

# THE TIMES OF MINERAL POINT

ILLUSTRATED

A CASUAL COMPENDIUM: WORDS AND WHIMSY TO INFORM AND AMUSE THE LOYAL READER

## SANTA TO ENJOY A WINTER GET AWAY IN MINERAL POINT

Mrs. Claus is said to be restless; urges return to the family's secret Polar mfg. & distrib. facility.

## EXCLUSIVE!

The world's best-known seasonal celebrity has revealed to insiders his plan to settle in Mineral Point after the traditional chores of December 25th, to enjoy a post-production period of "laid-back Leisure and Leinenkugels."

Close associates of Santa Claus, speaking to this newspaper on condition of anonymity, quote the Jolly Old Elf as saying, "No, I'm not retiring. I'm just taking a few months to recuperate from the Christmas rush in the Best Small Town I've ever encountered."

His decision took most observers by surprise. In years past, Mr. Claus has returned promptly to the North Pole after dispensing millions of gifts, and his office has created the impression Claus & Co. immediately sets to work on a multitude of supply and logistical imperatives for the next year's massive holiday delivery miracle.

According to informed sources, Claus plans to restructure his stressful 12-month cycle to satisfy his personal needs for a slower pace and beautiful, tranquil and congenial surroundings. "Mineral Point is simply incredible," he told his staff, "just being there drops my blood pressure by thirty points."

The wife of the renowned Children's Benefactor is said to be more restive about the relocation to Wisconsin. "I love Mineral Point too," she is quoted as saying, "but we need to get to our home base and get to work on our long and complicated ToDo list."

"Well," Santa Claus chuckled as he responded, "she's always the practical one, but after a few days as a Pointer, she'll come around."



EDITOR: "Just Joshing!"

Elsewhere on this page, a look at Santa's local visits.



## PUSHING WINTER'S "RESET" BUTTON

In the Northern Hemisphere, the winter solstice on Dec. 22nd is the shortest day of the year and the longest night, officially the first day of winter and one of the oldest-known holidays in human history. Anthropologists believe solstice celebrations go back at least 30,000 years, before humans even began farming on a large scale. Many ancient stone structures were designed to pinpoint the precise date of the solstice and the circles of Stonehenge were arranged to receive the first rays of midwinter sun.

Some ancient peoples feared that because daylight was waning, it might go away forever, so they lit huge bonfires to tempt the sun to come back. The tradition of decorating our houses and our trees with lights at this time of year is passed down from those ancient bonfires. In ancient Rome, the winter solstice was celebrated with the festival of Saturnalia, during which business transactions and wars were suspended, and slaves were waited upon by their masters.

In these modern times, most Americans are not in the mood to celebrate the arrival of winter. In fact, our daily conversations about the weather focus on self-fulfilling predictions of gloom. Cabin fever arrives earlier each year.

It's all a matter of expectations, of course, and as November stripped the colors from our landscape, we settled in for weeks of somber grays.

But, dread is not universal. In the world's coldest spots—Switzerland, Norway and Iceland—folks hunker down in the winter and simply enjoy it.

The Swiss are content because the trains run on time, the streets are clean, and citizens vote seven or eight times a year in public referndums, which make them feel they have a say in what happens in their country. The Swiss also minimize envy with an attitude about money that says, "If you've got it, hide it." Icelanders, likewise, suppress the emotionally corrosive force of envy by sharing their possessions and money. There are no strangers in Iceland, and a streetside conversation with a friend is a valid excuse for being late for work. The cities boast art galleries and music stores because creativity is highly prized and failure carries little stigma.

Getting outside is a known mood booster, so Norwegians keep going outside, saying "There's no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing." Norwegians also have a word, *koselig*, that means "a sense of coziness." People light candles, light fires, drink warm beverages, sit under fuzzy blankets. It's like the best parts of Christmas without all the stress.

In Mineral Point it is the beginning of winter's Quiet Time, an opportunity for days of snowbound introspection in an inspiring setting: a blanket of white over a clean landscape and startling and brilliant cobalt skies overhead.

For this newspaper's Editor, slowly recovering from surgery as a stay-at-home Pointer after three years as a South-Seeking Snowbird, it is a time to press the "RESET" button. And, the prospect of a winter of rehabilitation and regeneration brings an odd sense of comfort and contentment.

## GALLERY NIGHT:

### A Candlelight WalkAbout to Greet Our Artistic Neighbors

It's one of the most pleasant ways to welcome the Winter season and say "Hello" to our Pointer neighbors.

The December 5th Gallery Night is a stroll along High and Commerce Streets, with 400 lumenaries glimmering along the pathway. The city's shops and artistic venues are open until 9 p.m., with the gallery's host artists on hand to tell you about their work.

Arts Mineral Point(AMP) coordinates the four Gallery Nights during the calendar year, and has, in recent months, expanded the hours, sponsorships and scope of the event and increased advertising and promotions.

The December Gallery Night features a number of traditional holiday components, including seasonal food, drink, and music. Kiwanis Club members will roast chestnuts at curbside and local bands will entertain: *Point Five* at Gad & Pick, *Driftless Beggars* at Tequila Point, and, quite possibly, a few wandering street musicians.



## Santa Greets the Kids

On Saturday, Dec. 5th, at the Shake Rag Alley School of the Arts, Mr. & Mrs. Claus pay their annual visit to the valley, and invite children to pose with Santa from 10 a.m. to Noon. Take home the photograph (\$10).

The school offers special Holiday Workshops for Kids, informal fun-filled classes to make Christmas crafts and decorate gingerbread cottages.

December 5th from 10 to 3 p.m. (\$4)



Mineral Point's Downtown streets are graced with Garlands (funded by

the Chamber) and our New Wreaths (thanks to individual donors). We salute Jerry Schmitz and the City's work Crews, who tirelessly string up festive Holiday Greenery each year.



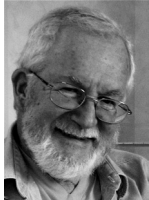
# THE TIMES OF MINERAL POINT

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## WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Check Sandee Beaman's  
Online Events Calendar

Go to

<http://hwy23events.wordpress.com>  
And simply click on an event  
to get all the details.



## HIGH STREET'S GREAT "STAYING POWER"

### *Life* Making a ~~Living~~ in a Small Town

Her big, cream-colored car isn't parked in its spot in front of the Red Rooster any more. Helena Lawinger, who baked the pasties and greeted the restaurant's diners for forty years, died in October. The funeral mass was crowded. There are many Lawingers in the city; it's one of about a dozen names that appears and reappears in the historic accounts of a city that KEEPS its families.

In the kitchen of the most iconic cafe in town, Patti McKinley carries on with the traditions established by her parents: hometown food with Cornish specialties and friendly service. Yes, and "everybody knows your name."

Downtown Mineral Point is a study in familiar names, and knowing the names makes business transactions warm and friendly. The city's retail center operates with a set of manners that makes no one wealthy but fosters healthy customer relationships and long-lasting customer loyalty.

When a visitor to the city walks into a gallery, store or eatery, the greeting usually comes from the owner of the building. That proprietor is often celebrating decades of continuing business in the same location. He or she is part of the business, totally absorbed in the daily life of running that enterprise.

Bruce Howdle and Roland Sardeson worked on the old Globe Hotel with their bare hands, clinging to a ladder to chip, fill and paint the building where they now live and work.

The Mayhews followed a city planner's guidelines to authentically restore their hillside storefront/home.

Catherine Whitford pioneered the co-operative model at the Cornish Connection, to supply income to her partner-participants, and her door is open every day.

Many offices along High Steet house the members of the Old Timers Club.

The Ben Franklin store opened on its corner in 1951, we are told.

And, the Mitchell family started an electrical/hardware store more than a century ago. Three generations of Mitchells have worked to make a living there, doing battle with big box stores.

On the spot where the city's best-known merchant once sold dry goods,

at Gundry & Gray, the city's Pointer is a dog who may very know the secret of local business longevity. It's hard work, day by day, to be sure. It's also a caring and sharing attitude toward city betterment, with strong affection creating a bond between the community and the people who work there.

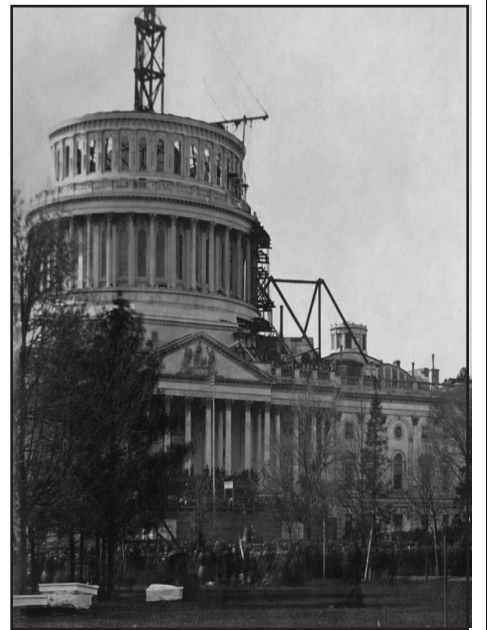
Compare your Pointer experience with the typical visit in a shopping mall, where the franchise stores pop up, close, and pop up somewhere else. The young staff members ride on swinging doors. Computers are in command. Everything seems so transitory, so momentary, so faceless, when the only goal of the business is "better numbers in the next Quarter."

But, in Mineral Point, everything seems permanent, solid, and authentic. Over-the-counter relationships are built to last. Those who make Mineral Point a special place are fully engaged in keeping the city alive and extending its life in future years.

The Heroes of High Street value the city's rich history, and invest time and money on their building's heritage. The photo above shows one of the latest examples of good architectural preservation. Weaver Katherine Nutter has opened her restored fabric store, "Artful Apparel & More" in the 1866 Clauer Bldg., at 232 High Street. Kathy and partner Paul Backstrom worked alongside their tradesmen to take their stone building back to its historic roots.

High Street customer traffic simply isn't large enough to allow local businesses to "make a killing." But, as our merchants, artists, factory and office workers, and shopkeepers have discovered, it's possible to "make a good living by making a good LIFE."

That's what they do.



## CHAOS IN THE U.S. CAPITOL BUILDING!

On November 17th, 1800, Congress met in the Capitol Building for the first time. Construction had begun on the domed building in 1793, but it soon fell behind schedule and went over budget. So, in 1796, the planners made the decision to build only the Senate wing. On move-in day, some of the rooms were still incomplete, but the building was sufficiently finished to accommodate the Senate, as well as the House of Representatives, the Supreme Court, the Library of Congress, and some district courts. President John Adams had pushed for the move, even though the building wasn't complete, because he hoped to gain Southern votes for his re-election campaign.

The weather didn't cooperate, christening the first day of the new session and the new building with a heavy layer of snow. The welcoming parade had to be canceled. Congressmen were delayed trying to get to their offices; only fifteen made it into the chamber on opening day.

Members of Congress were less than pleased with their new accommodations. Although richly appointed, the building leaked and had no heat.

Washington D.C. was a primitive backwater, especially when compared to civilized and more well-established Philadelphia, where the Colonial Congress met for the preceding ten years.

In its early days, the Capitol moonlighted as a church, with services held every Sunday in the House of Representatives. Thomas Jefferson did not feel this violated "separation of church and state" principles because attendance was voluntary. Only Protestant denominations were represented. The Catholic Mass came along in 1826, and church meetings were held in the House until after the Civil War.

Both wings of the Capitol were completed just in time for the building to be burned by the British in 1814. Reconstruction began in 1815 and work was completed in 1819, but the dome wasn't complete until 1826. By 1850, with the ongoing influx of new states and their new congressmen, it was clear that an expansion was in order.

Built largely by slave labor, the new Capitol was nearly twice as long, which threw it out of proportion to the original dome. So, in 1855, they tore down the old timber dome and replaced it with the cast-iron version we're familiar with today: three times the height of the original and topped with a 20-foot statue of a woman holding a sword and a laurel wreath, known as Freedom Triumphant in War and Peace, or sometimes, Armed Freedom.

**SOURCE: The Writer's Almanac  
from American Public Radio**





## EVENTS

**12/5** CHESTNUTS roasting on an open fire, at the corner of High Street and, yes, Chestnut. It's an annual Yuletide event for the city's Kiwanis Club. The volunteers brave the chill to cook the rich brown nuts and enjoy chats with passersby on Gallery Night, when downtown business places are open until 9 p.m. for Candlelight shopping.

**12/11** THE PINES in concert at the Opera House. The Minneapolis-based folk rock artists have created a loyal following for their layered sound and poetic lyrics inspired by the land and folklore of the American Midwest. 7:30 p.m. Tickets: Brown Paper Bag

**12/13** FILMZMP shows "Spinning Plates," an award-winning documentary about three remarkable restaurants and the people who bring them to life. At the Opera House, with Social hour at 5, movie at 6 p.m. Guests of members are welcome with a \$10 ticket.

**12/13** HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE AT ORCHARD LAWN from 1 - 4 p.m. Enjoy a Sunday afternoon visit to the Gundry home on Madison Street.

**12/19** "OLE & LENA'S FAMILY CHRISTMAS" provides a whole season of laughs at the Opera House at 7 p.m., as Mike and Julie Bateson celebrate the holidays with the entire population of Ole & Lena's friends, relatives and acquaintances from their community and church.

## TIMES OF M.P. CANCELS WINTER SHUTDOWN

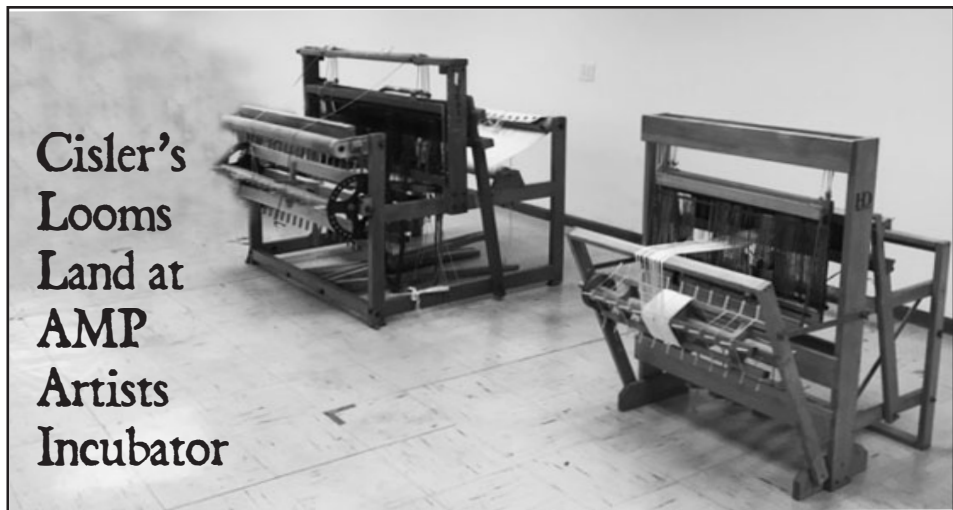
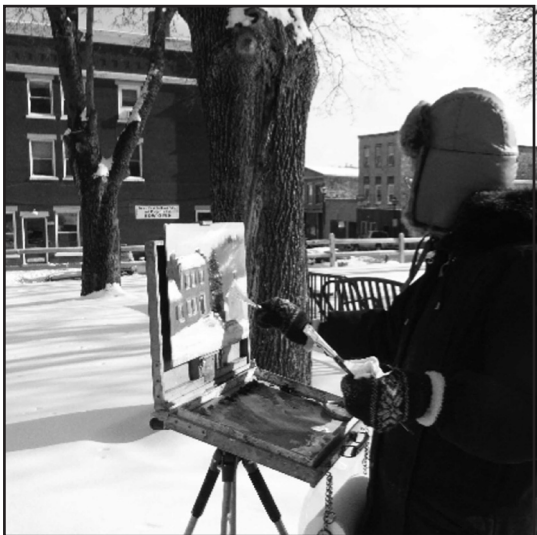
The *Times of Mineral Point* will be published during the months of the Wisconsin Winter of 2016, ending the previous practice of suspended printing while the paper's one-man staff was vacationing in warmer climates.

In the past two years, the Editor used the term "hibernation" to justify his privilege to suspend publication. In the coming winter months, however, the Editor will remain in Mineral Point, and will gather local news for the monthly *Times* tabloid.

Thus, the current publishing model will be observed: the newspaper will be a part of the *Shopping News* home bundle, which is delivered to approximately 1,100 households in the city of Mineral Point on the first Tuesday of each month. The *Times* is also distributed to several downtown businesses, restaurants and local lodging.

## PAINT THE POINT Winter Edition Feb. 10 - 14

It's a welcome return for the competition between plein-air artists from several states. Arts Mineral Point (AMP) will invite the painters who participated in the August 2015 "Paint the Point" event to visit the city in wintry times and depict Mineral Point's charm on their canvasses. Finished works will be on display and for sale in local galleries. The event lends a splash of color to gray February days.



### Cisler's Looms Land at AMP Artists Incubator

The photo shows two of the three looms donated by Laura and Gary Cisler, to encourage local weavers and educate newcomers to the craft. The Cislers are meeting with Arts Mineral Point (AMP) to draft a learning program and iron out administrative issues for a fiber-arts program at the Cannery Incubator space.



## ... and AMP invites ALL POINTERS: YOU CAN BE AN ARTIST!

Arts Mineral Point has issued a call to AMP members and townspeople — to submit a work of art for an ART EXHIBIT on JANUARY 16-17, featuring homegrown talent. So, get busy and complete a visual work (sculpture, painting, photo or drawing) to display at the Cannery Arts Incubator. The work, a past or present effort, must be created by the person submitting it. No cost for AMP Members, and non-members may enter for a \$25 fee that provides AMP membership for the entrant. Check [www.artsmpt.org](http://www.artsmpt.org) or email your inquiry to [contact@artsmpt.org](mailto:contact@artsmpt.org)

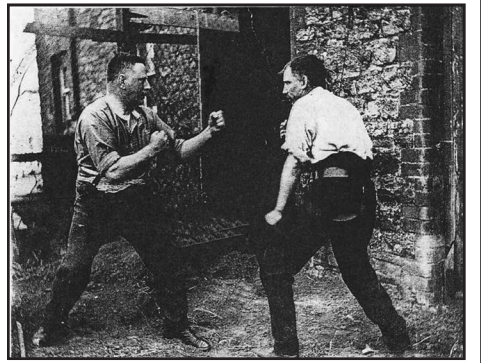
## POINTER PANTRY: An Act of Kindness that WORKS!



The Pointer Pantry was born of an impulsive act of kindness toward our less fortunate neighbors, and nourished by messages on the social media and generous donations from townspeople. Just weeks after its founding, the Pantry has become an established community endeavor, run entirely by volunteers without a dollar of operating cost. Maureen "Mo" May Grimm, a former Mineral Point School Board member, spearheaded the effort and coordinated the simple mechanics of fundraising. She credits a highly-successful "RoundUp on purchases" practice at Point Foods, (raised almost \$1,500 in October!) and a number of contribution cans throughout the city, which raised hundreds of dollars to provide a needed subsidy for more than 150 students on the public school's "Free/Reduced Lunch Program" list. The kids get \$20 per week in Pantry gift certificates, which can be exchanged for food at Point Foods market.

Donations can be made at any time at any branch of Farmers Savings Bank.

Members of the Pointer Pantry meet regularly to discuss options and planned expansion of the program. Join the *Facebook* group or phone 608.574.3555



## A BOLD CHALLENGE LEADS TO A BRAWL

### David vs. Goliath

The rustic journal of Esau Johnson yields dramatic proof that, in the 1830s, Mineral Point was a rough, rude collection of lead miners: the "Americans" from nearby states, and the "English" from Cornwall. Johnson migrated from North Carolina to dig lead near Gratiot's Grove in 1827.

He wrote his reminiscences in the 1880's and this eyewitness account speaks of a headline-making event:

"One evening, some of the Cornishmen trapped a pair of American boys into a house and went whipping the boys with a horsewhip. The screams drew a rescue team of Americans, who pulled a log from a woodpile and used it as a ram to knock down the door of the house. Then they rushed in to confront the Cornishmen.

There was a little Yankee named Hiram Hobs who took a few punches, but he had the best of two of the Cornish miners. He then declared that he, Hobs, was "King over the English," and "had the English under his thumb."

That night the English brought Henry Rablin, their biggest and best brawler, into town from Pedlars Creek, a distance of seven miles. And, in the morning, at Abner Nichols' Tavern on Commerce Street, they issued their challenge to Hobs: to fight Rablin, "in the American style, to hurt each other so bad as they could."

Other miners told Hobs he would surely lose. "You are a little scrub and Rablin is a big bully." But, Hobs replied, "I can whip any God Damed [sic] Englishman."

Word spread through town, and the townspeople "had their feathers up with glee like peafowl." The crowd formed a ring surrounding the two men as they faced off, and heard the countdown to the combat.

The big man knocked Hobs to the ground and jumped on him, but Hobs bit down on one of Rablin's fingers. The big man yelled, and yanked his finger free, taking two of Hobs' teeth with it, but Hobs reclamped his jaw over Rablin's right thumb and threw the bigger man down, churned his face in the dirt, and began punching him in the ribs.

The bully said, "Enough!!"

When they parted, it was said, the crowd had to jerk Hobs' mouth loose from Rablin's injured thumb.

Reluctantly, the Cornishmen honored their word. They carried Hobs to the Martin V. Burris Saloon and called him out as "King Hiram Hobs."

Marion Howard, of Darlington, is our source for this story. She says Esau Johnson's entire journal is stored in the Wisconsin Room at UW-Platteville. She told the *Times*:

"The spelling is terrible, punctuation and capitalization erratic, but it's a fascinating first-hand account of days I'm glad I missed."

Bard Marion Howard is a first-rate scholar of All Thing Cornish.





# FLOTSAM & JETSAM

BY THE EDITOR, FRANK BEAMAN

Thanksgiving was truly a heartfelt holiday for me this year. The day fell eight weeks after surgery on my spinal chord, and served as a celebration of my relatively speedy bounceback from pain and my apparent relief from the pinched nerves that made my tired old legs wobbly.

I have so many to thank: Doctors Biere and Bachhuber, Surgeon Elena Gutierrez, the Operating Room Docs and nurses at St. Mary's Hospital, and the surgeon's assistant, whose spinal stitchery was declared "beautiful" by a legion of medical helpers. (So, my career as bathing suit model is secure!)

I probably need to give credit to my late father, who lived 102 years in physical and mental agility and passed along many of his strongest genes.

Thanks to my dearest Sandee, whose list of wifely chores expanded during post-surgery days to include tasks I hated to ask of her. Always my source for joy and comfort, she literally gave me her arm to lean on as we hobbled about the house to log minutes of early walking therapy.

And, my many thanks go out to friends and family, who showered us with casseroles, baked dishes, greeting cards, phone calls and personal visits.

They hastened the healing. I want to share one odd component of my recovery period, and for that I refer you to the photo, above.

I used the Photoshop program on this vintage image to make the man look a bit like me, and I am titling the work, rather grandly, "Beaman, the Lonely Writer."

I allowed myself this foolish little project because I've been struggling with something rare for me: writer's block. Most of the time I swim in a broad pool of writer's possibilities, with more topics to explore than time to do so. For most of the days of November, however, I sat in my familiar chair at the computer and simply couldn't pull a topic together into a narrative I could live with. Even small stories, the most routine stuff of journalism, seemed impossible to write.

Maybe it was the Codeine I was swallowing for post-surgery pain. Maybe it was the result of a few weeks of self-indulgent idleness, the mere fact that I wasn't at the keyboard every day. And, I suspect, the brain drought may have been a reflection of the world around me in the autumn of 2015 -- a world gone mad, or so it seemed to me, with an ugly massacre in Paris, refugees looking for new homes, another school shootup, more punishment for

the Wisconsin Idea, and new, glaring examples of nonsense in the Know-Nothing politics of folly and falsehood.

When you are confined to a reclining chair in front of the television set the words and images of the daily news wash over you. It's a bath that does not cleanse the bather. It's a bath, instead, that adds a layer of grime and slime.

I asked myself, "Self, has there ever been a time as depressing as this?"

And a voice said, "You're an English Major, and you know what to do."

Well, of course! Open a book!!

**"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way ..."**

It's a single sentence, those opening words from *A Tale of Two Cities*. The words are quoted again and again because of their essential truth: that the measure of human activity depends on the point of view.

The Charles Dickens novel (1856) depicts the plight of 18th-Century French peasants, exploited and demoralized by the aristocracy, and a brutal retaliation that plunges the nation into bloody mob rule. Dickens wrote of the mistreated poor, the cold-hearted rich, the darkness of ignorance and the power of enlightenment, of good and evil, of social injustice, and of an angry, ugly, and overwhelming moral decay that makes everyone a victim.

*A Tale of Two Cities* was a classic work of fiction 159 years ago, but the words have stunning applicability for today's emotionally-draining human drama, where fiction, fact, and fantasy often appear indistinguishable.

The greatest enemy of the human spirit is despair, the feeling that some powerful force has pulled us beyond hope, or repair, or redemption, and that our individual action will not count.

Great literature, with its meaningful words, provides needed balance and relief to agrieved readers, to remind us that suffering is part of life but revival and recovery are both natural and achievable antidotes for our misery.

Take it from a surgery survivor who gets a bit stronger every day: the human body AND the human spirit are both subject to growth and healing - in an amazing process called regeneration.

# A BEATLES CONCERT



## TIMES OF MINERAL POINT SPONSORS A FEBRUARY FUNDRAISER FOR THE OPERA HOUSE

We've come up with a sure cure for Cabin Fever, the most severe malady of winter in the Badger State.

Be sure to mark Feb. 20th on your 2016 entertainment calendar today!

*The Times of Mineral Point* has booked **Get Back Wisconsin**, a quintet from Madison that takes a fresh approach to the music of the Beatles.

The Saturday night performance is a benefit to raise funds to refurbish the 1915 marquee at the Opera House by installing new signage and lighting and making needed structural repairs.



Get Back Wisconsin is not your usual look-alike, mop-topped Beatles cover band. It's made up of trained academic and professional musicians who are more interested in sound than image.

They try to achieve "Beatles purity," by matching the Beatles' songs, note by note. They've mastered about 100 of the Beatles' 215 original recordings, and keep around 50 of those songs in their repertoire. Live shows include music from the Beatles' entire career, plus facts and trivia the band throws out about its musical idols.

And, yes, you can sing along. There's nothing stuffy about their performances, which have drawn rave reviews at Middleton's Club Tavern and several Madison music spots including the Harmony Bar.

Your \$15 ticket for this important fundraiser will provide dollars to dress up the Opera House marquee, but it will also remind you of all those years when Beatles music topped the charts, and every time the Beatles released an album everyone was waiting for it.

**GET BACK AT 7:30, FEB. 20TH**



Photo by Gary Knowles

ONE MAN'S OPINION



# Darkness in the City of Light

by Frank Beaman

In my youth I spent six wondrous weeks in Paris and came to know—and love—the city's streets, subways and quiet neighborhoods, as well as the familiar tourist attractions. I didn't keep a journal, but there must have been a good number of Friday nights when I'd enjoy a coffee or a Calvados in one of the city's small outdoor cafes.

So the bloody attacks of Friday evening, Nov. 13th, whisked me back in time and made me ache for innocent victims of the latest barbarism. Like so many others, I obsessively followed the scraps of news out of the French capital, absorbing the horror.

It was the natural thing to do. And, it is exactly what the terrorists wanted all of us to do. We watched, we grieved, and we trembled in fear. Some of us reacted in understandable anger, with more heat than light.

Jeb Bush said the attacks were "an organized attempt to destroy Western civilization." No, not really. Let's cool off a bit and look at that. France has adequate military power, available resources to increase their strength, and an economy twenty times that of Syria. France will not be conquered by ISIS.

"The end of Western civilization?" Not even remotely. ISIS will never be able to build its caliphate in Paris.

Kneejerk remarks and sabre rattling by public figures make the terrorists seem more powerful than they are.

Actually, the bellicose speechmaking serves to help the terrorist cause.

The attacks in Paris, like those of Sept. 11, 2001 were an organized effort to sow panic, which is why it's called "terrorism." We should not elevate its purpose by calling it "war."

The greatest danger from terrorism is not the physical damage to property, or the loss of lives (a small percentage of the population). The real danger is the formation of a society driven by its fears, making bad decisions in response every threat, real or imagined.

In recent days, we hear the fervent call to arms. We are duly warned against appeasement, against caving in to the terrorists. When you think about it, you know that will never happen.

We hear loud demands for perfect security—impossible in a complex world. We hear, again, that "This Means War!" With whom? Fill in the blanks.

After 9/11, we heard, "This is like Pearl Harbor!" No, it wasn't. The 1941 attack destroyed the U.S. Pacific fleet and announced Japan's intent to seize territory — a valid reason to go to war.

Then came Korea, and Vietnam, and all the other "little wars" we could not win. Most of those conflicts, especially our endless skirmish in the Middle East, were fought because our fear and dread was exploited as we *invented* the wrong reason to start fighting.

Our foreign policy has been driven by Fear for far too long.

We can only hope we don't take the ISIS invitation to react to their vicious acts by doing something stupid.