over and over that we have a land-destroying, people-destroying economy. People who will destroy land

Sunrise on a Henry County Farm. Our history in Kentucky teaches us what happens when the local culture and landscape is not valued as much as what can be taken from it. A good farm economy is the only way to keep farmland, farm people, and their communities intact. Photo: Ed Fredrickson

are willing to destroy other people. We can do better. Health of the whole is the only acceptable standard and the only way to properly value farmland.

This is hopeful good work and we must do it. Luckily, we have some knowledge of what has and hasn't worked in the past. Leaving most of agriculture in the "hands" of agri-industrial corporations is using a cheap and efficient food system and the enrichment of a few as the standard for land use in this country. (One might as well use strip-mining.) Entrepreneurial farming as the only option for our young farmers is putting them in direct competition with each other, is not keeping up with rural decline, and isn't building a population of good land users. The model that we have used to start Our Home Place Meat at The Berry Center could be used for anything farmers produce.

If we can stop waiting for experts to come up with a big idea to fix the things we know to be wrong and if we figure out where we actually are and what we need to survive and thrive then we might become native to our homeland. Then we will find that what we need is here and has been all along.

Your friend,

Mary Berry, Executive Director

BEYOND THE BERRY CENTER

Left: Oct. 5, 2018—A spotted lanternfly visits a log in Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area in Lancaster County, PA. (Photo: Caitlyn Johnstone/Chesapeake Bay Program)
Right: Grove of green ash trees killed by the Emerald Ash Borer. (Photo: Ryan Bohannon, NC State University)

BEATING THE BUG: THE LANTERNFLY AND GIVING UP

I HAVE FOUND that when writing for this newsletter, inspiration usually arrives upon reading a particularly baffling or troubling article in the *New York Times*. I think there are a number of reasons for this, the first of which being that the *Times* is one of only a handful of operations in the United States practicing journalism at any sort of scale. As such their work has a sort of prestige, being associated as it is with great acts of journalism in the past and boasting a breadth of coverage that few news outlets can match in today's more niche media landscape. Another reason for my interest is that the readership, and more importantly the writership, of the *Times* is uniquely urban in interest and perspective. New York City isn't America's only megalopolis but it remains the cultural ideal of one, and its news writing population, naturally, has a rather metropolitan sort of bent. I often find that the tone of the *Times* exhibits a type of disconnection with the natural world that is even a step beyond that of the ordinary modern American, including me, even so thoroughly disconnected as we already are.

The article in question this time was penned by the Times' Sarah Maslin Nir and I would posit that the piece exhibits that disconnection as well as anything I've read lately:

> *IN THE LANTERNFLY WAR, SOME TAKE THE BUG'S SIDE—Even as the invasive pest spreads across 11 states and threatens agriculture, lanternflies are winning sympathizers who resist kill-on-sight orders.*

The headline is, of course, more inflammatory than the piece itself, but if you are unfamiliar with the subject here, a brief primer: Late in 2014, a rather striking red-winged insect, the Spotted Lanternfly *(Lycorma Delicatula)* was observed in eastern Pennsylvania, some 6 or 7 thousand miles east of its native range in the northern Chinese provinces. Likely a hitchhiker on a shipment of consumer goods or construction material, the Lanternfly would swiftly capitalize on an empty ecological niche in the American Northeast, aided and abetted by an earlier eastern import, the Tree of Heaven *(Ailanthus Altissima)*. Now spreading westward at a disconcerting pace, the Lanternfly is a ravenous consumer of agriculturally valuable trees and vines, with grapes and stone fruit orchards being some of the earliest and hardest hit crops. Common hardwoods and timber species seem to be vulnerable as well, and total economic impact from the jaunty looking little bugs could easily range into the hundreds of millions as they find their way into the orchards and forests of the upper Midwest. The response to this infestation would surely be a serious undertaking: an all-hands-on-deck international effort between federal and

state officials, research institutions, regional agricultural operators and everyday citizens. Unfortunately, this hasn't really been the case. Rather, the collective effort to eradicate this pest has developed more along the same lines as a few of its predecessors, particularly, to my mind, the Emerald Ash Borer.

If you are unfamiliar with the subject here, another brief primer: Late in 2002, a rather striking green insect *(Agrilus Planipennis)* was observed in eastern Michigan, some 6 or 7 thousand miles east of its native range in the northern Chinese provinces. Likely a hitchhiker on a shipment of consumer goods or construction material, the Emerald Ash Borer would swiftly capitalize on an empty ecological niche in the American Northeast. You get the idea. We've lost, to date, hundreds of millions of domestic ash trees (probably well into the billions if you count Canadian losses), and loss of revenues, replacement costs, habitat degradation, even just the cost of taking down the dead trees where safety concerns exist, total in the billions of dollars. Not to mention the unaccounted and unaccountable worsening and weakening of the forest ecosystems and economies where these trees grew without human interference. I'll be spending some of that money in my own backyard to remove a massive dead specimen which sits now-menacingly overtop a jungle gym a previous resident built. The control effort around the borer has always seemed opaque: there were pesticides available if you could personally afford them; quarantines on movement of lumber and firewood that were functionally unenforceable on individuals; public awareness campaigns that were marginally successful in notifying the public but incapable of empowering them beyond calling an arborist and hoping for the best. This elides of course the tremendous amount of work being done by underfunded researchers in developing chemical and biological controls, but with the ash borer and today with the lanternfly, knowing that a new cocktail of insecticides or imported parasitoid wasp will someday be deployed in particularly sensitive (read: profitable) regions doesn't take the sting out of the surety that catastrophe is already here, eating away slowly (or quickly) at the insides of one's beloved shade trees.

If I wanted to pad the length of this publication further I could spend a further few paragraphs on the vast array of imported and domestic pests and plagues which threaten our landscapes and agricultural operations. The European Gypsy Moth and Grapevine Moth, Fruit Flies (Mexican, Mediterranean, European, or Oriental), Giant Snails, Fire Ants, Citrus Greening, Sudden Oak Death, Kudzu and Knotweed, Asian Carp, European starlings, feral hogs, I could continue. All of these are existential threats to entire sectors of the agricultural economy and landscape, and as consumers of these agricultural products we nod our heads sagely and pledge to do what we can to stop their spread. We are enlisted, then, in a war against an enemy that we as individuals can barely even slow down, let alone stop. ***'Join the battle. Beat the bug.'*** exhorts the official USDA material on the subject. ***'Stop. Scrape. Squash.'*** Well, a lot of people have been squashing a lot of bugs, tens of thousands each in some cases, and that inexorable westward migration continues unabated. If we can't keep these things out of our own backyard what hope do we have for the billions of acres that nobody is watching? It is enough to drive you to distraction to consider any single one of these threats, let alone the totality of the problem. Absent a way forward, absent any means of effecting change on the outside world in the face of these threats, we can't help but turn inward, develop a pathological kind of self-regard, to try and keep sane, and this is what I see in the *Times* article mentioned above.

The piece describes several folks with what I have to imagine is an extremely niche perspective on the Spotted Lanternfly, but that perspective is, on closer examination, extremely revelatory about how we wrangle with, and ultimately resign ourselves to, a situation that has us utterly outmatched. All of those interviewed ("for" and "against" the Lanternfly, if you accept the framing) express misgivings with the rhetoric around the campaigns of extermination, and all of them express misgivings with their own feelings of regret or hesitance to join in the 'fun.' Their reasoning is varied, capricious, even hypocritical in some cases, and the subjects of the piece are aware of this: "They're creepy, I hate them, but feel a little bad for them—and for me," said one, and "I feel like I am evil saying this because I know they are so bad for the environment," from another. For the vast majority of us, the problem of the Lanternfly remains almost totally abstract: the bugs aren't particularly

USDA stickers from public awareness and extermination campaign around the Spotted Lanternfly (USDA)

harmful to mature street trees in the cities and towns where we live, vanishingly few of us make our living as farmers, sawyers, or vintners, and as far as insects go these are a nuisance in quantity but unlikely to cause as much personal distress to the average citizen as, say, a lone deer tick or mosquito. For these folks, the decision to squash or not to squash is more or less a lifestyle choice, like choosing to pick up tennis for the summer, or the ukulele. But here's the trick: if their participation (or lack thereof) is just a lifestyle choice then so, mostly, is ours, limited in my own case to a choice to read articles about the problem and drive myself slowly around the bend thinking about it.

The problem with the framing of the situation: man (individual) v. bug, is that we are delegated the personal human responsibility of fixing an impersonal and inhuman problem created by an impersonal and inhuman economy. The only way to eliminate the threat of the Spotted Lanternfly, or Emerald Ash Borer, or any of the rest, is to go back in time and unwind the mechanisms of global trade. The only way to prevent the next beetle or bird or fungus is to unwind them today, which seems harder, somehow. A Lanternfly researcher quoted at the end of the piece says the following:

"I don't like killing insects, I love them," she said. "But the spotted lantern flies being here is our responsibility. It is up to us to fix it."

I am frustrated with this for a couple of reasons. First, I didn't invite the Spotted Lanternfly (or the Ash Borer, etc.) around for tea, and I suspect that you reading this didn't either. I didn't call the quarry in Huabei and order up a load of accidentally infested decorative stone to be shipped halfway around the world. I didn't do these things because I am just one person, and to be expected to bear the responsibility, even diffused among our fellow citizens, for a natural disaster we had no ability to affect the direction of certainly seems unfair. Second, it is up to us to fix it, but only because no one in the position to stop these things from happening will, largely because of the profit motive towards international trade. Whether that profit motive will ever be matched and bested by the profit motive towards a secure domestic agriculture or silviculture, or indeed the profit motive for domestic or global environmental stability, is up for discussion. I would caution against optimism, however, given the state of things. What I would encourage instead is a little grace for our neighbors and ourselves in the face of an impossible situation. If you find yourself reading this article about regular people with baffling opinions, think about what, realistically, you'd accomplish in their place. Save your frustration instead for the public institutions who would do more but can't, and the private institutions that should do more but won't.

—Ben Aguilar, Director of Operations

BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

KATHERINE DALTON BOYER has been an editor in New York and Illinois, written for various newspapers and magazines, and worked in corporate communications. She contributed to the books Wendell Berry: Life and Work (University Press of Kentucky, 2007) and Localism in the Mass Age: A Front Porch Republic Manifesto, (Front Porch Republic, 2018) and writes for frontporchrepublic.com and its sister magazine, Local Culture. Kate lives in Louisville.

BONNIE CECIL was born and raised in Louisville, Kentucky. She taught primary-aged students in Jefferson County Public Schools for thirty years. In 1980 she was accepted into the Fulbright Teacher Exchange Program and taught primary students in London, England. In 1992 she was named an Ashland Oil Teacher Achiever for innovation in the classroom. In 1993 she was named Kentucky Elementary School Teacher of the Year and went on to be named Kentucky's Teacher of the Year. In 1994 she was recognized as a Milken Family Foundation National Educator. Today, she operates The Little School in New Castle, Kentucky, for preschool and primary-aged students. Along with her husband, John Grant, Ms. Cecil owns and operates a 200-acre ridgetop farm in Henry County, Kentucky.

FALL & WINTER 2022 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

"What is important to me about the Berry Center, and what I am learning from it, is its willingness to go to work at home, on a small scale, to improve the economy of local farmers and, therefore, the health of the local land. This is radical now, when public attention is all on global solutions to global problems. But what works here is likely to work elsewhere, whereas a global solution that won't work locally is a waste of time." —WENDELL BERRY

September 15	Give For Good Louisville—Over $90,000 raised this year. Thank you!
September 24	The Berry Center Fall Festival (October 1 Rain Date)
October 4	Book Release *"The Need to be Whole"* by Wendell Berry
November 8	Book Release *"How It Went"* by Wendell Berry
November 12	Kentucky Arts & Letters Day and book signing with Wendell Berry and other featured artists. (November 19 Rain Date)
November 21-25	The Berry Center will be closed. Please check www.berrycenterbookstore.com for holiday shopping hours.
November 29	Giving Tuesday—Give the gift of a Berry Center Membership this holiday season online at www.berrycenter.org/donate
December 19-30	The Berry Center will be closed. Please check www.berrycenterbookstore.com for holiday shopping hours.

Celebrating 10+ years of putting Wendell Berry's writings to work by advocating for farmers, land conserving communities, and healthy regional economies.

THE BERRY CENTER

The Berry Center's desire and the reason for its existence is to work on the problems of industrialism. Not just the symptoms of the problems. The media's collection of popular emergencies: climate change, species extinction, overpopulation, pollution, water shortage, ill health, pandemic, breakage of "supply chains," etc. This list leaves out the unpopular emergencies: soil erosion, toxic pollution of farmland and agricultural waterways, the destruction of farm communities. There are many "out of date" emergencies that return to popularity from time to time such as nuclear war and the accumulation of nuclear waste. Our social issues are taking up our time now but will fade as we now know that movements do. We believe that these are not the problem; they are the symptoms of the problem. The problem is industrialism and the industrial economy which ignores and transgresses every limit, denies the issue of scale, discounts every cost, and thrives and grows by consuming, once and for all, the living world.

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www.berrycenter.org/donate

All members will receive the printed Berry Center summer journal, electronic seasonal newsletters, and 10% off at The Berry Center Bookstore. Port William Circle Members contributing an annual donation of $1,000 or more will also receive a signed broadside by Wendell Berry.

For more information, please contact Loren Carlson, Director of Advancement, at lorencarlson@berrycenter.org or (502) 845-9200.

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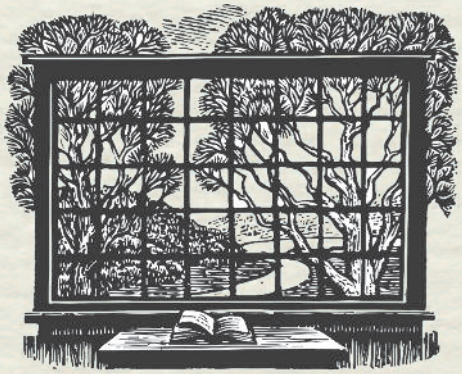

THE BERRY CENTER

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With sincere gratitude we thank those who have contributed to The Berry Center.

~

"The way we are, we are members of each other. All of us. Everything.
The difference ain't who is a member and who is not,
but in who knows and who don't."

—BURLEY COULTER

from "*The Wild Birds: Six Stories of the Port William Membership,*"
by Wendell Berry. (North Point Press, 1968.)