

ONE-PAGE STORIES

No. 8 — NOVEMBER 2020

A Cooperative Journal for the National Amateur Press Association

Operating a Private Press	2
BY BILL BOYS	
Lost Then Found	3
BY LINDA L. SHIVVERS	
“Farm Aid” Reynoldsville	4
BY TOM DUFFEY	
Go Fly a Kite!	5
BY TOM DUFFEY	
Remembering Jane	6
BY PATRICIA CHILDS CRANE	
“The Most Wonderful Time of the Year”	7
BY MICHELE DISBRO	
“Over the River and Through the Woods”	8
BY KATHLEEN J. ZWANZIGER	
All I Want for Christmas Is...	9
BY TOM DUFFEY	
We Are Probably Both White	10
BY TOM DUFFEY	
[available page]	11
BY TBA	
Write for ONE-PAGE STORIES?	12

Operating a Private Press

BY BILL BOYS

HOW'D YOU LIKE YOUR OWN private press? It's easy nowadays.

What is it? A small scale printing operation for the pleasure of limited editions of small format publications. (This booklet itself is a private press publication.)



My pressmark.

I started my press in 1960 with a tabletop Kelsey 9 x 13" cast iron press and just four or five typecases of hand-set printers' type. Yes, it really was an actual cast-iron press that used sticky printers' inks on lead type, pressed onto sheets of paper by the leverage action of the handle. Gutenberg would have quickly understood how it worked, even though it looked nothing like the presses he knew. But the printing principle – that was exactly the same.

That first setup stayed behind in the U.S. when my first call out of seminary took me and my wife to Nigeria. When we came back, I either gave it away or it had wandered off on its own in the meantime. In its place in 1967 I acquired a tabletop 5 x 8" Kelsey press and a few cases of type, some of which came from the old Wartburg Press in Columbus, Ohio, which was getting rid of its hand-set type in favor of Linotype machines, I think. Or maybe it was going to offset presses. By 1975 I had added a 24-case type stand, and an *old* Multilith offset press, which operated jerkily like something Rube Goldberg might have invented. Hence its affectionate name, Jerky.

In 1975 that melange of equipment moved with me to my first parish, in Mansfield, Ohio. Soon I acquired a floor model Chandler & Price 8 x 12" platen press. After buying our first house in nearby Lexington, Ohio, I got my most ambitious equipment – a 17 x 22" offset press, a NuArc floor model camera, a floor model paper cutter, and a Compugraphic photo typesetter. But that larger equipment was sold again in 1979 when we moved to Knoxville, Tennessee. The remaining equipment eventually came back to Columbus with us in 2015, but was sold in a few years, except for the Kelsey 5 x 8" press. I kept it for sentimental reasons. In the 1990's I had switched to composing with computers, using inkjet and laser printers – more fonts, much faster, easy to use color, easy to edit. How I've enjoyed operating my own Private Press. This is its sixtieth anniversary.

Lost Then Found

BY LINDA L. SHIVERS

EVER LOSE A FAVORITE TOOL? Sometimes we get accustomed to our routines, we don't pay attention.

If you have dogs, you know you have to head out prepared every time. I have a favorite scooper. It's actually a garden trowel. Our dogs are dachshunds, long on body, short on legs. They are not always in sync. You know, one wants to go this way, the other that way, so you end up with arms stretched out. On occasion, you have to untangle the leashes. You may have to put that "tool" down. Had to do that on a Friday evening. I set the tool down in its plastic bag and got busy with the detangling, got home. Usually I put the tool on the bottom step, or on top of the garbage bin nearby.

Saturday morning – started to head out for the walk. Looked at the bottom step. No trowel. Looked around the garbage bin. Looked here. Looked there. Figured I'd neglected to pick it up after last detangling Friday evening. Went ahead on the walk with a different scoop. That was August 8th. Kept my eye out for the favorite scoop. Asked different neighbors when I saw them if they'd seen a garden trowel in a plastic bag. Couldn't imagine anyone keeping it if they'd run across it on their own walks – it was obviously a poop scooper.

Almost three months later, I'm cleaning up the Hosta bed adjacent to the driveway and near where I'd usually placed that trowel after a dog walk. This Hosta bed is wide and long. I'm working my way along the wall of the house clipping dead flower stalks, saw something odd on the ground, looked in disbelief – my lost trowel/poop scooper – at least five feet away from where I normally put it. Have absolutely no idea how it got there. An opossum? A raccoon? Never happened before. A blustery wind? Really? Even the derecho that blew through Iowa three days after the trowel went missing didn't blow our outdoor stuff around.

Some puzzles never get resolved. I'm just glad the lost was found, however it got where it got.

“Farm Aid” Reynoldsville

BY TOM DUFFEY

MORE THAN HALF THEIR HERD WAS DYING of a disease. While my wife and I were walking along the middle of Main Street during a Reynoldsville, Pennsylvania, Homecoming Week, we were approached by a primary volunteer at the local Methodist church. She related to us that a church family who owned a dairy farm was in big trouble.

It so happened that I was part of a local band, “Country Pride.” Our thinking was that we could stage a benefit to help the farmers.

The band members agreed to play the show and we also contacted one of the premier players in the area (“Smokin’ Joe and the Wild Horse Band”) and he agreed as well. As it turned out, Joe had a problem at the last minute and his cousin and brother played in his place. I must admit it was a super good show.

So many folks joined in this effort. Some would say, “You’re gonna hear from Willie Nelson because of the name!” I would reply, “I hope we do because he would probably praise our efforts.”

My wife invented the idea of a “Cow Patty Platter,” which was a burger, beans and fries. The meat market owner donated more than 250 burger patties and many merchants in town gave of their stock as well. I ran the cash register when we opened for the dinner and Mr. Palumbo, owner of the meat market, and his wife were in line for the dinner. I tried waving them on by but he insisted on paying their meal charge of \$5.00 each. Such class.

There was no set price for admission – just a donation into a milk can that my wife manned at the door. By the end of the night, donations totaled over \$3,000. When we presented the can the next day, the farm lady was so pleased that she introduced my wife to a baby bull who was penned in a trailer. She cautioned that the young bull might try to suckle the ring from my wife’s finger. He did try, indeed.

Such a joyful Sunday! The generosity in this town is simply overwhelming.

Go Fly a Kite!

BY TOM DUFFEY

HOW MANY TIMES HAVE THOSE WORDS been spoken? Often in a dismissive tone – as in, “Oh, get outta here.”

I had the pleasure of working a job for ten years with an unusual title – “Comics Service Manager.” This was printed on my business card. It was also the butt of many snickers and jokes. Actually, though, my job involved the planning, printing and delivery of roughly ten million Sunday comics a week. This included forty-some newspapers in the East, including *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, *Newark Star Ledger*, *Hartford Courant*, *Harrisburg Patriot News*, *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, *Akron Beacon Journal* and a host of others all the way to Portland, Maine.

During the course of my job, I became friends with the Sunday Editor of the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, the late Ron Patel. He always took a personal hand in the planning of their Sunday comics section. Their actual circulation during that time was around 1.5 million, covering a wide territory, even into New Jersey. Ron would send me a weekly fax showing their plans for the upcoming comics sections. They usually ran an 8-page version and it would be used as a wrap for a multitude of advertising inserts – stuff that would fall out onto your floor when lifting the hefty Sunday paper. We always printed three weeks in advance of the actual publication date.

Late one Spring, I submitted an idea to convert the back page of their comics into a layout showing how to make the page into an actual flyable kite. I must’ve been thinking of the elder Ben Franklin of Philadelphia. Ha! I recommended that dental floss be used to tether them. It was strong and light and usually contained 100 yards in their plastic dispensers. They liked the idea, so we developed it for two separate Sundays. An additional concept was to hold a festival of these kites, including various types of contests. The celebration would also feature other flying objects, including “Philly Flyer” Frisbees.

Obviously, not all the comics sections got made into kites but it’s a special memory having had a hand in the printing of over 3 million possible kites in the Philadelphia area.

As my recorded phone message used to say: “See ya in the Funny Papers!”

Remembering Jane

BY PATRICIA CHILDS CRANE

I DON'T REMEMBER THAT DAY, BUT SHE DID. It was a hot July day in 1941 and there she was ... a cute 6-year-old girl sitting on the front steps at 4926 43rd St., Washington, D.C. She had been told that a girl was finally moving into the neighborhood, and she would have a partner putting up with Johnny, Billy, Harry, Bernard and any other boy who wandered onto the street.

Ours was a 79-year friendship. In the very early years, it was week-ends and summers: my large front porch and yard found us playing Jacks; “mother may I?”; “Oliver Twist can’t do this”; building castles in the sandbox; refreshing ourselves by running under the sprinkler; hop scotch; and, I can’t forget Jane’s First Communion.

A few years later it was reading and writing mystery stories; roller skating; bike riding; an interest in baseball which took us to Griffith Stadium on as many week-ends as possible. We did make peace with the neighborhood boys, and summer evenings found us playing softball, either in the street or around the corner in the big field; hide and seek until the street lights came on; or bike riding. Jane and I even discovered a swimming pool in Georgetown that gave us relief from the D.C. humidity, until the 1950 polio scare.

But it was the summers at Girl Scout Camp May Flather, in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia, and our crazy baseball escapades that held us together. On June 17, 1949, a flood swept through the camp and left a fantastic amount of damage which left us utterly heartbroken. But the next year we were right back – a lot had changed, but it was “our glorious summer home.”

By the mid 50’s we were off to college, working summer jobs, then marriage (each of us to a Chuck), kids, careers, and new hometowns. We lost touch except for Christmas cards. By the late 1990’s life was slowing as retirement loomed ahead. North Carolina was a thought, and I knew Jane and her Chuck were in Edenton. A 59-year friendship was renewed and a 20+ year friendship among a Jane, a Pat and two Chucks began. This friendship lost its second member September 2, 2020, as Jane moved on to meet her maker, leaving me to cherish our lifelong friendship.

I don’t remember her on those front steps, but I do remember a lifetime of friendship, and all those special times we had together.

“The Most Wonderful Time of the Year”

BY MICHELE DISBRO

“IT’S THE MOST WONDERFUL TIME OF YEAR!” As a kid, this Christmas song summed up my feelings. Christmas was a magical time. Living in Michigan, we typically enjoyed snow at Christmas. With the dark, snowy atmosphere outside and Christmas lights twinkling inside, I felt happy and safe sitting in front of my Christmas tree anticipating the arrival of the big day.

My family had wonderful traditions surrounding Christmas. Every year I would get a new Christmas dress and the premiere debut of this dress would be on Christmas Eve. The evening would begin with a family gathering hosted by one of my aunts. After a delicious dinner with my aunts, uncles, and cousins, we would load up the cars and head to Christmas Eve services at church. I was so excited for this whirlwind of holiday excitement that I could barely concentrate at church. Finally, church would be over and we could head back to the Christmas gathering to open presents. Of course, the drive back always included a frustratingly slow drive to see all the Christmas lights.

All too soon, the gifts were unwrapped and my parents were scooting us home and off to bed so Santa could come. It was so hard to fall asleep with all the excitement of Santa coming that night. There was a pact with my siblings that the first one up would wake the others. Then, my sister, my brother, and I would sit at the top of the stairs waiting until my parents would give us the signal that we could head downstairs to see if Santa had indeed arrived.

I’ll never forget some of those exciting moments at the top of the stairs. One year, I could see the shadow of bike wheels on the stairwell wall. Santa brought me the bike I asked for! Another year, he brought my sister a Barbie house and I got a Barbie camper! With wrapping paper and gifts scattered all around, we would scurry to my grandparents’ house for a noontime feast and gift giving. The afternoon would fly by and before long, we were headed to my other grandparents’ house to eat another Christmas dinner and open more presents!

Sadly, the day would come to a close as we shuffled through the wrapping paper still strewn across the floor, and tumble into bed. The most wonderful time of year was over!

“Over the River and Through the Woods”

BY KATHLEEN J. ZWANZIGER

EVEN IN A PANDEMIC YEAR THE DRAW OF HOME during the holidays is strong, especially when listening to the words of that idyllic song. But the realities of getting there do not always mesh with the words.

In the days before Christmas, 1983, my husband was attending a theological conference. While I was awaiting his return, I began loading the car so we could begin the trek from Ohio to northern Iowa bright and early the next morning. On one trip to the car with a load of packages, I did what I normally do on leaving, put the things in the car, turned around to the house door, and reached for the knob. Locked! Oh, well, I could just go around to my sons’ window and knock on it. No response. So I went to my neighbor’s house and asked to use her phone. Still no response – the boys were sound sleepers. I called a friend who was going to the airport to pick up her husband and asked her to bring my husband home as well, then I sat down and was introduced to Kahlua.

We were able to depart for Iowa the next day. By the time we got to the outer belt of Indianapolis “through the white and drifting snow,” I thought to myself, “This is a mistake!” The temperature got colder and colder. Fortunately, our ’76 car got great gas mileage; we would only need to stop once for gas. However, we could not stop for a meal because the choke would freeze and we would not be able to restart the car. The snacks I had packed would have to suffice.

We finally managed to cross “over the river” and get to “Grandmother’s house.” Of course the boys were excited to see the snow and wanted to play outside. They put on layer after layer. Naturally, one boy had to use the bathroom. Finally, 20 minutes later, they headed outside. In five more minutes, they were ready to come in.



Eric and Jeremy, in those five minutes.

Despite the severe weather (-90 wind chill), my siblings and their families had also arrived; the time *inside* “Grandmother’s house” was as idyllic as the words of the song.

All I Want for Christmas Is...

BY TOM DUFFEY

“**Y**OU’LL PUT YOUR EYE OUT!”

That spoken line is woven throughout the movie “A Christmas Story.” This is a Turner TV classic and is played for 24 hours straight every year starting on Christmas Eve. It was adapted from the book *In God We Trust...All others Must Pay Cash* by a well-known humorist, Jean Shepard. The main character is a boy named Ralphie. He so desperately wants a Red Ryder BB Gun with a thing in the stock that tells time, which he spotted in a Winter Wonderland style department store window in downtown Cleveland, Ohio. Children would press their noses up against the window for a better look. It was festooned with beautiful Christmas toys, both moving and stationary, which children could then entice Mom and Dad to buy for them. Santa, of course, is inside the store taking requests in person.

Based on a scene from the movie, each year I put in my request to my wife, not for the BB Gun, but for ... the Leg Lamp. She then informs me that I have yet to win “A Major Award.” Nonetheless, I dream about having this campy treasure plugged in and glowing in the front window of our house. I could visualize a whole line of headlights on the street outside and crowds of walkers going by pointing at the replica of THE LAMP and exclaiming, “There it is!”

Back in 2002, a year after we moved back to the town of Reynoldsville, Pennsylvania, my wife’s hometown, I was asked to play the town Santa. I was then game to volunteer for everything that came my way, to contribute to this small-town life. My new career started out with the Christmas parade where I rode in an elegant white coach decorated with colored lights along with Mrs. Claus. We brought up the end of the procession and screams and shouts went up for us. I truly felt like a “rock star” but actually they were screaming for the jolly old Santa I personified.

One memorable episode stands out from that holiday season – a child’s mother explained to me beforehand that her son would tell his wish only to Santa. The little boy’s wish was that his Mom and Dad would get back together. Mom later told Santa that her ex already had a fiancée. A tear in Santa’s eye; a lump in Santa’s throat.

We Are Probably Both White

BY TOM DUFFEY

NEAR CHRISTMAS 2002, I ASKED A NEIGHBOR BOY to deliver a card to my wife, on a morning when she was mourning a dear old cat that had moved with us from the D.C. area to her hometown, where we'd bought a house.

The card: the printed front read "Best Wishes" and showed a precious kitten peering through a tangle of greens. Inside I wrote, "We are waiting for you at the Clarion Shelter. *P.S. We are probably both white. Love, Fluffie and Tuffie." They were so named sight unseen. We had, in the past, a host of beloved pets based on our name: Muffy, Scruffy, Duffy and now – there would be these two.

Prior to a scheduled Breakfast with Santa (me) at the local hotel restaurant, I'd arranged a pickup from a "kill" shelter some miles away. A trip was scheduled for right after the breakfast seating. My wife was waiting in the car behind the hotel. Santa sneaked around the corner and into her car for the snowy trip. He drove beardless but still wore the red suit. He had made some calls prior to ask about availability of kittens and learned of two white sister kittens with about a week to live. The commitment was confirmed over the phone and the pick-up time was arranged.

Santa and wife entered the shelter with much anticipation and delight to see our new fur babies for the first time. We were ushered into the main area where all the cages were housed, including one with plenty of room for more than 25 cats. We immediately spied the two sisters. They were both pure white female kittens with little pink collars. The smaller one was short-haired with blue eyes and the other sister was

extremely long haired like a giant fluff ball with green eyes. We didn't have enough cash for the adoption fee, so Santa had to leave and find an ATM, then go back to claim our sweet white babies.



They were with us for many good years.

Your One-Page Story Could Have Been Here

BY YOU

A personal narrative?

A fiction piece?

How about writing and
sending us one
for a
future issue!

See p. 12
for how to.

Write for ONE-PAGE STORIES?

You don't have to be a member of NAPA to submit pieces, although members are definitely invited. (Here's an easy place to practice and present your short-short story writing efforts.)

HOW MANY WORDS? About 350 to 400 words. Less if you have a photo or graphic to go with your story.

WHAT KIND OF CONTENT? Original prose – fiction or non-fiction. First-person stories, anecdotes and memoirs would be especially welcome, but other genres would be considered as well, as long as they are your own original pieces.

CAN I GET SOME EXTRA COPIES FOR MYSELF? Certainly. Just let me know how many you would like. No charge.

WILL I GET FEEDBACK? I'll be happy to share with you any feedback I might get from others about your story.

And a NOTE TO READERS – I welcome comments on any of the stories so I can pass them on to the writers.

WHERE DO I SEND A SUBMISSION? To Bill Boys either by email at williamboys@att.net (preferred, to save retyping) or by postal mail to 184 Reinhard Ave., Columbus OH 43206-2635.

Tips on writing first lines

“Write a first line that makes you want to know more.”

Diane Callahan quotes this tip in her YouTube video, “How to Write a Good First Line” (16 min, 38 sec.).

She describes various ways first lines can set the tone and invite readers to want to read your story – Questions, Character, Imagery and Theme. A fascinating feature of this video is the many first lines she cites, ones that you might well recognize.

Check it out. Even a short-short story can benefit from a first line that makes readers want to read your story.