

Retirement Railroad

Part One: Dreams of Empire

by Noel Stanton

I was a long way from retirement when we moved to Kansas in 1993, but I always knew that someday I'd build an HO-scale model railroad in the basement. I had been an HO hobbyist as a kid, in partnership with my father, and I still had some bits and pieces from that time, including my first HO locomotive, assembled and painted in 1948.

By the time I did go into phased retirement in 2005, I had a rough plan in mind. The era was to be March 1940, because I liked steam locomotives better than diesel ones, and because I wanted the challenge of modelling bare trees. The setting was to be coal-mining country in Appalachia. This locale was inspired by family hikes in the deep hollows and steep ravines of southern Ohio, and by a

memorable detour on a family vacation over a twisting two-lane road through southwestern West Virginia. The restaurant where we stopped for lunch had a wall plaque listing Chamber of Commerce members; at least half of them were Hatfields and McCoys. Feud over, I guess.

One end of the layout was to be the small, somewhat shabby city of Clifton, with factories, iffy neighborhoods, and railway things like a roundhouse and working turntable. At the other end was to be the coal-mining settlement of Burnwell. In between: wooded, hilly country with a ravine like the ones we used to hike. An absolute must was a photogenic bridge where one train crossed over another.

See RAILROAD, page 2

RAILROAD, from page 1

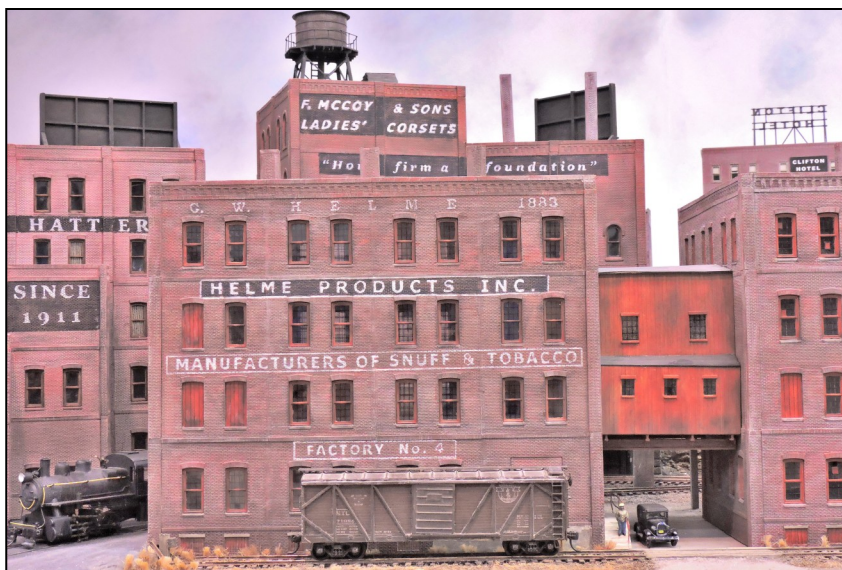
Dreams first met reality when I began to negotiate for basement space with my wife Marie. (“How much room does the water-meter guy really need, anyway?”) The boundaries were laid out in Sharpie on the concrete floor, never to be violated – except maybe just a little bit.

Building the support benchwork, laying track, and getting trains running took a lot longer than I anticipated. Grades on the hills were too steep for all but the shortest trains, and they had to be redone, more than once. Balky switches that caused derailments needed endless tinkering. At last, trains ran smoothly, but through an uninteresting world of open 1” x 4” lumber benchwork. Now began the part that proved to be most enjoyable for me: constructing scenery, buildings and homemade signs.

I started with the city of Clifton. Potholed Railroad Ave, which ran under the bridges where two trains crossed, was an especially seedy neighborhood. The Gospel Rescue Mission did its best to save souls while flanked by Sowse’s Liquors and the Pussycat Lounge (“Drinks! Hostesses!”), just down the block from the Fantasy Ballroom (“10 cents a Dance!”).

Clifton had three large factories. The Hatfield Hattery (“Top it Off with a Hatfield!”) adjoined McCoy & Sons Ladies’ Corsets (“How Firm a Foundation”), which rested on shaky-looking pillars to allow trains to pass underneath. The Helme tobacco factory was based on a regional landmark in Helmetta, NJ, just down the road from the town where Marie grew up. It operated from 1883 until 1993, filling the summer air with the sweet fragrance of snuff. I had taken a complete set of photos during a family visit to be sure I’d faithfully capture its aged façade, iconic crossover, and splashes of bright orange.

Smaller factories lined one side of Enterprise Alley in Clifton: Modern Celluloid Products,



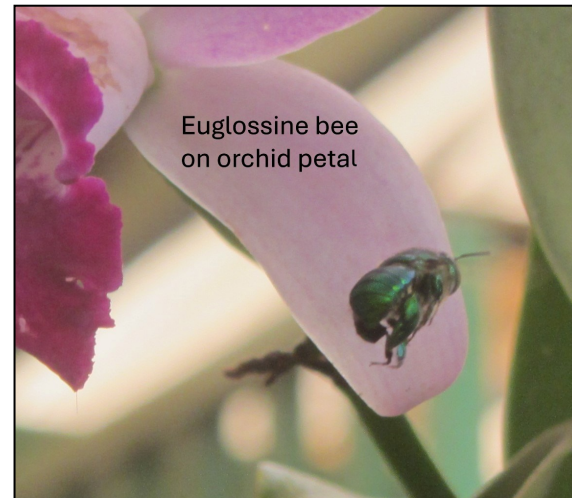
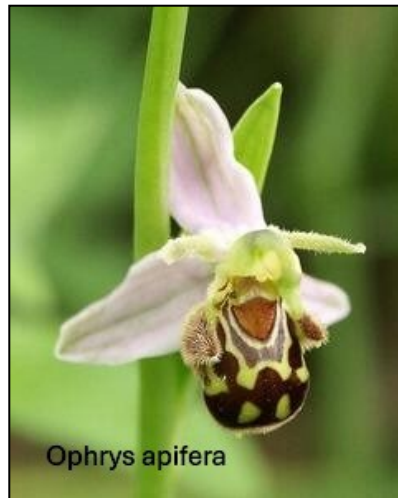
[top] Big factories. [above] Ronkett Fireworks and Prof. Currie’s Genuine Radium Tonic.

Whoopee Novelties, Griswold Grommet, and Prof. Currie’s Genuine Radium Tonic, whose exterior plumbing leaked a mysterious green ooze onto the street. Across the way, Ronkett Fireworks had recently suffered an unfortunate but spectacular conflagration.

When I built the locomotive service facilities, I made my own electrical rotation mechanism for the turntable rather than buying a pricey commercial one, and it took quite a bit of puttering to make it work right. It was very satisfying in the end to see a locomotive slowly turn into position, then chug into its stall in the roundhouse.

Clifton now seemed to be in pretty good shape, but the rest of the layout was still raw lumber with a mine siding to nowhere. I was ready to move on to wooded hills, a ravine, and the mining settlement of Burnwell. Or so I thought.

Known, Grown, or Killed



by Richard Vanderlip

This month's topic will be orchid pollination. Nathan Bolls got me started on this series on orchids with Darwin's story of the Angraecum and the moth from his book of 1862 "On the Various Contrivances by Which British and Foreign Orchids Are Fertilized by Insects." Pollen of all orchids are contained in small packets called pollinia. The pollen is never released into the air. Thus, for the plants to reproduce, these pollinia must be transferred from one plant to another. What transfers the pollen and what causes the pollinator to visit the flower on one species and pollinate another plant of the same species covers a wide range of organisms and orchid and pollinator characteristics.

The Darwin example and other orchid species that have white or light green flowers and are fragrant at night are almost certainly pollinated by moths e.g. *Brassavola nodosa*, "lady of the night." Another example of 'fragrance' being the lure is *Bulbophyllum echinolabium*, which is pollinated by carrion beetles. The fragrance is sometimes described as "having a dead elephant behind the sofa."

Many of the terrestrial orchids of Europe mimic insects, e. g. *Ophrys apifera*. Many of the Central and South American orchids are pollinated by Euglossine bees. We heard a very interesting talk on them which showed how the pollinia would become attached to the bee in a certain place and this was different for each orchid species.

EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES

Paid Volunteer Opportunity: Standardized Patients Needed



Meadowlark friends, we have a new and exciting way to support the next generation of nurses; the time commitment takes one or two days each semester.

Wichita State's School of Nursing is launching a Standardized Patient Program, which will bring trained community members into nursing labs to act as "patients" during student check-offs and learning experiences. Standardized patients are paid volunteers who help students practice real-world skills in a safe, supportive environment before they begin working with actual patients in clinical settings.

Here's how it works: volunteers are assigned a made-up patient role and receive training about two weeks before the student check-off. Then, on the scheduled day, they come in and act out the role while students complete required tasks. One example of this is the standardized patient experience at the end of the first semester for Health Assessment and Fundamentals. Students may be required to administer a mock medication, transfer the patient from a bed to a chair, and complete a basic head-to-toe examination. No assessment of bathing suit areas is included.

The goal is to build a pool of standardized patient actors for the Pathway program that can be used by faculty across multiple courses. Organizers are hopeful this program will launch as early as this spring, beginning with the Fundamentals/Health Assessment joint standardized patient final for first-semester students.

For the spring semester, the program is especially looking for volunteers who can portray a male or female patient age 50+, but adults of all ages (18+) are encouraged to apply.

Interested independent living residents and/or team members can connect directly with Rachel Johnston, the nursing lab liaison who is leading this project, to learn more and sign up. Contact Rachel at rachel.johnston@wichita.edu. The QR code provided on this page can be scanned with

the camera on your smartphone to learn more, as well.

Even if you're not sure this is for you, you can still help by sharing the link with three to five friends and encouraging them to pass it along. Your support will make a meaningful difference for our nursing students and help strengthen the future of compassionate care in our community.

Music with Dave Zerfas

Friday, Feb. 20, at 7 p.m.

Meadowlark is happy to welcome back Dave Zerfas on Friday, Feb. 20, at 7 p.m., in the Event Center. Whether with his rock ballads, acoustic songs, or country music, Dave never disappoints. Come out on Friday night for a good time with Dave!

Shopping at Target & Dollar Tree

Saturday, Feb. 21, at 10:30 a.m.

The next scheduled trip is Saturday, Feb. 21, with transportation going to Target and Dollar Tree West. The bus will depart from the Village Entrance at 10:30 a.m., and the return time is set for 11:45 a.m.

Next month's trip will travel to Hobby Lobby and Dollar Tree East on Saturday, March 21. Please sign up in the Blue Book to participate.

Worship Services

Sunday, Feb. 22, at 10 & 11 a.m.

Join Rev. Melanie Nord, Spiritual Life Leader, for worship at 10 a.m. or 11 a.m. on Sunday, Feb. 22, in the Community Room/Chapel. This week's sermon title is "Logotherapy & The Psalms." All are welcome to enjoy coffee and fellowship before or after worship in the lobby between 9:30 a.m. and 12 p.m.

ARTful Memories

Tuesday, Feb. 24, at 10 a.m.

ARTful Memories is a Meadowlark Memory Program collaboration with the Marianna Kistler Beach Museum of Art using Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS). Kim Richards, Education Assistant, will conduct a facilitated discussion of three different art images with joint participation by memory care receivers and caregivers. All are invited to attend Tuesday, Feb. 24, at 10 a.m. in the Bison Room.

EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES

Grief & Loss Education Program

Tuesday, Feb. 24, at 1 p.m.

Meadowlark invites residents and guests to take part in a compassionate eight-week Grief & Loss Education Program designed to support anyone grieving the loss of a loved one. The program will continue to meet on Tuesdays through March 3, from 1 to 2 p.m. in the Flint Hills Room. This initial series is dedicated to healing after the loss of someone close.

Social Circles

Tuesday, Feb. 24, at 2 p.m.

All residents are invited to attend Social Circles each Tuesday at 2 p.m. in Prairie Star Restaurant. This is an informal opportunity to gather with others who call Meadowlark home and get to know one another. Join us!

McCain Auditorium presents: HEDY!

Tuesday, Feb. 24, at 3 p.m.

Meadowlark, you're in for a treat! McCain Auditorium presents HEDY! The Life & Inventions of Hedy Lamarr on Tuesday, Feb. 24, at 3 p.m. in the Event Center. Enjoy a shortened but powerful version of this one-woman show, followed by an interactive Q&A session.

Written and performed by Heather Massie, the play celebrates Hollywood legend Hedy Lamarr—hailed as “The Most Beautiful Woman in the World”—while spotlighting her groundbreaking work as a co-inventor of frequency-hopping technology, the foundation for today's Wi-Fi, GPS, Bluetooth, and cell phones. Portraying 36 characters, Massie brings this inspiring story of beauty, brilliance, and innovation to life.

Page Turners Book Club

Wednesday, Feb. 25, at 11:30 a.m.

Explore a different culture with the Page Turners Book Club as we read *Snow Flower, and the Secret Fan* by Lisa See. This historical fiction novel set in 19th-century China tells the story of a lifelong friendship between Lily and Snow Flower who are bound together as laotong (old sames) at the age of seven. The novel explores themes of female friendship, duty, and tradition as the two navigate arranged marriages, foot-binding, and the isolation of their lives. You don't have to attend

every time to participate, come when you are able. If you have questions please contact Katie Sigman at (785) 323-3899.

A Search for Meaning: Lecture Series

Wednesday, Feb. 25, 1 p.m.

For Christians, Lent is a season of humility and reflection — an invitation to move beyond simply “giving something up” and instead enter into deeper spiritual growth and renewed purpose.

Meadowlark's second annual Lenten Lecture Series, themed “A Search for Meaning,” continues Wednesdays from 1 to 2 p.m. in the Event Center. Drawing inspiration from the book of Ecclesiastes and Viktor Frankl's classic *Man's Search for Meaning*, the series explores humanity's enduring quest to understand our purpose — even amid life's uncertainties and challenges.

Ecclesiastes reminds us of the deep human longing to find meaning in our lives and work, while Frankl's powerful reflections from his experiences during the Holocaust point to the possibility of hope and purpose even in suffering.

Our next speaker is Lisa Melander, Ph.D., on Wednesday, Feb. 25. Please see page 6 for Melander's full bio. Lenten Lecture booklets are also available for personal devotion and reflection throughout the season. We hope you'll join us for thoughtful conversation, spiritual enrichment, and a shared exploration of what it means to search for meaning—together.

Line Dancing Lessons

Wednesday, Feb. 25, at 3 p.m.

Join us Wednesday, Feb. 25, in Verna Belle's Lounge for Line Dance lessons at 3 and 3:30 p.m.

Protecting You Legacy: Smart Legal Planning for the Second Half of Life

Wednesday, Feb. 25, at 6 p.m.

UFM is offering a class titled “Protecting Your Legacy: Smart Legal Planning for the Second Half of Life.” Join the session in the Community Room on Tuesdays, Feb. 25, from 6 to 7:15 p.m.

Explore planning for the dynamics of blended families, your grown children, and children who

See EVENTS, page 6

FEB. 25



LISA MELANDER, PH.D.
PROFESSOR OF SOCIOLOGY,
KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

Lisa Melander's research interests broadly include crime and family, and many of her projects emerge from the intersection of these substantive areas. Her primary research interests include incarceration, intimate partner violence, and cyber aggression. In particular, Melander has conducted research on contact maintenance programs within correctional facilities, exploring the ways in which parents maintain contact with their children, negotiate the co-parenting relationship, and transform their parenting identity while incarcerated. Other research projects include fines and fees among probationers and parolees and jail reentry programming.

EVENTS, from page 4

may struggle with money. This class also explores how to plan for your long-term care costs and protect your assets to go to your heirs. Learn how irrevocable trusts and Medicaid planning work in Kansas, and why preparing in advance is important. The session is led by Lisa Ward, a business, real estate, and estate planning attorney with decades of experience.

Enrollment is now open and can be completed by calling (785) 539-8763. This class is offered through UFM at no charge to Meadowlark residents, and Passport members may attend with a 20-percent discount.

Caring Conversations for People with PD *Thursday, Feb. 26, at 11:30 a.m.*

Join this opportunity to share your experiences and receive support from others with a Parkinson's or Parkinsonian diagnosis. It is open to all with a diagnosis at any stage of your journey. The next meeting is at 11:30 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 26, in the Flint Hills Room.

Knitting & Crocheting Group *Thursday, Feb. 26, at 2:30 p.m.*

Are you interested in learning how to knit or crochet? Or maybe you have ongoing projects you'd like to work on? Whether you are just beginning or have years of experience, join other yarn creatives in the Kansas Room at 2:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 26, for a fun, social, creative opportunity. All skill levels are welcome!

Prairie Star Writing Group *Tuesday, March 3, at 1 p.m.*

Prairie Star Writers, led by Cathy Hedge, meets the first and third Tuesdays. The next meeting is 1 p.m. Tuesday, March 3, in the Patriot Room.

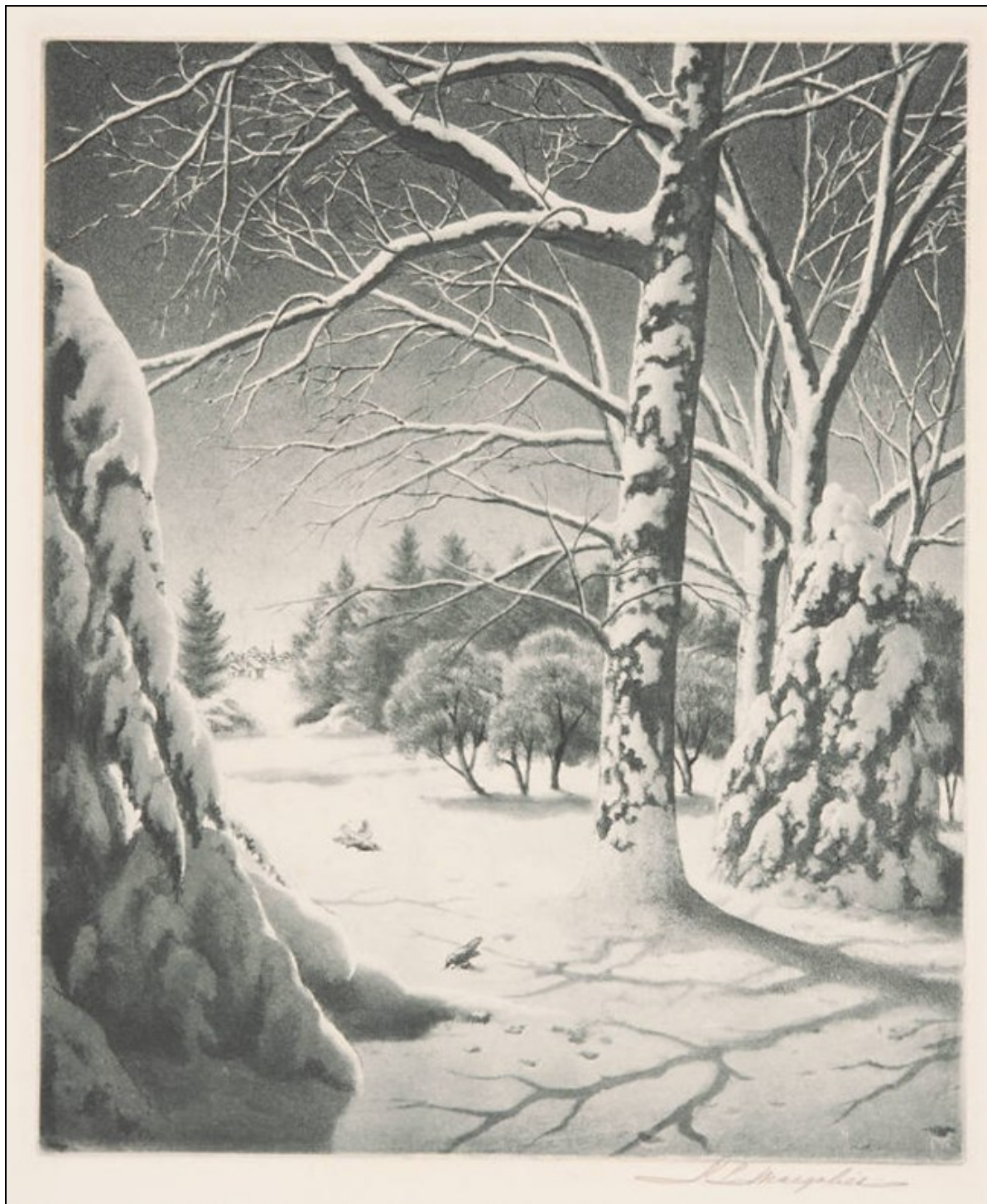
The March 3 session, "Feel the Power!", will explore moments when you discovered your own strength, the times believing in yourself helped shape who you are and made the impossible feel possible. Come ready to write and share your story!

Community Garden Meeting *Friday, March 6, at 9 a.m.*

Current and interested gardeners are invited to attend a Community Garden Meeting at 9 a.m. Friday, March 6, in the Bison Room. We'll have discussions as we look forward to spring planting. Please contact Alan Hunt with questions.

Art Engagement *from the* **Beach Museum of Art**

The focal point in an artwork is the area the artist wants to spotlight. To draw the viewer's attention to the area of focus, an artist might use contrast in color, value, texture, or size. The artist may create a point of convergence to direct the viewer to an object. The important item might be isolated within the composition or treated in a very unusual manner. Placement of the targeted object is a common technique. The artist may place something of importance in the bottom or top third of the piece, or just off center. As you look at this print do you observe a focal point? If yes, what did the artist do to draw your eye there?



Samuel L. Margolies, *Foraging*, 1942, Etching on paper, KSU, Marianna Kistler Beach Museum of Art, bequest of Raymond & Melba Budge, 1992.52

RESTAURANT **SPECIALS**

<p>Sunday, Feb. 22</p>	<p>Sunday Brunch Brunch Menu available from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.</p>	<p>\$14 Dinner Swedish Meatballs <i>served over egg noodles</i> Buttered Carrots</p>
<p>Monday, Feb. 23</p>	<p>\$11 Lunch Maple-Bacon Chicken Sandwich <i>served on a croissant</i> Watergate Salad</p>	<p>\$14 Dinner Ham Loaf Roasted Red Potatoes Creamed Peas</p>
<p>Tuesday, Feb. 24</p>	<p>\$12 Lunch Steak Gyro Garlic Parmesan Fries</p>	<p>\$16 Dinner Chicken Alfredo Garlic Bread Side Caesar Salad</p>
<p>Wednesday, Feb. 25</p>	<p>\$10 Lunch Everything Bagel Sandwich <i>(Ham, Turkey & Swiss Cheese)</i> Macaroni Salad</p>	<p>\$16 Dinner French Onion-Stuffed Pork Loin Roasted Brussel Sprouts Garlic Red Mashed Potatoes</p>
<p>Thursday, Feb. 26</p>	<p>\$9 Lunch Ham & Beans Cornbread</p>	<p>\$16 Dinner Pot Roast <i>with Carrots, Onions and Celery</i> Mashed Potatoes and Gravy Green Beans</p>
<p>Friday, Feb. 27</p>	<p>\$11 Lunch Mac & Cheese Bar</p>	<p>\$17 Dinner Grilled Shrimp Risotto Asparagus</p>
<p>Saturday, Feb. 28</p>	<p>\$12 Lunch Lobster Hoagie Cucumber Salad</p>	<p>\$19 Dinner Short Ribs Loaded Mashed Potatoes Green Beans</p>

Weekly Opportunities Calendar Feb. 22 to Feb. 28

Sunday • Feb. 22 *Put your trash at the curb!*

8:45 a.m. ~ Transport to College Ave UMC, ME
 9:30 a.m. ~ Sunday Morning Fellowship, ME
 10:00 a.m. ~ Transport to College Ave UMC, ME
 10:00 a.m. ~ Worship Service, CR/1960
 10:30 a.m. ~ Transportation to FUMC, ME
 11:00 a.m. ~ Worship Service, CR/1960

Monday • Feb. 23 *Trash & Recycle pick-up*

9:30 a.m. ~ Seated Strength, CR/1960
 9:30 a.m. ~ Memory Care Partners Group, STM
 10:30 a.m. ~ Weights 101, CR/1960
 11:00 a.m. ~ Rock Steady Boxing, PF
 11:30 a.m. ~ Sit & Be Fit, CR/1960
 1:00 p.m. ~ Parkinson's Exercise Class, CR/1960
 1:30 p.m. ~ God Talk, KSU CL
 1:45 p.m. ~ Parkinson's Voice Class, CR
 7:00 p.m. ~ Community Bingo, CR

Tuesday • Feb. 24

10:00 a.m. ~ ARTful Memories, BR
 10:00 a.m. ~ Mat Yoga, KSU CL
 10:30 a.m. ~ Steady Yourself, CR/1960
 11:15 a.m. ~ Chair Yoga, CR/1960
 1:00 p.m. ~ Grief & Loss Education Program, FHR
 2:00 p.m. ~ 10-Point Pitch Group, GR
 2:00 p.m. ~ Social Circles, PS
 2:00 p.m. ~ Water Media Painting, KSU CL
 3:00 p.m. ~ Coffee Corner, EC
 5:30 p.m. ~ 3rd Floor Supper, BR
 6:00 p.m. ~ KSU Gerontology Class, CR

Wednesday • Feb. 25

9:30 a.m. ~ Seated Strength, CR/1960
 10:00 a.m. ~ Walmart/Dillons Shopping Trip, ME
 10:00 a.m. ~ Memory Care Partners Group, FHR
 10:00 a.m. ~ Memory Café, KSU CL
 10:30 a.m. ~ Weights 101, CR/1960
 11:30 a.m. ~ Sit & Be Fit, CR/1960
 11:30 a.m. ~ Page Turners Book Club, PR
 1:00 p.m. ~ Lenten Lecture: Week Two, EC
 1:30 p.m. ~ Diabetic Wellness Group, FHR
 3:00 p.m. ~ Rock Steady Boxing, CR
 3:00 p.m. ~ Sing-Along, FHR
 3:00 p.m. ~ Line Dancing Lessons, VBL
 4:00 p.m. ~ 4th Floor Social, FHR
 5:30 p.m. ~ 1st Floor Supper, MR
 6:00 p.m. ~ UFM: Protecting Your Legacy, CR

Thursday • Feb. 26

9:00 a.m. ~ Messenger Team, VBL
 10:00 a.m. ~ Mat Yoga, KSU CL
 10:30 a.m. ~ Steady Yourself, CR/1960
 11:15 a.m. ~ Chair Yoga, CR/1960
 11:30 a.m. ~ Caring Conv. For People w/ PD, FHR
 11:30 a.m. ~ PD Care Partner Social, PS
 1:00 p.m. ~ Parkinson's Exercise Class, CR/1960
 1:00 p.m. ~ PD Care Partner's Group, FHR
 2:00 p.m. ~ Water Media Painting, KSU CL
 2:30 p.m. ~ Knitting & Crocheting, KR
 4:15 p.m. ~ Meadowlark Singers Practice, CR
 7:00 p.m. ~ Thundering Cats, EC

Friday • Feb. 27

7:30 a.m. ~ Rock Steady Boxing, PF
 9:30 a.m. ~ Seated Strength, CR/1960
 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. ~ Meadowlark Market, MM
 10:30 a.m. ~ Weights 101, CR/1960
 11:30 a.m. ~ Sit & Be Fit, CR/1960

Saturday • Feb. 28

9:00 a.m. ~ Tai Chi, 1960 only
 9:30 a.m. ~ Band Bust Exercise Class, 1960 only
 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. ~ Meadowlark Market, MM

Room Abbreviations

1960, TV Channel 1960	ME, Main Entrance
BR, Bison Room	MM, 120 Scenic Drive
CR, Community Room	MR, Manhattan Room
CY, Courtyard	PF, Peakform Wellness Center
EC, Event Center	PR, Patriot Room
FHR, Flint Hills Room	PS, Prairie Star Restaurant
GC, Grosh Cinema	STM, St. Thomas More Church
KR, Kansas Room	VBL, Verna Belle's Lounge
KSU CL, KSU Classroom	WPL, Wamego Public Library

McCain

AUDITORIUM

PRESENTS

HEDY!

THE LIFE & INVENTIONS OF
HEDY LAMARR

Tuesday, February 24 at 3:00 PM

A Salon Presentation on Hedy Lamarr
Hollywood Screen Siren & Mother of Wi-Fi!

Meadowlark Hills Retirement Community





GROSH CINEMA SHOWTIMES

MONDAY TO SATURDAY 1:00 P.M. / 4:00 P.M. / 7:00 P.M.

SUNDAY: Feb. 22

RUTH & BOAZ (2025) TV-14, 1 hr. 33 min. *Drama, Romance*

Cast: Serayah, Tyler Lepley, & Phylicia Rashad

Modern-day retelling of one of the most iconic love stories in the Bible. A young woman escapes the Atlanta music scene to care for an elderly widowed woman, and in the process, finds the love of her life and gains the mother she never had.

MONDAY: Feb. 23

WHIPLASH (2014) R *for strong language*, 1 hr. 46 min. *Psychological Drama, Music*

Cast: Miles Teller, J.K. Simmons, & Melissa Benoist

A promising young drummer enrolls at a cut-throat music conservatory, where his dreams of greatness are mentored by an instructor who will stop at nothing to realize a student's potential.

TUESDAY: Feb. 24

RESIDENT REQUEST

ORDINARY PEOPLE (1980) R *for language and intense scenes*, 2 hr. 4 min. *Psychological Drama*

Cast: Donald Sutherland, Mary Tyler Moore, & Judd Hirsh

The accidental death of the older son of an affluent family deeply strains the relationships among the bitter mother, the good-natured father, and the guilt-ridden younger son.

WEDNESDAY: Feb. 25

FRANKENSTEIN (2025) R *for grisly images and bloody violence*, 2 hr. 29 min. *Horror, Dark Fantasy*

Cast: Oscar Isaac, Jacob Elordi, & Mia Goth

Dr. Victor Frankenstein, a brilliant but egotistical scientist, brings a creature to life in a monstrous experiment that ultimately leads to the undoing of both the creator and his tragic creation.

THURSDAY: Feb. 26

THUNDERBALL (1965) PG, 2 hr. 10 min. *Action, Thriller*

Cast: Sean Connery, Claudine Auger, & Adolfo Celi

James Bond heads to the Bahamas to recover two nuclear warheads stolen by S.P.E.C.T.R.E. Agent Emilio Largo in an international extortion scheme.

FRIDAY: Feb. 27

TWINS (1988) PG, 1 hr. 47 min. *Buddy Comedy*

Cast: Arnold Schwarzenegger, Danny DeVito, & Kelly Preston

A physically perfect but innocent man goes in search of his long-lost twin brother, who turns out to be a short, womanizing, small-time crook.

SATURDAY: Feb. 28

RESIDENT REQUEST

F1 (2025) PG, 2 hr. 35 min. *Action, Sport*

Cast: Brad Pitt, Damson Idris, & Javier Bardem

A Formula One driver comes out of retirement to mentor and team up with a younger driver.