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CML News

Recently, the members of the Lucerna Fund Board of Directors (CML's source of funding—we call them friends) met virtually to vote on a CML budget for 2022 (it passed), and to introduce and elect two new members to the board's current group of six. We are very happy to introduce **Dorrie Rush** and **Christopher L. Irving, Esq.**

Dorrie Rush was already an executive in the apparel industry, when she was diagnosed with Stargardt disease. She continued in that field until she joined Lighthouse International in 2001 as its Director of Development. In 2007 she became LI's Director of Accessible Technology. The synergistic effect of her own progressive sight loss, and her growing skills in the use of assistive technology, gave her the voice to become an outspoken advocate for mainstreaming accessibility. Today, Dorrie is an independent consultant, accessibility evangelist, and a progressive proponent of inclusive design. Welcome, Dorrie!

Christopher Irving has been a member of Publishers Clearing House (PCH) in the Consumer and Legal Affairs Department since 1994. (You may recall that PCH is the company that LuEsther T. Mertz's family started.) Before that, Chris was Assistant General Counsel and Consumer Advocate for the Department of Consumer Affairs in New York City. He was born in Port Washington—just like CML—and he is a long-time colleague and friend of the current board President, Deborah Holland. Since both his mother and uncle have macular degeneration, he is excited to learn more about low vision and to spread the word about CML. Welcome, Chris!

Highlights

The war that we are currently witnessing in Ukraine has so far remained a conventional one, though no less horrifying for that. Yet, as **Rachel Riederer** explores in "Ad Astra," the realm of outer space is becoming increasingly weaponized. "While many experts," she writes, "say that the likelihood of kinetic war—bombs bursting in space—is impossible to assess, conflict in less overt forms

is already playing out.” Riederer makes clear that the need for a viable arms-control treaty that governs space is more urgent than ever.

Of course, there are more benign ways of world conquest. How about sushi? In “The Untold Story of Sushi in America,” **Daniel Fromson** tells the fascinating tale of how the late Reverend Sun Myung Moon, founder of the Unification Church, used his company, True World Foods, in a messianic plan to “solve the food problems of the world” and “proselytize at the same time.”

This issue brings you some truly outstanding poetry and fiction by **Nasser Rabah**, **Thomas Alan Orr**, **Gish Jen**, and perennial CML favorite **Jorie Graham**. Graham’s remarkable poem, “Are We,” gives voice to a deep anxiety about the fate of humanity and the planet. **Jessie Greengrass**’s short story, “The High House,” considers this fraught future through the experience of a young woman and her younger brother as they seek safety from rising waters and increasingly destructive weather patterns. Reality of course is catching up with fiction: **Paul Kvinta**’s nonfiction article, “Surf’s Up,” recounts the gridlock that embroils a California community in a hyperlocal dispute over beach erosion. Already, these issues are being fought out around the world; increasingly, they’re coming close to home.

Last issue, we brought you **David Treuer**’s powerful account of the Ojibwe Big Drum ritual; we feature him again now with a moving—and sometimes funny and scatological—autobiographical memoir, “Portrait of the Coyote as a Young Man.” Most memorable in this piece is, perhaps, the portrait of his father, a Holocaust survivor trying awkwardly but always endearingly to assimilate into suburban America.

TOP PICKS

Nigerian writer **Pemi Aguda**’s haunting short story, “The Dusk Market,” offers us a deeply moving portrait of a lonely woman, Salewa, barely surviving in modern Lagos and visited by visions of a magical market, its vendors calling out her name “like her attention is needed, like she is real, like she belongs.” **Jill Crawford**’s story, “Vale,” also takes us into the mind and heart of an outcast, the homeless Bulgarian immigrant Bobi, as he wanders the streets of his town in Northern Ireland. A happier, but no less complex, fate awaits Henry, the main character in **Sylvan Thomson**’s “This is the Way,” who works to build a new life

after gender transition among a crew of roofers in New Zealand, including his sympathetic but hesitant brother.

Annette Gordon-Reed is famous for her groundbreaking 1997 book, *Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemings: An American Controversy*, which established the true nature of Jefferson's relationship with Hemings. In this interview conducted by **John Jeremiah Sullivan**, we learn of the books and experiences that shaped Gordon-Reed's remarkable life and career. "We are still trying," she says, "to come up with a definition of the American experiment that acknowledges the black struggle."

And finally, we could not resist sharing "Against Access" by **John Lee Clark**. In this vital and urgent essay, Clark, who lives with Usher syndrome, issues an exacting critique of the contemporary accessibility movement: "Why is it always about them? Why is it about their including or not including us? Why is it never about us and whether or not *we* include *them*?" Clark rejects the movement's efforts to replicate the experiences of sighted or hearing people, the facsimile conveyance of visual and audial information, in favor of a more direct experience of the world unmediated by sighted or hearing interpreters. Clark goes on to explain the origins of Protactile, a language he developed to promote communication among Deafblind users relying on touch-based signs and syntax. "Until Protactile plunged us into the churning currents of *being*," Clark says, "we didn't know what we were giving up by consuming access."

The D-B Beat

Resonance is an abiding interest among the editors of CML. In "Requiem for a Heavyweight," the great contemporary chronicler of rural life and the natural world **Verlyn Klinkenborg** praises Rebecca Giggs' debut, *Fathoms: The World in the Whale*, which traces the resonances between human and cetacean life. What do we experience when we encounter a whale? "We ache to meet the limit of the human world, and to look past it," Griggs writes, but are impossibly bound to our human perspectives, our human understandings. *Fathoms*, and several other notable natural histories mentioned in Klinkenborg's review, are available for download on BARD:

- *Fathoms: the world in the whale* can be found under **DB 102225**

- Batsheba Demuth's *Floating Coast: an environmental history of the Bering Strait* is listed as **DB 96869**
- Nick Pyenson's *Spying on Whales: the past, present, and future of Earth's most awesome creatures* is available as **DB 91534**

And Special Thanks to...

Authors!

CML sometimes contacts authors for clarifying questions about permission to use a story, copyright attributions, or how to pronounce their names. Recently, in an effort to get the correct pronunciation of author **Doug Crandell**'s last name (we used his "The Union Waltz" in Issue #335, Summer 2021), we discovered not only the correct pronunciation—"It is pronounced just like candle with an "r"—but that he advocates for employment and economic justice for people with disabilities.

It's a small world, after all.

Happy Spring from Jay, Raquel, Alfredo, Mike and Annie!