

VOLUME **ONE**, of,

Peppermint  
ALLEY  
Press! ♥

Hello ♥ Hello, I'm glad you're here.  
This is a zine made monthly and sent  
via snail mail in newsletter form. I am  
Linnea de Roche - a queer parent + teacher +  
traveler + baker + theater + maker type,  
who is in love with this whole damn world.

★ This volume covers July 2018 - July 2019 ★

books + music + starting out + projects  
recipes + houses + Mexico + Peru  
RENT + theater + family

[www.peppermintalley.com/press](http://www.peppermintalley.com/press)  
for snail mail sent directly to you!



# Peppermint Alley Press

yeah, I know the acronym is PAP. I think I can deal.

★ Mid-July 2018 ★ Northern MI ★ gotta start somewhere → ★ VOL 1 issue 1 ★

## hello & hellos

I love mail. Maybe because my Grandpa was a letter carrier, or because of the joy of getting personalized fun mail or just because I like connections; who knows why. Inspired by author Celia Perez (Read her book!) - who sends out a fun newsletter + knowing that I respond well to deadlines, here I am: sending this mid-July first installation of a friendly newsletter to you! ♥

### INGREDIENTS:

- 1/2 cup butter
- 3/4 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup chocolate chips



RECIPE: CAST IRON CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

- 9-10 inch cast iron pan
- preheat oven 375 or grill!

### PROCEDURE

- 1) Brown butter in pan 3-5 min. in oven/grill
  - 2) Mix brown butter + sugar (ideally use stand mixer)
  - 3) add eggs + mix on low 1 min.
  - 4) add 1/2 c. flour with salt + baking soda
  - 5) gradually mix in rest of flour (on low still)
  - 6) mix in chocolate chips with wooden spoon
- Spoon into pan (sprinkle more chocolate on top) **BAKE 25-35 minutes**



## set list

I'm listening to...

May Erlewine: Never one Thing + Shake the World

Jönsi: Go Do \* this might be my personal theme song?

Janelle Monáe: all of Dirty Computer

DJ Frida: If it's Meant to Be It'll Be

## Setting/you're invited!

again this summer, we are in Lake Ann. It's a refreshing change of pace that involves lots of campy-living ~ swimming, playing, stars, letter writing, visiting, hiking etc. Aaand also lots of handy projects - painting, fixing, building, setting up, moving stuff etc. Come, join us. Stop by with/without notice. Let's Play or pitch a tent!

## July Goals

um, I don't really play soccer but that's okay!

- o swim often (near daily?)
- o read + write > social media time
- o dance daily (Rhyt!)
- o befriend (or spy on) nearby Sandhill cranes
- o collect less rocks



We put my grandparents house on the market. Send out all the wishes for an easy sale. This is totally not my forte. At all.

## Recent Reading List:

Gender Failure: some parts are like looking in the mirror!

Y.A. previews: Hurricane Child, Miseducation of Cameron Post, Ghost Boys, Me, Frida, + the Peacock Ring



Old faves: Nick Bantock's Griffin + Sabine  
Mary Oliver (because I'm in nature!) +  
Andrea Gilson

Currently - The Summer We Got Free <sup>poems</sup>  
by Mia McKenzie  
Time Slips - Queer Temporalities,  
Contemporary Performance, and  
the Hole of History by Jaclyn I. Prior



Of the many items "in storage" I'm currently most pleased to be reunited with my typewriter. Maybe I'll tell that story next time! I've been typing poems! Both new ones + revisits from winter writing projects.

## WRITING

**MEXICO CITY** Any book recs to Mexico City + San Miguel de Allende this October! I'll be taking a group through the capital and co-directing a play for a conference of world-school families in San Miguel!!



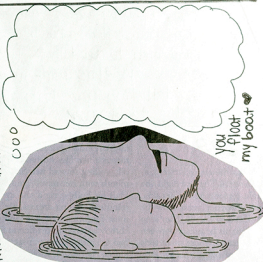
## Fruit Talk! <sup>More pre-locals</sup>

I live for MI fruit seasons.

- cherries might be my favorite, but the pits slow down baking with them
- strawberries are almost done but it was nice to get the Philly season AND the Michigan season later
- blueberries are coming!! there's a lot of free picking super close to here pick berries, swim in Lake MI, repeat!

← Traverse city area is the tart cherry Capital w/ a big cherry festival!

FLOATING IS A ABOUT RANDOM THINGS. NICE TIME TO THINK TRY IT.



I ♥ my life in Philly and summer time in Michigan (um, and travel too!)

I've been thinking about some of the trades (and trade-offs) made:

Philly: So much theater + art, city energy, liberal, always things to go do, access to everything city, trains, people noise

N.MI: time in real nature, stars/sunsets/lakes longer driving distances, less traffic truck noise, creative fun to make

HAPPILY: friends in both places who understand or tolerate this migratory life

## snail mail:

PO Box 139

Lake Ann MI 49650

until late August/early Sept.

Visit: Lake Ann School House  
17022 Almira Rd.

(616) 309-3144 if you want to call first

Not far from Sleeping Bear Dunes/Empire and easy to find from Traverse City





but you can surprise me too.

# Peppermint Alley Press

Mid-August :: Northern MI :: Ode to Slow Living :: Vol.1 Issue 2


hello  hello

Summer break is winding down, though I like to hang on until the very end, the energy and weather does start to shift. We still have 4 weeks here, but it will go all too quickly. I encourage y'all to hang on to Summer - with picnics, quick lake trips, hammock naps and porch visits. As for me, I'm embracing the slow life as much as possible: reading with tea, typewriters, hand-written letters, blueberry picking, kayaking, and star-gazing too. 




Recipe: Fruit Crisp on the grill  anyone? warm



We don't have an oven/stove... yet, it's coming soon. Meanwhile, I've taken to grilling in a big cast iron pan. It's not an exact science, but I like the ambiguity.

- Basic Fruit Crisp:** Turn on the grill with the cast iron pan inside.
- Melt a little butter in the pan while prepping rhubarb or blueberries, peaches etc. Mix in a little sugar + cornstarch.
  - In another bowl, mix 2 cups oats, 1/3 cup flour (any), a pinch of salt, 1 stick softened butter (or half butter, half applesauce) 1/2 cup brown sugar, cinnamon if it matches the fruit
  - Pour fruit into pan ↑ if it's too dry, add butter or oil or applesauce
  - place oatmeal crumble mix on top
  - stick in grill + keep it closed... as much as possible
  - check every 15-ish minutes until fruit is bubbly + top is brown

Note: make daily - you can do less butter & add milk if you want it more like baked oatmeal. Adjust sugar based on type of fruit + taste buds. Other sweeteners + flours totally work - it's very forgiving/adaptable. Just like me? 



- we sold our house in Grand Rapids to the people who were living there. I didn't point out where Rhys was born or where Ry once fell through the floor.
- we are set to close on my Grandparents' house 8/22. I didn't point out where my Grandpa died, where my Aunt fell from the attic, or how deeply rooted my family memories are, in this house my Grandpa built.   

 saying on their  hearth

**Lingo Chit Chat**  
 1. THE Lake: sure, there are lots of lakes up here, but THE Lake refers to Lake Michigan (aka the big lake... aka almost an unsalted ocean)

2. Up North: northern half of MI's lower peninsula, where there are lots of little lakes, cottages, camping & the big lake. One place ve Michiganders don't need to use our hand-as-map to locate.

come for the fudge, THE stay for BIG the Lake?  


3. Fudgies: folks visiting Up North... they come for the fudge & leave in a rush. Locals refer to all non-locals as fudgies.

4. Vernors: the local ginger ale; the only HFCS beverage that cures all types of malaise - from mauses to sunburn to heartache. Just ask my Dad if you doubt it.



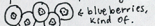
**August Aim**  
 Ummm, I shot a gun last week for the 1st time. Probably half of you are appalled by the fact that I found it exhilarating... the zing of the target getting hit! The other half of you are probably shocked that I hadn't shot a gun before now.

ps: it was a .22 if you wonder and I hit 4/6 on my first round.  
 pps: it was at my safety-minded neighbor's DIY range. Country Life!

Borta bra men hemma bäst  
 away is good but home is best 

## Blueberry Joy

On the way to the Lake, there is a place to pick blueberries for free! It's a farm that's now part of the National Park. The bushes are no-spray (yay) but also minimally pruned (challenge). I've taken to solo-picking with the sunrise. The berries are still dewy, which is maybe not the best. But it's quiet and lovely. I wear the red plaid flannel shirt that my grandma sewed my grandpa. Often I go for a quick (read chilly) swim too, all before my people wake up. Magical.



## Zine Making \*

This month I made a zine called "Trajectory of a hike" after climbing at altitude in Colorado. I'm working on a blueberry-inspired zine now. I also made a fill-in zine \*(all instant-book fold-up style) to give people on their birthdays. I always intend to send bday cards but often forget. I figured, I could personalize this design all year + then make a new one. Cute? Tacky? Tell me your thoughts please.

Also: send a note if you'd like a copy of said zines or have topic ideas.

Lake Ann address until September 10-ish...

happy  
BIRTHDAY

We are in the season of celebrating! Jack's last year as a pre-teen + Mia will soon hit double-digits. Hold fast, the time just flies.

### visitors

there's still time!  
Stop by, with or without notice. We have had everything from visits planned a year in advance to 4-hour warnings to knock, knock, anybody's home?

You are welcome!

To You  
Dear  
Reader:



Ajijack: Sandhill Crane  
(Antigone canadensis)

↳ migratory bird that spends summer nesting in the woods directly next to the school-house.

↳ 6.5 foot wingspan  
- earliest found fossil dated @ 2.5 million years old

- Known by the Anishinabe people as I of the 7 original clans, co-chieftain with the Loom clan. Honored for their eloquence / great orator

↳ During migration, they take take breaks to dance. This relieves migratory stress, aids in pair bonding, and is social too.

- They mate for life but also stay in social groups of cranes who are not necessarily related.

- Their calls can be heard 2.5 miles away.

- I hear and see them daily, but have not successfully befriended them... yet.

.....  
Music I've mostly been listening to  
classical music on the radio + Spotify  
mixes... any suggestions on spotify  
or elsewhere? 🎵 🎶 🎷

Typewriter Vices

I changed ribbons and something got messed up. Sad for the wonky parts... Maybe I need to find a typewriter repair person?

Shout-outs, slow hugs & extra dessert to the librarians, letter-writers, mail deliverers, and other purposely hand-making, slower-downers everywhere.  
THANK you for inspiring me to these romantic callings. I'll try speaking slowly too, as my gun-neighbor says I talk quickly.

Hasta Pronto. (do I?)  
(until soon)

regard



# Hello ♥ Hello!

I hope this finds you, like me, holding on to these late summer days- with every sweet juicy peach, corn-on-the-cob picnics, with shorts and sandals, leaving windows open, and fitting swims into the schedule... We've returned to Philly for classes + Mexico trip prep.



It's tough to say bye to MI + people there. Yet, I'm happy to be back to life here. Both places are home in ways.



HOW TO

# Make -vs- buy

I'm revisiting things I used to make and thinking up what else to try?

- + waffle cones
- + peanut butter
- + stampers
- + envelopes
- + yogurt
- granola
- hummus
- jam
- bread
- Kombucha
- condiments
- peace



Time to return to those goals of more bulk purchases and less little containers to turn around and throw away. I now have my containers out of storage to do this more easily!



I finished lots of books this month:

- Bow Grip & Tomboy Survival Guide by Ivan Coyote ♥
- Walk to Water (so good!)
- From Here to Eternity (all about death rituals around the world)
- Gracefully Grayson
- Invention of Solitude

currently reading Carmelo (audio book read by the author-Sandra Cisneros) + photo-copied stickers used on book spines @ the Lake Ann library (so quaint)



Juvenile Literature

# CONFESSIONS!

I have wanted to like the following things, but I just don't: olives, opera, pets in general.



Small talk, graphic novels, There you have it.

Also, a list of things that I can't help but enjoy: maps, flags, flag raisings, patches, butter, naps, splashing water, rocks, canning jars, snickers, french fries, letters, new "school" and art supplies.

I also really enjoy libraries, non-creepy physical touch and all the freshest seasonal fruits. But that seems more common. Phew



# Monarch Migration

This fascinates me. I've been planting milkweed and interested in migratory species since I was a kid. I've always wanted to see where they over winter. This year, I'm trying to actually make it happen

← yeah, I find it romantic →



eggs get laid on milkweed because that's what their caterpillars eat.



I store up milkweed toxins to protect myself from birds. Yay, I taste awful.

Reserva de Biosfera de la Mariposa Monarca Michoacán México

We did that credit card points thing people talk about and got all 5 flights for just the price of taxes! Woah!

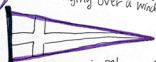
We'll be in Mexico October 17 - November ?

← TO DO: make return tickets



← rainbow peace flag from Patty (2009) brought from Italy, hanging over a window

\*pa-che"



A Swedish vimpel (triangular flag) bought @ a hardware store in Stockholm with my Aunt ♥

# MUSIC THIS MONTH

- Closer to Fine (Indigo Girls)
- Bite the Hand (Julien Baker) those harmonics!!
- High As Hope (Florence + the machine album)
- I Don't want (Santigold album)
- Whoever you are (eggy Tah) (that song about changing lanes - Rhys loves it.)

# Putting By



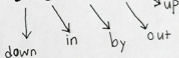
In addition to my little "problem" with rock collecting, I seem to have a thing for canning jars.

- I prefer mason + Atlas + weck
- I use them for canning (duh) and storage and drinking, transporting food, pen jar, flower vase, salad dressing shaker, there's more I'm sure

WIDE MOUTH > REGULAR  
(agree or disagree?)

What do you accidentally collect or land boards?

# PUTTING



# New Tatt'oo

Closing on my Grandparents house was tough. I was fortunate to have a dear friend along + much support from afar. The next day, I got a new tattoo from the amazing Sarah Scott. She let me use part of it (wild mint sprigs + a stink bug) in my header this month. (Thank you Sarah!) To see the rest (and share the idea in mason jars)

**j** these dots have a name!  
 • please stop by. You're Always welcome!!!  
 • tiddle  
 classified under things I learned while bowling with the bobbies.  
 Now you know.



FANTASY



HISTORICAL



Non-Fiction



## SAD NEWS:

In the move, a rather large vat of vinegar spilled.

Linnea lost a nearly full notebook of summer lists and writing. Many tears were shed in an already awful hotel room smelling of sour vinegar. The next day, a perspective-shifting message from their friend Lisa Rose bailed the loss. Lisa suggested that the timing (Rosh Hashana + New Moon) was auspicious. She added this beautiful line "the imprints of your ideas and visions aren't lost. They have just been rehidden for now." Linnea is currently trying to embrace this. -From the biography

DATE DUE

MOVING STINKS

I thought selling the house was the hard part. Moving in a truck is kind of rough too. Stuffing things in a storage unit? Noooo.

ADDRESS:

5529 N. 4th Street  
Philadelphia PA 19120

Meanwhile, please cross your fingers that we have house-hunting progress and soon!

But also: I'm actually very grateful that we can be mobile. Don't let the lament confuse that. ☺

# LIVING YOUR BEST LIFE

what does this mean to you?  
 it's a phrase I've been hearing people say to me in recent months. I think it has to do with choosing to live joyfully? With intention? I also read a science journal article that said the following ways of being are "best life" living habits, statistically speaking:

- + forgive easily
- + prioritize social relationships
- + take a long trip to a foreign country.
- + get strong + stay strong as you age.

YOUR THOUGHTS ???

ALMIRA TOWNSHIP LIBRARY

Present this card each time you borrow materials from the Library. You are responsible for all items borrowed on this card.



AUTHOR *Linnea says*  
 TITLE CLOSING WORDS

DATE LOANED

BORROWER'S NAME

go.do





# Hello ♥ Hola

This month is a little more newsy than my usual non-news letter. There is huge national news on my brain, and I haven't decided to discuss that yet, but it's with me (and of course I believe her and you and I love you)... There's also just personal news to share + plenty of chit chat too. So grab some tea + sit on down with me...

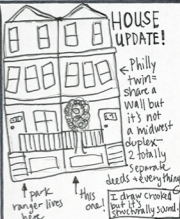
# Make vs. Buy

UPDATE:

Despite the transitions, I have managed to find a source for bulk of oats + peanuts so:

- ✓ granola (ahh, so good)
- ✓ peanut butter (still needing to Perfect this one...)
- ✓ chocolate peanut butter (chocolate covers sins)
- ✓ gf bread (much better)
- ✓ pesto (basil is my love language)

[Kombucha, Condiments, yogurt, envelopes, stampers, hummus & peace, see you late November maybe?]



Oct. 16 - last update before I print + send. Your envelope is already labeled + waiting! We closed on this house today. It feels both like a long time coming and really quick. After 2 years of looking, we put in an offer our first week back. My friend Ang was our realtor & it all went smoothly. Thanks Ang! The house is...

# Pets, explained.



I got some stern feedback when I confessed that I don't like pets. It's not like I admitted to how much butter I eat or how many calendars are hanging in this room. Look, animals are cool. I love wildlife... in the wild. And I'm glad you like your pets. But they shed & stink & they need care. daily. from me. I'm just barely caring for my kids and myself. I hardly remember to comb my hair. But yeah, I'll probably still pet sit for you... in a pinch. ♥

Also, confessing felt good despite the questioning. IS confession addicting?

PS: I have 4 wall calendars 1 planner & the google cal. that I actually use. Mostly I like flipping to new pictures.

# FUN FACT:

When we bought our current house, it took a long time to close so we ended up leaving for a month in Thailand a few days after we closed. This time, we leave for Mexico the next day!

Sorry - no coloring or personal notes this month. I plan/hope to close on the house. Fill in the last section over here → Copy, send these + get on a plane...

- + 6ft wider + 1 floor taller
- + We happen to know (+like!) the neighbors to the left
- + Neighbor to the right is a small Catholic School (please send all the rainbow flags + provocative mural artists. Yes, really.)
- + Needs a lot of updates + paint... so basically it's totally our style. ☺
- + We hope to move in a few months, after doing the work.



here we go to **MEXICO** By the time you read this, I'll be in Mexico City.



- Oct. 17-27 = Mexico City
- My co-adventurer, Melissa + I are bringing our families + some awesome Philly homeschool families through Mexico City. We've been doing workshops leading up to this & I'm excited!
- OCT 28- NOV 3 = San Miguel de Allende
- Melissa + I are co-directing a theater camp for kids @ a conference and then they'll perform it. Also: Day of the Dead
- Nov. 4-9 = Rancho Viejo (I can't find it on a map, it's small) will be while we're here
- We'll be creating an environmental play with local kids at a school with Melissa's ex-student who now is living there.
- Nov. 10-22 = Hopefully see the monarchs where they live in the winter and... some other adventures not yet planned.

CLASSES: I'm facilitating at Talking Stick again this year. Happily, they are amazing about me also going to Mexico. We're doing a fun "History Through Role Play" class there.

I'm also co-directing a Panto play/musical. Ry + Liz (his sister) are making the music, J&A are acting in it and actually, Ry is playing the part of the dame! Family Fun!

If you have suggestions, please email me!  
 Truth: this has been so much work to put together and I can't really believe that it's actually happening. Ry & I have wanted to make these shifts for so long. And now it's actually time. Also: Ry turns 40 on Nov. 24!

**PINCH ME!**

**BOOKS**

With the exception of a book of stirring poems,

I'm mostly reading about Mexico + pre-reading Y.A. novels for possible classes. I'm okay with that.

I have seen some amazing theatre though!

**S  
H  
O  
W  
S**

• wild feral girl child still has my heart, weeks later. it basically entertained ideas of what we could do if creativity weren't stifled by limits + no's + corrective authority figures

**WRITING ? ?**

Again, so much brain power has been on Mexico. I have not really made any zines even. Last year, I had a great November doing daily poem writing with a co-conspirator. We encouraged each other. I think Pauline & I will try this again in November. It's much less intense than NaNoWriMo. We agreed that even a daily sentence or list is better than nothing. 😊

**final words:**

Do we keep moving forward because that's what we do? Are we actually moving forward or is it a spiral? I'm not sure, but I'm trying to pay attention and notice things. Thank you for nothing with me & pointing out things that I miss. With gratitude. With love. Linnea

say yes to your life.

**MUSIC:** Florence + the Machine when Rhys doesn't beg for Goggy Tah's whenever you are... on toddler repeat...

Start Somewhere  
**write something.**  
 write anything.

**Go Do**



# premsa de Peppermint Alley

RANCHO Viejo

MID-NOVEMBER 2018 • MEXICO EDITION • Hold on to each other... Florence + the Machine Song • VOLUME 110 • ISSUE C50 •

iHola ♥ Hola! After a few busy weeks, we are enjoying a relax/laundry/catchup/ watch TV in Spanish kind of day. I walked to a "Super papeleria" and got envelopes so I can send this from Mexico. It may take awhile, but it will have fun stamps for nerding out. (With a nod to my Grandma for whom I always got foreign stamps.)

♥♥♥♥♥

### LE COEUR DU MEXIQUE THE HEART OF MEXICO EL CORAZÓN DE MÉXICO

**ITINERARY:**  
 OCT. 17-27 MEXICO CITY  
 OCT. 28 - NOV. 4 SAN MIGUEL DE ALLENDE  
 NOV. 5-9 Rancho Viejo  
 NOV. 10-13 Morelia + Monarchs  
 NOV. 14-18 Pátzcuaro + Guadalajara + Tequila  
 NOV. 19-22 Puerto Vallarta  
 NOV. 23 Philly  
 NOV. 24 Ry's 30th birthday



### FAMILY ADVENTURE

We (Melissa + I) made business cards + a work-in-progress website for our venture!



← conference that hired us to create an original Kids play in San Miguel. It was very well received. Yay for too!!!  
 Melissa is also a teacher + theater maker + she's a great traveler. We make a great team. Lucky find!  
 ← the cathedral reminded me of a Disney castle  
 San Miguel de Allende sky line!

GUANAJUATO

My kids keep collecting these contest tokens in bags of Chips. Philly kids love chip bags!



## C D M X

aka: Mexico City aka: DF (distrito Federal)  
 aka: first stop!



Lucha Libre freestyle wrestling event!

BLUE PANTHER LA LEONERA LASURERA  
 40 ANIVERSARIO ARENA MEXICO  
 VIERNES 19-OCT-18 20:30H

↳ I'm not sure how she would feel about this image of Frida related souvenirs ingram!



Frida Kahlo's house - was amazing. There was a huge Dia de los Muertos altar and her words + paintings... Her bed, belongings... Definitely worth the visit!!!

Fact: Ry + I navigated the city on foot + metro-zero taxis, zero uber. LOTS of walking!

N° 727468  
 EO DEL PALACIO DE BELLAS ARTES

MUSEO DEL PALACIO DE BELLAS ARTES

Entrada Libre  
 VISITANTE

CULTURA INBA

San Diego Rivera mural here + also @ the National Palace

Melissa + I hosted a group of 11 through the city for a week. I was the only Spanish speaker. Luckily, my Spanish is working quite well after all these years.

↳ Also saw Amalia Hernandez's Ballet Folklorico show here!  
 \* Mexico City is so chill + friendly for such a big city. Also, tons of trees + green space and so much art... Tons of street food too. I find it a very easy city to visit.

# Travel Tricks

Passo de la Reforma  
**+ Next Times**  
 Alert: I checked a bag.

- + I cover my guide book with Kraft paper. Maybe it's less conspicuous? Also, I can take notes.
- + Copies of maps, passport & money conversion are useful.
- + I packed my kids their home pillowcases - feels + smells familiar
- + I should always pack LESS. But, I did forget the usefulness of black pants & a headlamp
- + I could use a better day pack & Mia needs a bigger backpack next time & pack a washcloth?
- + I'm glad I brought markers + scissors + a paring knife + uno
- + I never know what to do about packing books... any ideas?
- ? What are your minimalist travel hacks?



San Miguel de Allende is where I was for this amazing holiday. We were mostly really busy making theater, but thanks to our generous + knowledgeable host, gave us the local scoop.

- pop-up markets for sugar skulls + special treats
- marigolds, so many adorning doorways, altars, heads of people
- parades + music + candles
- \* celebrating lives well-lived, the Pleasures of life
- + return of monarchs = ancestors
- lots of calavera (skull) face paint!!

PS: thank you Poppy for all your many acts of kindness + sharing!!

# NEW ON THE STREET VOCAB.

- Suavitel: fabric softener, not gentle laundry soap that I've used for 3 weeks now. OOPS.
- Mexico: means belly button of the moon in Nahuatl
- Mexica: is what the people in Mexico called themselves, Spanish conquistadors made up 'Aztec' which means invaders. Mmm hmm...
- Chispas: I liked already this word for static sparks in blankets. It's also for sprinkles on ice cream + sparks at a fire.
- Antojitos - little cravings + whims, street food yum!!
- Tampones de Ruido - earplugs
- Marimacha: a reclaimed word mary + macho - for butcher + tomboy

## WHAT'S NEXT????????????

- fix up that house we bought, + move eventually.
- more theater projects
- Peru w/ Philly families next Spring?
- Another homeschooler trip to Mexico City? *oh the travel bug*
- Bali next Fall??

## RANCHO VIEJO, population ~150 hours away from a town ~3

- We were invited here to play theater games + make theater w/ kids. *The area is in a biosphere preserve.*
- It was immersive, all-encompassing challenging + humbling. I think we all left a bit of our hearts there. I'm not sure what else to say to possibly explain. Except to suggest, sometimes you just **\*... SAY YES...\***

## Monarchs - Monarchs

• Mariposas:

- there were so many butterflies + various species in Rancho Viejo
- We saw a huge group of monarchs on their migration. They were roosting for the night in a cypress tree along the river. It was so beautiful + majestic!
- In 2 days we'll visit the big monarch preserve. I don't want to expect too much. I'll have to write about it next month!

## things I want to believe in:

- the goodness of humanity
- power of snail mail
- the possibility that love is real + reliable
- some kind of Karma
- health properties of chocolate + laughter
- SNL + Wait Wait Don't Tell Me.

## Personal / Family traditions + rituals

Do you have any? I've been thinking about this... and wanting some of this but also knowing that it can't be things that are too involved or rigid... nothing that becomes duty... things that can transcend my own wandering... hmmm...

## Final thoughts

• follow your passions and also your antojitos. I'm grateful for this life full of love for each of you, truly. *go do dinner*

patterns kept + also broken

# Peppermint Alley Press

★ Mid-December 2018 ★ Philly, mostly ★ **Holidayze Edition** ★★★★★ Vol. 1 ★ Issue 6 ★

## Hello ♥ Hello

Greeting from Philadelphia! So when I finally set out to begin this monthly non-newsletter, 6 months ago, I was well aware of the fact that I've basically never been good at holiday cards or birthday thoughtfulness. I decided to try anyway. And so, with a nod + hug to those dear holiday card senders, I'm sending this to my regular lovely readers & all those diligent holiday card senders. If you would like to get monthly mail, I made a google form that you can find here:

[www.peppermintalley.com/press](http://www.peppermintalley.com/press)

Much love + peace to start 2019  
go do, *Linnea*



## RECIPE:

swedish

### Pepparkakkor Cookies

#### Ingredients:

- 112.5 g. brown rice flour
- 112.5 g. white rice flour
- 90 g. tapioca starch
- 90 g. potato starch
- 2 t. baking soda
- 1T cinnamon
- 2 t. ginger
- 1-2 t. cloves
- 1 c. cane sugar
- 1/2 c. brown sugar
- 1/4 c. butter, soft
- 1/2 c. coconut oil, melted
- 2 eggs
- 2 T molasses

(A)

(B)

(C)

(D)



(9F)



PROCEDURE: preheat oven 350° for 20 min before baking

- sift (A) ingredients (dry)
- add in (B) ingredients (spice)
- in another bowl, cream (C) together
- add (D) ingredients to (C) (wet)
- Mix wet + dry together. You'll have to press it together w/ clean hands @ the end
- Chill for a few hours in fridge
- Roll out shapes + a silpat is your friend here
- cookie sheet w/ silpat or parchment paper

## QUICK RECAP:

- Oct-16 bought a house. (in Philly)
- Oct-17- NOV 23 Massive Mexico trip (work, play, make theater)
- December back to classes, working on new house, theater + trip planning..
- Holidays 1st in S.C. w/ family & then making in DE for New Years!

## Music + Books



- Florence + the Machine has had my attention since we saw them in concert in October. **so good.**
- RENT's soundtrack is my holiday music of choice
- Beauty in the World *used in the play HELLO that we made in October in Mexico*
- MLK by U2 *by Macy Gray*

- ↳ I'm Afraid of Men by Viktek Shraya
- ↳ Lord of the Butterflies by Andrea Gibson
- ↳ Pastrix by Nadia Bolz-Weber (thank you Tom!)

**JOLAROKAFLOD** x-mas book flood

This year my fam. is trying this Icelandic book-gifting + book reading twist on holiday gift giving + enjoyment. I'll report back...

♪ Ja la la la la ♪

ODE TO

# RENT

Does anyone else feel like this musical shaped their growing up? Or their growing into ones own skin?

### RENT - my timeline:

- It was workshoped starting in 1993 & opened on Broadway in 1996.
- I learned of it in 1997 & got the soundtrack (11th grade?)
- Saw the original Broadway tour in G.R. as I was graduating from high school.
- Saw it twice in College (I.U. w/LS) and in Peoria (between exams- Renthead!)
- Tried to see it on Broadway w/ Allison (1999) but totally sold out (ALAS)
- FINALLY saw on Broadway w/ Ry (Renthead fix!) in 2008 just months before it closed
- Seeing anniversary tour in March! in Philly w/ Pandora. Maybe try for Renthead again? Mia!!! wants to see it now! ♥ ♥ ♥

↳ I like to watch both the movie & Broadway versions over New Years. join me! ♥ ♥ ♥

**Renthead:** someone who 'camps out' to get day-of tickets in 1st 2 rows. It's amazing to see it this way, at least once.

Save the date: **Rent Live** on TV **January 27, 2019**

**YouTube Alert:** you can see a filming just before it closed in 2008 + a great documentary about Jonathan Larson.

search: "Rent, Broadway, 2008" look for high quality filming

How do you measure a year in the life?

Different songs have hit me at various seasons in life. I don't have a set favorite, do you? There are so many powerful lines + songs!!

# HOUSE UPDATES

- o Ry works on the house 5-6 days a week, I help as needed for now... will do more once it's OK for kids to be there **OK for kids** **OK for kids** **OK for kids**
- o Demolition (no kids allowed)
  - removed non-load bearing walls between living/dining/ kitchen
  - removed a weird closet section on 2nd floor
  - removed a really weird 3rd floor wall to open up kitchenette
  - removed 5 layers of kitchen floor, living room drop ceiling + paneling (hello brick walls)
- o Reclaimed- trying to re-used materials where it makes sense + only buy new when we "must"
- \* trying to really consider our environmental impact
- o current thought is to finish 3rd floor 1st (2 rooms, bathroom, kitchen) + stay there while working on main house? TBD...

New address: **38 W. Logan Philadelphia PA 19144**

Is it time to make a return address stamp yet? I think **YES!**

## ★ COMING SOON! ★

**Super Heroes the Panto!**  
**January 17-19**

Jack + Mia are in this play that I'm co-directing. Ry is in it too + I wouldn't be shocked to see Rhys on stage. Ry, Liz + Andy (super fun local person) <sup>best</sup> made the music. It's Punny + political. Come see it!!



Well, since it's the holiday/end of year edition, here's <sup>this</sup> section.

## Personal Updates:

Ry: loves bikes, works on bikes, coaches a bike team, rides a lot. Also very involved in kids learning + can fix just about anything.

Mia: resident animal lover + introvert always unique and has the sweetest laugh. Loves Talking Stick!

Jack: entering social media, thoughtful amazing big brother, kid magnet loves to tinker + go to science

Rhys: our entertainer: museum loves to dance, sing, play games best cuddler with the cutest little voice mixes really well with the big kids or content to do his thing!

Linnea- Um, you get enough of me here. I still ♥ to teach + make theater, write, cook, explore, still me!

Melissa + I found our groove in Mexico. So we're doing more!

• Peru end of March 2019

• Harlem NY late spring

+ theater projects brewing now...

[www.stagingjourneys.com](http://www.stagingjourneys.com)

## MONARCHS: final update:

We made it to their winter home. It's hard to find the words - I was just in awe. Just to hear millions of butterfly wings all winging at once... or to look up at trees thinking they're full of leaves but it's actually butterflies! If you dream of going. just go! Next: learning about fireflies maybe?

## HOLIDAY CONFESSIONS

I don't know how to balance traditions vs. stressful expectations + rushing around. I'm sure my kids will complain that I neglect traditions. Last week, Jack assembled the tree + hung some lights... by himself, unceremoniously. Is that awful? Aunt Jan sent advent gifts + the kids are so happy (thank you!) I've basically done nothing except put on holiday music + movies + strewn holiday books. <sup>quilt level = 2 or maybe</sup>

## LAST WORDS:

\* I sent issue #5 from Mexico but butterflies seem to migrate faster. So I put a virtual copy here: [www.peppermintalley.com/press](http://www.peppermintalley.com/press)

\* If this holiday edition is your intro-to-nonnews letter + you want to be in on months 7-12, let me know & I'll add you.

\* Whether you do 120% of the holidays or .02%, I'm sending you much love, peace, & quilt-free affirmation. - go do - <sup>winna</sup>

# Peppermint Alley Press

Drawings by Olive

Mid-February 2019 :: Philly Phrozen :: Beneath the noise, below the din... -U2

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 2

## Hello ♥ Hello!

January came and went in a flash, so here we are with non-news covering two months. Some little birdies tell me that November's mail from Mexico travels at the speed of Monarchs and is now arriving - so at least that happened. (If yours never arrives, drop a line, I have a few extra.) You'll probably never get a Valentine, fake apology or feigned interest from me, instead here's some Jan-Feb love to you. Oh! And heading art work is by a student. Thanks Olive!! Stay warm friends!

*Oliver*

## Ode to Age 37:

I spent my 36th year thinking it was year 37. So, in a way, I've spent two years being 37. My second year being 37 was a rich one indeed. I found new ways to love and reconnected with old loves. I managed to let go of some old patterns + beliefs that didn't suit me. I wrote + read + observed. I traveled, made lots of theater built some things, laughed a fair amount... In a word, I **exploded**.

eyes on tiptoe *winning*

## Little List of Happy Things

- ♥ Winter Wake Up tea from Trader Joes *again!*
- ♥ Making my own kombucha
- ♥ Spotify family account *(thanks Mandy!)*
- ♥ When my kids call attention to a beautiful sunset, moon or sunrise even
- ♥ Keeping the fridge stocked with endless taco supplies
- ♥ It snowed on my birthday night - that fresh bright snow that sticks to trees + makes everything feel new.


## theater /re:

hmmm... I have no preference on the spelling still. Regardless I especially enjoy spending winter months making + watching theater. I love getting lost in the dark corners and well-lit stages, wrapped up in stories, smells, and memories. I get lost here. Time and needs just disappear and I am alive again and again.

In the Last Year:

- WOZ w/ Melissa @ Talking Stick
- Bienvenidos Blancos w/ Team Sunshine
- Spider's Web w/ School Free Players
- Here. (in Mexico) w/ Melissa as Staging ♥ Journeys
- SuperHeroes: the Panto - School-Free Players

## TACO TIME

- ① Chicken - put in instant pot w/ garlic, oregano + 1 cup salsa
  - COOK on high for 12 min.
  - After 10 min. of natural release, let out steam
  - Shred with 2 forks. Yum!
- ② Cauliflower + Chickpea Mix
  - 4t chili, 2t. cumin, 2t. salt
  - 2 cloves garlic, minced (or more)
  - 1 small onion, minced
  - 2 T fresh lime juice
  - 2 T olive oil
  - 2 T water
  - 30 oz. chickpeas (cooked, rinsed)
  - 1 med. cauliflower (washed, dried, bite size florets)
  - preheat oven 400°
  - place together all ingredients except chickpeas + cauliflower
  - then stir in the 
  - place seasoned mix onto baking sheets, spread evenly
  - Roast 30-35 minutes
  - Stir occasionally + cook until chickpeas are crisp + cauliflower is tender. YUM!



- ? If I get a press, would I make my own shells... ?

OR WA2: olfactory-receptor gene that makes 4-14% of people taste the aldehydes in cilantro. Aka cilantro tastes like soap for 4-14% of people, but NOT ME.

This was a family affair: Ry as the (hot) dame, Liz helped with music, I co-directed + all the kids acted + sang. Family project win!

Mary Oliver has died.

Would it be acceptable to have an entire newsletter reflecting on this? Her poems have often carried me or I have carried them with me for many years now. One does have to wade through many animal poems, but the gems found are so affirming.

Peonies ~ to be wild + perfect for a moment before they are gone forever

When Death Comes ~ I don't want to end up simply having visited this world

Whelks ~ All my life I have been restless... my heart cries aloud: YES, I am willing to be that wild darkness, that long, blue body of light

Rice ~ I don't want you just to eat and be content... I want you to fill your hands with mud, like a blessing

Poppies ~ ... that light, an invitation to happiness.

Mornings of ... so come to the pond / or the river of your imagination / or the harbor of your longing, and put your lips to the world, and live your life.

Wild Geese ~ YOU DO NOT HAVE TO BE GOOD... the family of things

### Sunday Sing

I love the way voices sound together and how they fill a space with fresh + warm energy. So I'm trying a new intention to gather with people and sing, as a way of starting the week with goodness. Let me know if you want to gather with me and sing on a Sunday(s) in the late afternoon. I have a Spotify group playlist. I'm also baking on Sundays... CAKES.

"Tell me what you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?" - from *The Summer Day*  
Do you ever get a sense of urgency from this poem? I get inspired and start making big to-do + goal lists and then I pause. I remember that Mary's answer to this question seems to involve taking time away from the hustle-tire to take long quiet walks, thinking, listening, soaking in the good air.

### ♥ Holding Space ♥

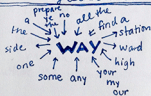
This phrase is always a little confusing for me, but I'm using it for an important reason. Could you please hold a little space in your heart for a "gem of a young teen" who is suddenly in our lives? She is facing some real + serious challenges. She is one of the most brave and thought-filled people I've met.

Thank you, Mary Oliver.

### Reading List:

I haven't been reading much. My people are gifting me books with pictures & children's books, so they must know my current capacity. Ha.

- \* Julián is a Mermaid by Jessica Shave
- \* Enormous Smallness a story of e.e. Cummings by Matthew Bi
- \* Ansel Adams postcard folio
- \* Penin Lonely Planet
- \* Making Books with Children by Esther K. Smith



### You don't have to be Super to be a hero.

- Milan Marvelous -  
this was a line my co-director wrote in the program notes for our play Super Heroes: the Pantos and it stuck with me. Our play was about putting aside differences, working together as a silly group of heroes: clunky, quirky, messy and perfectly flawed. Our play was also about identity and being your true self. If you ask me, living this way and honoring others' quests for these goals is pretty damn heroic. Sometimes the most simple things one can do are also quite challenging. Wishing you a month of authentic living and everyday heroics. go do

Hello ♥ Hello! There's no spring in the air yet but the days grow longer. Planning spring theater projects (and next fall too!) and taking walks in the sun. In an effort for less color, I took Frankie's advice and turned my phone screen to grayscale. It's much less interesting! I'm on my phone less. Win! (I still turn on color for photo times) So hello to you. May you find your own paths toward spring (it will happen) and less phone usage. Thanks for the mail and inspiration this past month. I'm happy to be in this life with you.

## Bike Season!



There is currently snow on the ground, and Ry rides year-round but... it's about the time when your body itches to bundle up and ride. I'm still not super brave about street riding in Philly... maybe this will be the spring that I get more fierce about it. If you ride a lot, do you have any advice for me?



I still haven't been reading all that much. But one of my weekly highlights is when Pauline reads aloud to our group of kids.

We are reading *A Crack In the Sea* by H.M. Bowdman. It's such a beautifully written book with these vivid and well constructed sentences. It's such a luxury to have someone read aloud, I highly recommend the practice.

"The seed of a seed of a plan..."

"Your job is to lead - but to lead people who can see where they're going and agree to it."

"She was finny and adventurous and wild and full of hugs exactly the way a mother should be." "His thoughts floated out in rings."



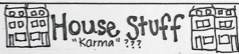
By the time you read this, we will be in Peru! Melissa and I are scoping out ideas/locations for a potential 2020 Staging Journeys trip. Our children (66) and Ry are taking this trip with us. I'm super excited. Also, Melissa got all 4 of her flights with frequent flyer miles and we got 4 of our 5 tickets that way. I'm rather amazed to fly on miles again. We're visiting Cuzco, various towns in the sacred Valley, Machu Picchu, and Lima. We are also close to finalizing details to take a group to Mexico next October through early November.

March 19 - APRIL 3



little list of things keeping me afloat this month:

- google docs
- mail from you
- Wissahickon trail walks (even short ones)
- hugs + cuddles
- spotify
- audio books
- theater shows
- tacos!
- cocacola (I know, I know)
- miso soup
- zine-makers esp. Kids
- looking forward to travel / spring / new house



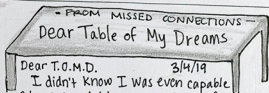
Reconstruction takes a long long time. Ry is a rockstar but unfortunately there's only one of him. I'm only managing to find/make pockets of time to help. Slowly though, things are taking shape - drywall, paint, insulation, flooring... Oh! One lucky twist - there's been a massive water department project on our street. It complicates our progress but they magically destroyed our crumbling front sidewalk that needed replacing.. So we got a freebie all-new sidewalk. Thanks Philly. We'll keep paying taxes + doing good stuff.



## Writing Projects on a Small Scale

Ever in a spot where you want to take on bigger projects but there's a slump or you're blue or stumped or busy or tired? Yeah, I'm there. Here's a few things I have been doing that ease those feelings for me:

- Instant-book zines - just go for it
- Where I'm From poems (a la George Ella Lyon) written with friends, kids, etc. and again
- just improv/impromptu prompts - even if you write one crappy sentence, it's something and you **Just Keep going...**

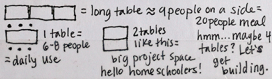


Dear T.O.M.D. 3/4/19  
I didn't know I was even capable of having a table or any piece of furniture that I would care about until I saw you at the ReStore in December. You were long and fairly narrow, super solid. As soon as I saw you, I pictured you in our house, full of people sharing food, I imagined the projects we would create & the plans we would dream, the games and tears and laughs we would share around you. I was ready to dance on top of you and roll out pie crusts on your sturdy surface. You reminded me of a wooden version of the one from the Life Cafe in RENT. I paid for you right away and returned with a trailer. But ALAS, somehow you went home with someone else. I hope you are well loved in your new home. Thanks for showing me what I need from a table. *at dinner*



### BUT THEN!

I saw RENT's 20th Anniv. Broadway tour... twice. That's a whole other story, but I noticed/remembered that the table in Rent is actually 3 tables, configured in various ways. Makes sense for theater, makes sense for life too.



Favorite Sweat-Shirt-shout out

Share Create Pursue change

Beauty The world Stories Justice

The words I wear & try to live.

The words on my very well-worn (out) favorite sweatshirt from Chicago's Albany Park Theater Project

## RENT MAGIC!

Somehow, against all statistical odds, we won the Rent lottery, where they sell the front row tickets 90 min. before the show. 70 of us entered and 50 of us won. This means we won 10 of the 20 front row seats. How is that possible?!? It was the 3rd time as a **Renthead**, but so incredibly meaningful to be there with my kids (picture Rhys, arms outstretched to the stage & Mia with a huge grin) and with our people - family who actively and deeply connects with us in building the world we want to be.

♪ To being an us for once. Instead of a them..

Last min. change: ticket lottery on Sunday!!!  
Mia also won the Sunday!!!

My lot of 7 Rent ticket stubs!

**TICKET**

Merriam Theatre  
250 South Broad Street  
Broadway Philadelphia

Thu, Mar 07, 2019 7:30

\$25.00

Orch Pit Lft Row AA Seat

As in the very front!

Upper balcony = \$45 Front sec = \$165 Very front = \$25

## LAST WORDS. Year of the Cake Sunday Sing's Foster parenting

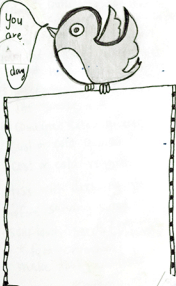
I've been trying to wade through recipe testing & writing about the year I made 52+ cakes while my grandpa was at Hospice - with my Sunday Sing's dream. I think I've made 5 cakes & hosted 2 sing's. I'm hoping Sunday Sing's will gain momentum, however I've not done much about that. Our family life took a dramatic turn in late January when we welcomed a 14-year-old into our lives. It was not pre-planned but sometimes you say yes because you can. She is currently our (temporary?) foster child and I suspect she's got a permanent spot in our hearts. So cake & Sunday Sing's have been on the back burner. BUT! If you want to sing (or make cake or design a table or paint dr...) with me, let's make that happen. It's time! *yo do dinner*

Hello. ♥ Hello!

Here, the world is in full bloom with cherry+apple+ magnolia etc. blossoms. I'll take all the petals and colors along with the sneezes. It seems that as the windows open and light stays around later, I dust off the winter and my energy picks up too. How about you? How does your season shift go?

YOU'VE GOT MAIL ???

I'm not sure what to do about mail@our new place. The post office is apparently notoriously unreliable. We get misdelivered mail weekly. What if my mail is also going to random wrong houses?? Last week I started resubmitting misdelivered mail (instead of redelivering it myself) I wrote "MISDELIVERED, PLEASE CHECK ADDRESS." So on other mail, the post office wrote "Please don't write on mail. ☹️" What do I do with that?! Would a Po Box even help? Ponderings. In other news, I finally made address stickers to a) streamline and b) help your mail deliverers? Oh! Also! Thank you to those of you who sent me mail. I love it! (Sandy, Tara, Kerry, Celia, Anne, name)



One of these months there will be no more house updates. It's not this month

If all goes well, our original house in Philly will belong to a new owner at the very end of May. We're "under contract" after 3 days on the market! There will be time to reflect upon the 14 years of memories here or how I won't live with my sister anymore. ☹️ Or how this will be Rhys' first time not living with extended family...but for now it's clean/pack/and most of all work work work on the "new" house on Logan Street. And maybe I'll actually get a return address stamp this time...



Breathtaking (beauty+altitude)  
Peaceful (surroundings+time)  
Timeless (duh, but wow.)  
Spiritual/Mystical/Magic

I'm not sure what I expected, but wow, what a scenic trip. There was this feeling of sensing past generations wordlessly etched into the green mountains. The people were gentle and kind and everything felt linked to the natural environment. I'll forever tie the smell of burning eucalyptus & warming soups to this place. I also ate many potatoes & (too) many eggs. Melissa & I hope they grow 3,000 to bring a group Potato varieties! back next Spring to experience the colors + climbing with us.

New-to-me-Peruvian-Lingo

SOROCHE: altitude sickness

KION: ginger (added to fresh juices to help soroche)

FLAME: llama - the animal it still means fire flame

AL TOQUE: immediately... which may still be 45 minutes from now.

PATA: not an animal paw but a good friend of any gender.

QUE ROCHA: it's like "Que pena" or how embarrassing/painful

LA YALPA: a little something extra thrown in, like a banana or an extra potato in your soup.

## HOW TO PAINT A HOUSE FOR LESS



- PAINT it all white and be done. Not a fancy-named white, just white white.
- Go to paint stores + ask to see their mis-tinted paints. Sometimes called a "bone pile"
  - buy a bunch of gallons for \$5-10 each + mix them into a 5 gallon bucket
  - note: this works well with a bunch of yellow or tan and with people who aren't too particular with the exact results... All I know is I got 5 gallons of yellow for \$25 & 1 gallon of a specific color for \$4!
- Don't paint. Buy VACATIONS instead + bring back tapestries + Art to cover the walls.

## ASPARAGUS+CHICKPEA DISH

This is an asparagus-season go to. I love it. My kids are medium-ok with it. They prefer it with chick beans. I adapted it years ago from a website - 101COOKBOOKS.

(My approach is to have dressing + cooked rice + chickpeas prepped.) so it's a quick weeknight go to

- Ingredients:
- olive oil x 2T
  - 15-30 oz chickpeas (drain if using cans)
  - 2 cloves garlic, minced
  - 1 med. onion chopped
  - 1 clove garlic, smashed
  - 1/4 c. tahini
  - 2 T of 1 lemon
  - 1/4 c. freshly squeezed lemon juice
  - 1 bunch of asparagus in 1-1.5 inch pieces
  - 3 c. rice, cooked
  - 1 c. almond slivers, toasted
  - salt + pepper
  - 2T olive oil
  - 2T hot water
  - 1/2 t. salt

- Whisk dressing in a mason jar + use hot water to thin to your liking
- Olive oil in a heated skillet, cook chickpeas w/ a sprinkle of salt until a little brown - maybe 2 min
- add onion for 3 min, then garlic
- Stir in asparagus, dash of salt, cover it w/ lid to steam for 1-2 min until it's

## PICNIC TIME

What are your go-to picnic tricks? I want to up my game but I'm usually at the grab a chicken or pizza level. So I've got a ways to go.

Planning ahead is not quite my forte here. I'm more likely to want to eat ten minutes ago, not two hours from now. For awhile, I was in a Friday night pizza routine that involved getting/making an extra pizza for Saturday outings. Maybe I should go back to that? Or maybe it's time to up my game?

- Uncover + stir in rice + almonds + stir + kill the heat
- taste, add dressing by drizzling over top (to taste) + salt/pepper to taste.
- This makes a nice picnic or potluck dish because it's yummy hot, warm, or room temp.

## NO PLANTS LEFT BEHIND?

I have this pattern of planting things that are finally established and ready to harvest when I'm moving on. I've done this with blueberries, rhubarb, grapes (x3) asparagus, hops, garlic, apricot tree, cherry tree, raspberries... you get the idea! Also, I have deep love for things like mint + morning glories that just grow tenaciously without needing (or wanting) my help.

But this time... I want to get a yard established sooner... and I want to stick around long enough to harvest whatever grows in APRIL-EARLY JUNE and/or after AUGUST... Plant People: help me.

Bloom Where You're Planted.  
— and —  
Plant yourself where you bloom.



I don't usually talk about actual news, but can we talk about this huge fire at Notre Dame? Historical damage. Religious relics. Art. Tourists. I get it... but I'm surprised by the massive outcry and 700+ million dollars immediately pledged for rebuilding. Can we get this kind of outrage for the 3 historically African American churches burned by a white arsonist? Or the mosque in Jerusalem that was burning at the same time? Can we raise money for people in Flint who still can't drink the water instead of rebuilding a cathedral? And can we think about how building that monstrosity was funded & formed in the first place? And if you want to tell me that yes, we can care about all these things, just follow the money trail and let's call it white supremacy again and again.

## That time I joined the CIRCUS

KINDA SORTA ALMOST

About a year ago, my friend Katy asked me to create a resume of the variety of projects and random jobs I've had. I'm still thinking of that challenge as a sort of snarky creative writing project. It would probably just show how very unhireable I'd be if I needed to actually submit a resume. Meanwhile, one more for the books is that I work of a circus (School). The unsexy version of the story is that Melissa and I rented space

here for a sweet youth theater project & to make it work insurance-wise, they had to hire us. Either way, I'm claiming this. And that, my friends, is the LAST WORD.

godo flinner





# Peppermint Alley



Mid-May 2019 Logan House or Bust This is my heartbeat. Like yours it is a hatchet. It can build a house, or tear one down. Andrea Gibson VOLUME ISSUE 10

## Hello ♥ Hello!

Yes, I just devoted 1/2 of this side to a cake recipe that I adapted from *Art of Fika*. I'm not sorry and nor will you be if you bake it.

I hope this finds you enjoying nice weather or planning for summer adventures (visit!) or taking time for a slow supper outdoors, coffee on the porch or an impromptu trip to the beach or camping. It's the season to somehow find a little time.

## M-O-V-I-N-G continued

As I write this, our parents are enroute to help my sister move. She is set to close on her house this week. We are set to finalize the sale of our 4th street home in a couple weeks. We have 3 of 5 bedrooms done-enough (they just need trim) 1 of 3 bathrooms work (needs a toilet seat still) and the kitchen is nearly finished, the big small kitchen should be done next week. Living Room? Dining room? All in good time. Packed? Ready? Not so much. One way or another, it will get done but I'm somewhat still in denial. Oh, also in that time, my teaching semester ends and the youth play is in 20 days so that's a lot of moving + shaking.

## WE THE REAMERS

Making devised theater is a wild ride. Making it with youth is all the more of a wild card. For this show, Melissa picked the songs. I shared a lot of poems that people voted on and a variety of young people wrote scenes. The scenes have all been placed and now we just need to write a few more to round out the edges, construct some big props & voila! Break A leg. time.

JUNE 4 if you're in town!

## Swedish Meringue Celebration Torte ~ Marängtårta

When I made this cake for my Grandpa, he declared that a version of this was what his Mom made for every birthday! She would adjust the fillings/toppings/flavors for each person. It made me so happy to have rediscovered a family connection. This cake is light & fluffy. I love to top it with strawberry slices & add pured strawberries to the whipped cream layers. The only really intimidating part is learning get egg white peaks & stopping at the right part. My best advice for this is youtube. PREP: preheat oven 300°



## ③ PUT IT TOGETHER

- divide meringue between the 2 pans.
- or you aren't a purist & added choc. chips or nuts, the meringue needs to cover them
- BAKE 40 minutes. Meringue should be golden brown & a little crispy
- Let cool in pans & then carefully remove

- Put 1 torte/meringue on a platter & spread w/ whipped cream
- Add 2nd layer & top w/ whipped cream
- You can cover the sides or leave them exposed.
- I personally like to decorate the top w/ strawberry slices
- ♥ Smaklig måltid! ♥ right in drawing

## ① TORTE

- 6 T. butter @ room temp
  - 3/4 c. sugar
  - 4 egg yolks
  - 1 T. vanilla
  - 1/4 c. milk + 1 T. milk
  - 3/4 c. flour or bleached almond meal
  - 1 1/2 t. baking powder
- ① cream
- whisk + add to #1
  - add vanilla
  - milk to #1
  - add flour or almond meal + b. powder to #1
- ② Divide batter between 2 pans. Spread w/ spatula. It will be thin. \* optional - spread chocolate chips or nuts over torte base. I don't do this.

\* I've also used almond extract

grease + flour 2 9-in. or 8-in spring-form pans

## ② MERINGUE

- 4 egg whites
- 1/2 c. sugar
- beat egg whites w/ electric beaters in a bowl without grease residue until you get soft peaks
- add sugar a little at a time & whisk/beat until stiff peaks form
- I don't do this.

## POST OFFICE WOES

Is it actually possible that my new post office is awful? I've heard such terrible stories but I really want it to be Urban Lore. But... in addition to misdelivered mail, Ry's Mom's Mothers Day Card was the first thing I mailed from the Germantown post office and it showed up as just a torn empty envelope. I kind of want to mail a bunch of empty gift cards and see what happens. It's time to put on a detective hat...

## Ode to a Philly Park on a Fine Spring Day

Before Rhys was born, I had just gotten to that sweet spot of taking kids to the park & being able to read a book or write a little. And then it was back to chasing a baby/toddler. Today, after some swing pushing, I realized that I'm back to park time allowing for a little break. Ahhhh. Spring here has been cool for longer than usual, the parks are lovely and I'm grateful for this space, and for the other adults who, while friendly, have not been too talkative so I could write two blocks.

know your  
pa-  
gender

egg  
on a

ROLE  
play

ROLL  
call  
of thunder  
away

do you have more?



## BEHIND THE SCENES

Some dear readers have asked about the process of making this non-news letter. Generally I write it all in a day or 2, but I keep a running list of topics. The first couple times I tried, I only wrote a few blocks & quit. Usually I start early one morning and just go. The heading takes way too long so if anyone wants to design a reusable heading, please do! After I finish, I wait a couple days & review. Some blocks get cut or redesigned for a later month. Some people surprise me with sending stamps (thank you!) and ideas (yay). Some months I know I have more time to color or personalize. This month, no. I wrote this block on a clipboard at a playground with squeaky swings on May 15, if you're curious. I don't know why I do this exactly, but I enjoy it, so I continue.

## Books + Music this month:

- \* Audio books in the car because I'm over the radio!
- \* Spotify of the music for the Dream Jukebox Musical until June 4
- \* lots of U2 this month too
- ~ A Tear in the Ocean (YA sequel to A Crack In the Sea)
- ~ Difficult Women (Roxane Gay)
- ~ History of Wolves (Emily Fridland)

## In progress:

- The Unbinding of Mary Reade by Miriam McMonim
- Pillow Thoughts (Chosen for the jelly fish cover - I'm superficial)
- She of the Mountains by Vivek Shraya - borrowed but not started yet...

## The LAST WORD:

Things are winding down for the "school year" even though we keep learning all the time. It's the last weeks of classes, teams, performances, portfolios etc. This also means that Michigan is on the horizon! We're about a month-ish away; Horay! This also means you're invited to meet us at the school house in Lake Ann! Join us for meals, swim in Lake Michigan, spend the night, play music + games + explore. You're welcome, join us! Campfires, star gazing, kayaks, dance parties, golfing dinner

welcome to...



how much can you juggle??

\*mid-June 2019 \*Philly→MI\* Freedom has a scent like the top of a newborn baby's head...-V2\* VOL. 1- Issue 11\*

Hello! Hello!

I'm writing by phone light in the early morning hours of moving day. Outside, rain drips on the roof & whatever birds like 3AM are chirping. It's peaceful but I'd rather be sleeping. We are deep in the "first times" and "last times" and "out of times" But I can't seem to slow down time so I'll try to just be in this moment for a little more time.

What No Day But Happened to Today

ALL IN GOOD TIME

- Move out & close on 4th street house (thank you MAY 14 years!) 31
- Last Day Cafe @ Talking Stick MAY 30
- R's bike coaching season ends JUNE 3
- We the Dreamers - my Staging Journeys Spring Theater Show JUNE 4
- Take Kids to a water park with Pauline JUNE 5-7
- Philly Pride Weekend JUNE 8-9
- Mia's last day of softball JUNE 15
- Head to Michigan! ≈ June 16-ish

PO Box 139 Lake Ann MI 49650

until about Sept. 1st

- Up Noah Pride JUNE 22
- Cherry Festival JUNE 24-July 6
- part cherries

house updates

- For the 1st time in 10 years, our stuff is in one house (well, except summer stuff that stays @ the school house)
- 1 ceiling left to dry wall during Phase 2... eventually the last 2 rooms but that's later
- we have a WORKING shower! AND two toilets (that's a first for us!!)
- stove (oven almost ready to hook up... instapot & microwave living!)
- the living room might become purple. Will you still come over? It might also have a stage because: house plays! Shows! etc.
- no laundry until september but I can manage for a few weeks

New-to-me-word:

the earthy scent that accompanies rain falling on dry soil; typically more pronounced after a light rain

petra

ichor

↑greek for stone

↑fluid that flows from veins of gods in greek mythology

- a 2015 study at MIT released video of super slow-mo rain drops falling on porous surfaces (it's on you-tube of course)
- they were studying how aerosols move into the air & how soil-borne bacterial diseases spread but it got me thinking about smells & memory
- raindrops moving at slower speeds create more aerosols.

You got this.



Coping skills for end of rope times:

- make + ignore lists
- turn off social media
- drink water & coca cola
- accept help (bonus if you know to ask for help, I'm not that evolved.)
- try to laugh
- research random terms

geosmin (C12H22O)

greek = earth + smell

is the name for an earthy scent + flavor. it's responsible for the taste of beets (blech!) & the aroma of petrichor (yes please!). humans are very sensitive to ~~the~~ geosmin & can detect the aroma at 5 parts/trillion. scientists in Australia identified a yellowish oil of geosmin by steam-distilling rocks from an arid climate & comparing it to "blood of the stone" name. a small perfumery in India figured out how to capture the scent. If you want to go down another entire rabbit hole, google: Demeter Fragrance Library



thanks to Jenna for this 'rabbit hole'!

down to the wire

# welcome as you are.

this is a motto that I hope you feel from me, that I want our spaces to exude.

Some of you have asked about our foster-parenting situation. Without over-sharing a story that isn't mine, here's my part: there was a sudden need, I knew we weren't perfectly set up but I knew we could say yes to this child. It has been an amazing network of people who surround & protect her and I fell in love with her too. We

found an awesome couple who were waiting to foster a queer teen, and she has transitioned to living with them. They are such a great fit and include us as part of the parenting team. We see each other at least weekly and in many unexpected ways it's an extension of family none of us knew we even needed. I know, in my heart, that this was all meant to be, and also I must acknowledge that it was not easy. But I'd do it all again for sure.

Let your love  
be expansive, you  
are a milky way\*

## SHOUT OUTS

- \* a freezer full of popsicles
- \* a more-mild-than-usual Philly Spring
- \* people who return paint so I can buy it cheaply
- \* The paint store person who saves colors she thinks I'll like (all the Minkows!)
- \* fun/thoughtful/encouraging mail + stamp gifts (you know who you are - thank you!)
- \* my sister - she makes these copies for me but really she enriches our lives in countless ways!

We the Dreamers - \* \* \*  
jukebox musical + devised theater project that made me a circus-school employee  
Melissa + I have finished our first "Staging Journeys" production. Phew! I'm proud of all our hard work and everything the cast came up with. There's lots of room to grow but this was heart+felt, honest, and brave. I'm also proud that we had such a wide age range (8-15) and were able to let their individual talents

## Confession:

#1: saving parking spots is a thing, and of course there's unspoken "understandings" where some people feel entitled to spots. For the first time, I blocked off spots on 3 streets for moving day. I only feel a little entitled to that.

#2: we bought a minivan. I hate the idea. They're fine for other people, I'm only judging myself here. But I'm also practical. Being able to transport up to 8 people & have trunk space is sensible. So here we are: minivan owners. Still 1 vehicle people though.

## The Last Word

Here we are already. I started with a circus motif because life has felt as such & also I've been at the circus school a bunch. But it's also PRIDE month. And, well, I'm feeling all sorts of ways. Most of all, I want you each to know that you are loved + vital + welcome. Let yourself be seen here.

"those heavy days in June when love becomes an act of defiance. Hold on to each other. Hold on to each other. Hold on to each other. HOLD ON TO EACH OTHER."

-Florence + the Machine.  
I'm here. I love you.  
Go do, dinner



Hello ♥ Hello!

It's currently after 10pm in Lake Ann, with enough light to be outside writing. Sandhill cranes are crooning in the field and a nest under the porch eave is loud with little chirps as evening meals are dropped off. Of course, trucks also rumble by, mosquitoes buzz, kids whine as they get tired and I have a fly bite on my butt cheek, just to keep the idyllic scene accurate. But I'll take the sunburn with the sunsets for a good while longer. DON'T WORRY, I'm actually watching the sun exposure, I promise. ☺

### Reading List:

- Prairie Fires - it's a newer look @ Laura Ingalls Wilder (albeit still problematic)
- (research for a Panto Play)
- Saving Vincent + The Urn Carrier by a local author (Chris Convisor)
- Stories of Mexico City - a cultural + literary companion (prep for returning this fall) I can't wait!!

I'm in this rabbit hole of research on the ways these stories perpetuate a harmful false narrative embedded in racism, capitalism + isolationists.

### ODE TO WELL WATER

My grandpa would always reminisce about how much he missed well water - how it come out the perfect chill temperature even on the hottest days, always tasting so perfectly sweet. I think about him each time I draw a glass of well water from the sink at the school house.

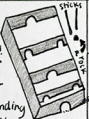


Indeed it's just the right temp. and tastes a little sweet. I'm glad to finally know what he meant. ♥

PUKE MICHIGAN ← state slogan

### BOX HOCKEY

COMES TO THE SCHOOL HOUSE!



team deRoche celebrated our 11th Family Founding Day this month.

We celebrated by making a box hockey game. (Thanks to my brother for the help!) It's reminiscent of the ones I loved @ Camp growing up. Think of a pre-foosball game that's easy to build if my drawing leaves you confused. It's about 4 feet long and getting lots of play. Yay! Ry + I also went on a long bike ride & I made a lemon blueberry cake. And we did sparklers. ☺

### SUMMER PROJECTS

I've been at the School House for nearly a month, but it's gone so quickly! Ry is building a second bathroom (he really is amazing if you ask me). We are settling into having an actual (beautiful) kitchen, painting projects, tree care etc. I dream of a bigger table (but there's always room for YOU) and the days past construction phase too. I'm trying to write, ride bikes, swim, work on some recipes and just be. That last one is of course the hardest one for me, disrupting the idea of always working + the notion of being busy.

SLOWING DOWN TAKES TIME, I'M LEARNING.

### COLD SWIMS.

Two summers ago, I decided to say YES to a full swim each time I went to the beach. Last summer, though the water was rather warm, I said no a few times. This year, the water started out at 57°.. I've said some NO's but I'm also learning to somehow appreciate a brisk swim where the chill catches in my chest a bit. There's a mental block to get over and then a thrill. I still can't decide if it's easier to wade in at first or just dive under. What kind of swimmer are you?







### More Up North Mitten Talk:

**PARTY STORE:** place to buy alcohol & such

**JEET YET?:** did you eat yet?

**PROLLY:** probably - is this a MI thing or just something I happen to say?

**THE LAKE TURNED:** well "the lake" means Lake Michigan of course. When it "turns" the temp changes to cold quickly as a rip tide churns up the deeper water. (Thanks for explaining Clint!)

I left these for you to color in thing  
rainbow glory. Gnomes r lazy?



The IG is gnomOfficial if you want to see what Jack is doing. Thanks for drawing these for me Jack. :)

PS: If you know me, I have a graphic novels, so of course he loves them. Perfect...

### SHOUT-OUTS!

- Thanks for all the lovely mail Tara, Sandy, all 3 Jenna's, Celia, Aunt Jan, Pops, Nancee, Veronica, Breezy, Pinc, Amy, Jo, Mom, Olive +
- To you for being here, reading + imagining with me. ♥
- Geeka for making this month's UpNorth heading, xo
- To the strawberries that finally made an appearance and the cherries that are almost here. I'm ready for you + peaches + blueberries too.
- Cab-on-the-corn - Rhys' favorite don't anybody correct him please!

Summer address:

PO Box 139  
Lake Ann MI  
49650



### Meet Jack's gnomes!

At the end of June, Jack decided to make a comic about Gnomes going to Pride. He asked me to help with the handwriting. Every now and then he asked my opinion but this was his project. I am trying to do that parent thing where you hold back and let something go at your kid's pace. But I also can't wait to see what the gnomes do next! So far, the gnomes have Instagram and Jack wants to sell the comics on a sliding scale. Really, this kid is all his very own person and I'm lucky enough to watch him grow. Shout out to his art teacher (Phil!) and the light box he bought for tracing. Now I stand back and watch (and laugh at how well he developed these gnome personas.)

### The Last Word Volume 1

Well dear ones, we have made it to the last issue of P.A.P. Volume 1. I had little idea why I wanted to do this and I've actually completed a year. Some how it brings me joy and I love hearing when you enjoy it too. My encouragement is that you find something that brings joy to you. Maybe someone else will appreciate it, maybe not. There doesn't have to be (and maybe shouldn't be) a point past it sparking something in you. Make magic, make peace, make ritual, make beauty, make mischief, make a riot. Don't overthink, just start.

go do y'inner



### GROWING LIKE WEEDS

y'all have been so sweetly asking about the ever-growing + keeping me on my toes Kiddos. I mentioned Jack's gnome project. Amelia (almost) is officially taller than me. She loves animals + can wrestle me to the ground, and at 10 years 11 months is officially taller than me. Rhys is a tiny one who is agile, sweet & getting into jokes. They are each very self-determined & self-directed. One of the things that makes me bubble with happiness is to hear them each laugh. ♥