

For the RECORD

A compilation of facts, large and small, about our community

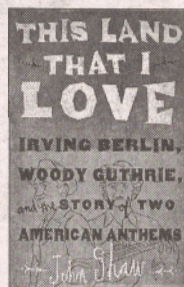
- Percentage of low income Oregon families who pay more than half their income on housing: 80
- Percentage of Oregon children living in poverty in 2011: 25
- School children in Oregon who were homeless in 2013: 20,000
- Hours per week a worker earning minimum wage has to work to afford a two-bedroom apartment in Oregon: 70
- Percentage of inmates in jails and prisons who are classified as severely mentally ill: 16
- Youth experiencing homelessness in Multnomah County who were under age 18 on one given night in 2013: 749
- Percentage of those homeless youth that were under the age of 5: 26
- Minimum number of migrant laborers working in Sochi preparing for the 2014 Olympic Games who were not paid: 700
- Percentage of people in Portland living below the poverty level 2008-2012: 17.2
- Percentage of people in the United States living below the poverty level in 2012: 15.9
- Percentage of 125,000 federal inmates have been convicted of non-violent crimes: 97
- Portland Public Schools graduation rate: 62 percent
- Percentage of households in the U.S. that own at least one dog: 47
- Cost to build the Fisht Olympic Stadium in Sochi, the setting of the opening and closing Olympic ceremonies: between \$519.9 million and \$703.4 million
- Average annual cost of tuition and fees at a public college for a state resident: \$8,893
- Number of pages in "I Am Not a Poet" poetry anthology: 198
- Number of vendor poets represented in the anthology: 106
- Number of poems chosen for the anthology: 160 out of 982

Sources: Oregon Housing Alliance; National Alliance for the Mentally; Portland Housing Bureau; Multnomah County; Memorial's Migration and Law Network; U.S. Census Bureau; Centre for Research on Globalization; PPS auditor; American Pet Products Association; The Anti-Corruption Foundation; College Board; Street Roots' "I Am Not a Poet"

Of thee I sing: One country, two great anthems

BY JOE MARTIN
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

As a snow storm blanketed Pennsylvania, the 27-year-old balladeer Woody Guthrie stood unsheltered on a roadside alone, caught in winter's fury. He was hungry, broke and thought he might well freeze to death before he would ever make it to New York



"This Land that I Love: Irving Berlin, Woody Guthrie and the Story of Two American Anthems" by John Shaw

City. A kindly forest ranger picked up the desperate hitchhiker, gave him hospitality for the night and helped to ensure that Guthrie would make it to the Big Apple. Woody had been invited to that metropolis by his good friend, the actor Will Geer who was then starring in a theatrical version of Erskine Caldwell's "Tobacco Road." He was sure that Guthrie and his music would impress many in "the leftist artists' scene." Geer was right.

In the course of Guthrie's journey eastward from Texas, he heard over and over Irving Berlin's rousing "God Bless America." Originally written in 1918, Berlin rewrote it in 1938, when it was sung by Kate Smith. It was a ubiquitous staple playing on juke boxes and radios. Guthrie was infuriated by the piece. Its lyrics were a stirring paean to a sanitized America, which overlooked the bleak horrors and devastation that had been visited upon millions of citizens during the harrowing years of the Great Depression. He decided that he would compose his own anthem in response to Berlin's. "This Land Is Your Land," written in 1940, would portray America in a different light.

Guthrie and Berlin are the two iconic musicians whose lives and respective works pervade "This Land That I Love," penned with erudition and affection by Seattle's own

John Shaw. An accomplished songwriter and performer himself, Shaw resonates with his two legendary subjects as well as with a lively salmagundi of other composers, musicians, minstrels and personalities who populate his marvelous narrative. The result is a colorful cento of Americana chock-a-block with vibrant vignettes and fascinating pieces of little-known history.

There is the story of Francis Scott Key, who in 1814 wrote the "The Star Spangled Banner." He was actually aboard an enemy British ship from which he watched the bombardment of Fort McHenry. As a lawyer, Key was attempting to obtain the release of a friend who was a captive of the Brits. When dawn broke, and it was obvious the Americans had withstood the attack, Key wrote his poem. Another choice factoid involves the fiddler Dan Emmett who wrote "Dixie," the unofficial anthem of the Confederacy. Emmett was a fervent opponent of the South's rebellion and is supposed to have said, "If I had known to what use they were going to put my song, I will be damned if I'd have written it."

Of Guthrie's determination to compose his counter-anthem Shaw writes: "Some people say that it was when he was freezing on the side of the road that he started thinking about writing a rebuttal, a song that would give vent to his leftist politics." Despite Guthrie's countervailing perspective, he and Berlin actually had much more in common than would appear at first blush. Although he had already been a huge success by the time Guthrie was born, Berlin was no stranger to hard times and destitution. In Russia, his Jewish family had been victimized by hideous pogroms. He had known poverty and homelessness as a young immigrant in the United States. For Berlin, America was a genuine refuge that gave him the opportunity to achieve artistic greatness. His stirring anthem is his heartfelt thank you.

In 1931 the United States adopted "The Star Spangled Banner" as the nation's official anthem. The tune was taken from a song popular in the latter part of the 18th

century entitled "To Anacreon in Heaven." Anacreon was an ancient Greek poet who waxed rhapsodic about love, wine and good times. It was the song of an English gentlemen's club, the Anacreontic Society of London, and booze and debauchery were the themes. The voice of Anacreon sings: "And besides I'll instruct you, like me, to entwine/The myrtle of Venus with Bacchus's vine."

Other American anthems have emerged throughout our history and have been sung at ceremonies and celebrations: "My Country 'Tis of Thee," "America the Beautiful," "Hail Columbia" and the African-American anthem "Lift Every Voice and Sing." Shaw notes that they "reflect the shifts in our vision and values over time as our history has confronted us with ever-changing circumstances. All are fascinating songs with their own unlikely histories, their own surprising stories to tell."

Irving Berlin's career was remarkable. He was 101 years of age when he died in 1989. Of his voluminous musical oeuvre many are classic American standards. "Alexander's Rag Time Band" was his first big hit in 1911. Songs like "Putting on the Ritz," "There's No Business Like Show Business," "Cheek to Cheek" and "White Christmas" are known to just about every American.

Guthrie would precede Berlin in death by almost 22 years. By the mid 1950s he was incapacitated by Huntington's disease. His son Arlo reflected on the irony of his father's big success coming when he could not react in any way due to his physical impairment: "He's sitting there in a mental hospital, and he knows what's going on, and he can't say anything or tell anyone how he feels. It's Shakespearean." Woody Guthrie died in 1967 at 55.

"This Land That I Love" is a fine work written in an easygoing and appealing style. Shaw takes the reader on an exhilarating tour of the rich and multifaceted legacy of American song. It is sure to appeal to all who love good music and lively well crafted history.

It's a Long Way to Go

by George B.

I pack my bag, it's got a long way to go. Toothbrush uncheck, mouthwash uncheck, 6 pairs of underwear, uh-oh too many things What a ridiculous decision to make. But I know where this leads, and I can really leave these. It's a long way to go.

Sorry father's day card you'll not survive. The hair clippers were temporary any way.

Tough is the plastic, spare no expense it is a long way to go.

Sharpie check, mp3 player check, I.D. OK, (or not).

It doesn't quite say "Samsonite" but I am not the only one to see the beauty of this durable luggage. Please don't snag it for I had to leave my duct tape behind. It's a long way to go.

One ride back, it's all good. Two rides, fuck this one snagged and is going to take a while. Oh well, I see a bar and I will self-medicate. It's all good. It's a long way to go.

Pills and cramps and the endless miles bark, bark and I see a high peak. Thank GOD. But let's go.

I am in a hurry for nowhere, I mean somewhere. It is now a short way to go.

Finally time to greet the dog pound where I'll be getting off. Oh good, most of the luggage is intact, hardly any rips.

I'm there, me and my overpacked luggage thing.

Oh look, a bar.

Figuring Out a Way

by Kenneth Nickell

Jack is hungry and crying.

The highway screams at us with speed and noise. His food weighs heavy on my back, but we can't dart left without becoming statistics, and can't leap right without being seen as a double suicide.

It occurs to me I've left his bowl behind in Santa Rosa. Traveling on the wall of the highway breaks any sort of rational solution I've been working on. Then, in its own way, the road itself adds its answer.

A hubcap flies off an old Chevy and the cover comes rolling to a stop ahead of us. Small and light enough to carry, sturdy and large enough to feed my boy. Nearby we find a wooded area of highway easement. I clean his bowl there.