The Desecrators

For centuries people have dug up Native American graves. Now the FBI is tracking down the culprits — and trying to return what they stole.

BY ELIZABETH EVITTS DICKINSON
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Art With a Point

Title: “Olympic Hopeful”

Artist: Jon Krause, Jenkintown, Pa.

From the artist: There’s so much controversy and uncertainty surrounding the Olympics this year because of the pandemic, but I think most people are hopeful the Games can go on. While they might look strange — with mandates to not cheer and the possibility of few or no spectators — they are a much-needed respite from coronavirus burnout.

For more art from the magazine, go to wapo.st/art-with-a-point.

On the cover: Illustration by Lia Liao


Web: wapo.st/magazine Twitter: @wpmagazine Instagram: @washingtonpostmag Facebook: The Washington Post Magazine Email: wpmagazine@washpost.com Editorial: 202-334-7585 Advertising: 202-334-5224
In June, Backer, 23, confidently strode out on a stage in Miami’s Bayfront Park. Dressed in a crisp navy-and-pink patterned button-down, he welcomed attendees to what was billed as the first climate rally for concerned conservatives. This, he said, was the start of the “new climate movement,” one that “knows capitalism and freedom” instead of regulation.

“Today, conservatives are reclaiming our seat at the environmental table once again,” Backer crowed.

As the founder and president of the American Conservation Coalition, which organizes young Republicans around free-market climate change solutions, Backer is part of an emerging effort on the right to win over environmentalists. The June rally featured Republican speakers including former U.S. representatives Carlos Curbelo and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (both from Florida), Rep. Carlos Gimenez of Florida and Miami Mayor Francis Suarez. It was time, they said, for the right to leave behind climate denial and offer real fixes. “If we want to win elections in this country, we have to talk about this,” said Suarez.

The GOP’s recent history on the environment has gone from John McCain’s 2008 campaign featuring a modest cap-and-trade plan for addressing climate change, to anti-Obama rhetoric on green policy, to the outright denial of the Trump administration.

Republicans who sought bipartisan action haven’t fared well: Of the 11 House members who signed a resolution expressing climate urgency in 2015, the only one in Congress today is Elise Stefanik of New York.

And yet there are still conservatives who want to...
Backer wants Republicans to put together a platform including ambitious zero-carbon electricity standards and a leave-it-in-the-ground approach to oil and gas drilling. Many environmentalists view spending on innovation and mitigation as necessary, but only as a piece of a more wide-reaching plan—one ambitious enough to tackle the state of emergency facing the planet: The United Nations’ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change wrote in 2018 that policymakers had just 12 years to act to avert the worst consequences of global warming, while Faith Brod, head of the International Energy Agency, wrote in January that “nothing short of a total transformation of our energy infrastructure” is necessary to fight climate change.

The question is who is listening. Republicans in Congress are still opposed to sweeping climate action, while the left wants more harm than climate deniers do.”

The group won’t disclose the names of its funders, but Backer spending to adapt coastlines and rural areas to extreme weather. public lands to oil and gas drilling entirely. ACC also backs federal Republicans joined a climate change caucus, which Backer helped address climate change. Recently, more than 50 House encourage farmers to create carbon markets and protect like carbon capture technology and nuclear power. He wants to coastline (although he has done little to cut emissions). DeSantis have made overtures on climate change, with DeSantis research — both public and private — into clean energy solutions spending on innovation and mitigation as necessary, but only more innovation.” Republicans, he contends, are the ones who can do that — and win. But his rally showed that may be harder than Backer’s optimism lets on. Despite a projected attendance of more than 500, only about 150 were there, huddling in sparse patches of shade. Some of the loudest voices at the event were exactly the ones Backer wants to leave behind. A group of older men jeered the speakers, lustily waving a Trump 2020 flag and signs that read “There Is No Climate Crisis.” Rafael Gomez, a conservative YouTube vlogger who managed to obtain a press pass, at one point sidled up to the rally’s VIP area to taunt the “Democratic plants” like Suarez and Gimenez. “You’re a RINO, you want to destroy America,” Gomez shouted. “You want to destroy Miami with your globalism climate bulls—.” Benji Backer’s “new climate movement” may still have some work to do.

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Backer told me its money “comes from a diverse group of private The group won’t disclose the names of its funders, but Backer...
“As with lynchings, we know who the victims of the Tulsa Race Massacre are but we don’t know who the perpetrators are.”

John Whittington Franklin

INTERVIEW BY ERIC EASTER
PHOTOGRAPH BY MARVIN JOSEPH

John Whittington Franklin, 68, is a historian and the son of scholar John Hope Franklin. His grandfather Buck Colbert Franklin, a lawyer, survived the Tulsa Race Massacre of 1921 and penned the first known memoir of the event. He lives in Silver Spring, Md.

Your family has a long and storied connection to Oklahoma and that tragic event.

I’m the fourth generation to come out of the Oklahoma experience. My great-grandfather was born in 1820 and came to Oklahoma as a slave to Chickasaw Indians in the 1830s. He was a Black cowboy and farmer. Then my grandfather was the seventh of his 10 children.

Ground was broken for a park named after my father in [2008], but there was already a park named after my grandfather in the 1970s. It was my grandfather who was the massacre survivor.

How did your family pass along the story? Is there a particular moment when they sat you down and said, “You need to know this part of your history”?

You have to remember that I was growing up in the household of a historian, so I was learning about all of our history at the same time: the Mali Empire, Ghana, Frederick Douglass. And I was learning all of that at home because I was not getting it at school. I learned about it in my household with all my other Black history.

There is, rightfully, much focus on the massacre. But when we talk about “Black Wall Street,” how the community came to be is largely untold. Where did the wealth come from?

So Black Tulsa’s wealth was from the land, from farming and the petroleum and natural gas on their land. That’s what makes Tulsa different from Atlanta or Durham or Wilmington or Raleigh, the other Black economic centers. So this was a level of wealth that created not only a prosperous African American middle class, but also the services to cater to them: hotels, restaurants, furriers, jewelry stores, professional offices.

With so much wealth and opportunity available, why the resentment from the White community toward the Black community?

Because only the rich White people were getting wealthy — or wealthier. The oil workers were poor Whites who were jealous of these African Americans with material wealth, with homes, with things they could not dream of having.

As a historian, does it bother you that most of America probably knows the Tulsa story because of the HBO series “Watchmen” instead of history books?

Our history has been so consciously suppressed — African history, the history of Africans in this hemisphere — that I see it as my daily duty to inform whomever I encounter about our history. They don’t know it. They haven’t read it. I don’t care if they’re Black, White, Asian, Latino or Native — they don’t know the history. What they’ve been given is a surface, cursory analysis that is meant to appease. It’s a much larger issue of education.

What do you hope comes out of this year’s commemoration, the documentaries, the events, the news articles?

I see two goals. One, that every child and teacher in the state knows about this history. And that’s no mean feat. So that’s the first thing. But also it’s fascinating that, as with lynchings, we know who the victims are but we don’t know who the perpetrators are; their identities have been suppressed to this day. How is it that I, as a scholar of the 18th and 19th century, can find out who did things in, say, 1736 or 1835, yet it’s 1921 and we have this blank spot? There is ongoing suppression of the knowledge of history, and that needs to be resolved.

Eric Easter is a writer and producer in Washington. This interview has been edited and condensed. For a longer version, visit wapo.st/magazine.
Ethan Rinks says he is picky when dating and likes things to be orderly. “I can sometimes be a control freak and very routine and by the book,” said the native of Savannah, Tenn. But this spring when Ethan saw a cutie in the Date Lab column, he decided to toss a little chaos into the mix by applying. “I thought it would be good for me to step outside of my box,” he said, “and have a true blind date. Let’s just see how this goes.”

And though he may mostly color inside the lines when looking for love, Ethan has led an unusual professional life. He did a two-year stint in Ecuador for the Peace Corps, which helped bring him to Washington in 2012. Now, he manages programs that remove land mines and other unexploded ordnance from post-conflict areas in Southeast Asia and the Pacific islands for the State Department. “I love connecting with people and to be able to visit a lot of the projects that the U.S. funds in these countries,” he said.

At 37, Ethan wants a life companion and eventually would like to get married, but there’s no rush. His last relationship ended amicably after four years in 2019 — he said it wasn’t built for the long haul — and he’s content with singleton life. “I think it’s unhappy to look for happiness in someone else before you find it in yourself,” he explained. “Whoever I find is kind of like the cherry on top.”

This time, the risk was worth the reward — initially at least. Ethan was pleased when he first saw his date, Frankie Catalfumo, a 30-year-old infectious-disease epidemiologist. “You don’t know what to expect, and it’s strange to have no idea what this person is going to look like, but he was a super attractive guy,” Ethan said.

Unknowns are something Frankie has grown more comfortable with after this past year helping to fight covid-19 in a hospital. “The pandemic was really rough, as unexpected as it was and with the absence of CDC guidance due to many political issues,” he said. “I describe it as building the plane as you fly it.”

There were weeks when Frankie worked as many as 90 hours and felt as if he were hanging on by a thread.

His last relationship ended a year ago, but dating petered off during the pandemic, as it did for so many others. “I thought, ‘Wow, I have probably one of the most sexiest careers right now and I can’t date,’ ” said Frankie, who grew up as a “beach baby” in West Palm Beach, Fla.

He learned about Date Lab while on a hike with a friend who had submitted the night before, and Frankie soon decided to apply. He was hopeful he would meet someone he might not have crossed paths with otherwise.

It turns out both Ethan and Frankie spent quarantine working on sprucing up their craft cocktail skills, something they discovered pretty quickly after arriving at Duke’s Grocery near...
Dupont Circle on a Friday evening. “We’re both very interested in amaro; it’s like a bitter Italian liqueur,” Frankie explained. “Nobody is this obsessed over this bitter liqueur because not many people are interested.”

Frankie talked about making his own Buddha’s hand-infused vodka, orangecello, lavender gin and a goji berry rum. Ethan shared that he is making a shrub (a drinking vinegar) to create his own cocktail.

They ordered burgers, split mac and cheese, and each had five drinks over the four hours they were at Duke’s. The two men were surprised they had so many points of overlap. Frankie was also in the Peace Corps, and both come from large families and love hiking.

Frankie described the solo hiking trip he had recently taken in East Tennessee — unfortunately not near the Catfish Capital of the World, where Ethan grew up.

“One of the great things about this kind of connection is how many common interests we have, which I think is rare,” Ethan told me. “Deciding to join the Peace Corps is a pretty big decision and I guess indicative of a kind of worldview and flexible living that is nice to find in someone.”

The conversation veered from making up their own “Real Housewives” tag lines to music to Frankie’s flora and foliage collection. “In gay terms, he’s a plant daddy,” Ethan said.

Ideas for future dates came up too, such as trying out an amaro bar and hiking in Shenandoah National Park. The night ended with a kiss, and the next morning they were texting each other.

“He has some silvering on his temples, which is a very distinguished, handsome, sexy characteristic,” Frankie said. “We planted a lot of seeds. Now we just need to see which ones we want to germinate.”

RATE THE DATE
Ethan: 5 (out of 5).
Frankie: 5.

UPDATE
After a second date, Ethan and Frankie decided they wanted to be friends. They shared cocktails again on a third meetup.

Tanya Ballard Brown is a stand-up comedian and an editor at NPR.
‘There’s This Notion That Some People’s Graves Are for Plunder Because They Are Not Considered to Be Fully People’

The mass looting of Native American burial sites — and the FBI’s effort to return what was stolen

STORY BY ELIZABETH EVITTS DICKINSON  ILLUSTRATION BY LIA LIANG
The day the SUVs arrived in Waldron, Ind., a rural town 10 miles southeast of Indianapolis, the residents took notice. It was April 1, 2014, and to get to the house on South 850 West you had to drive down a long stretch of flat roads, past orchards and farmland. The line of government cars was easy to spot in this community of less than 700 people.

The caravan pulled in front of a large, unfamiliar rural home. FBI Special Agent Tim Carpenter and cultural anthropologist Holly Cumack-McVeigh got out of the cars, accompanied by other agents. They walked up to a human-sized terra-cotta replica of a Chinese warrior, which offered a first hint of the obsessions of the homeowner inside.

Carpenter, armed with a 100-page search warrant, the largest he’d ever compiled, knocked on the front door. When Don Miller, age 90, appeared, he only smiled. He didn’t seem worried to find federal agents standing on his porch. “I don’t think he believed what he had done was problematic,” Carpenter told me. After consulting with his lawyer by phone, Miller voluntarily let them in.

Inside, and squirreled away in outbuildings across his property, was one of the largest personal stores of cultural artifacts in the world, according to the FBI. “In my experience dealing with antiquities cases, a large private collection would have been 100 pieces,” Carpenter says. “Then I walked into Don Miller’s house.” He had more than 42,000 artifacts.

In the basement, glass cases and wooden shelves displayed some of what he’d amassed in a makeshift museum. He loved to show off the items that he’d dug out of the ground and gathered over eight decades, regaling friends, Boy Scout troops, curators and reporters with stories of his global adventures. Miller was what professional archaeologists derisively call a pothunter, an amateur hunter of Native American antiquities. He was a thriving hobby in America, with many types of collectors. Surface hunters gather what has leached from the earth or what may have been broken up by, say, farm or construction equipment. Relic hunters tend to use metal detectors. And then there are those like Miller who employ shovels and picks and, in his case, heavy machinery. Digging at a site is a pothunting.

Miller was one of the most prolific pothunters of his generation. He began digging as a kid and was still going well into his 90s. He could spend days and weeks buying and excavating, eventually displaying in his basement artifacts ranging from Ming Dynasty pieces, to show off the items that he’d dug out of the ground and gathered over eight decades, regaling friends, Boy Scout troops, curators and reporters with stories of his global adventures. Miller was what professional archaeologists derisively call a pothunter, an amateur hunter of Native American antiquities. He was a thriving hobby in America, with many types of collectors. Surface hunters gather what has leached from the earth or what may have been broken up by, say, farm or construction equipment. Relic hunters tend to use metal detectors. And then there are those like Miller who employ shovels and picks and, in his case, heavy machinery. Digging at a site is a pothunting.

Miller’s main obsession was with Native American cultural goods; the Miller case represented a shift: Increasingly, the Art Crime Team had been looking into thefts against Native American graves. Miller was wanted for the size of his looting, and the extent to which he took bones out of graves, but “Don Miller is not unique,” says Deborah Nichols, who is president of the Society for American Archaeology. “He was just able to do it on a larger scale than most.”

Federal law management agencies estimate that more than one-third of Native American sites on federally protected property have been emptied. Many of those sites were graves. To take just one example of the scope of theft, according to a 1997 FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, 75 percent of Native American graves on public land in southwest Virginia have been pillaged. And this doesn’t begin to account for the graves on private property.

In some cases, the plunder happened years ago. In other cases, there are professionals, or amateurs, or pothunters and collectors. Professional archaeologists and amateur pothunters alike aimed to build collections around Native American artifacts and bones. “The whole idea of how museums even started was as cabinets of curiosity,” Tayac says. “It was outright desecration, and an essential lack of acceptance of the humanity of certain people.”

Samuel George Morton, a member of the Academy of Natural Sciences, procured skulls from pothunters and others around the world during the 19th century, and these now make up the Morton Cranial Collection at the Penn Museum in Philadelphia. There was “quite a lot of interest in racial hierarchies,” Tayac says, “showing cranial size is important, and what’s the difference from barbarism to savagery to the most highly civilized, of course is the White race.”

Learning about skull science was “disgusting,” says Mike Catches Enemy, who is Lakota, from the Oglala Band Sioux. He lives on the Pine Ridge Reservation in Little Wind, S.D., not far from where Miller would hunt, and works as an administrative assistant for the tribe. He was encouraged by his elders to get a master’s degree in archaeology and help the tribe better understand the methods of the profession. “I’m asking myself during that process: What am I doing, as a Lakota man, trying to be in archaeology?” he recalls. “But I had my elders who were encouraging me, saying, ‘Go ahead, learn it so that we can be at the table with archaeologists today and they can’t talk over us. You can be our interpreter.’”

By the 1900s, Native Americans were beloved by many to have disappeared. Jacqueta Swift, who is Comanche/Pequotville, and works as a repatriation manager at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian in D.C., explains it to me this way: “Imagine you go into a natural history museum and you’ve got animals, and then you’ve got the cave men, and then you’ve got Native people and Indigenous cultures. … We’re in with the animals and the fossils. That is embedded, sadly, in American culture and the world.”
Legal challenges by Native Americans over the desecration of their graves began as soon as Colonial courts existed to file them, but for a long time it wasn’t explicitly illegal to dig into Native American burial sites. It wasn’t until 1906, as a market for Native American cultural items grew, that Congress passed the American Antiquities Act to try to protect some of what was being taken. The law levied fines and even jail time against those doing unauthorized excavations on federal land, and it gave the president the authority to designate national monuments. Native American bones and funerary items were given special distinction, but as material culture. “In that act, we’re referred to as resources, alongside pots,” says Swift. “We were considered things.”

The act did little to stem looting, and by the 1920s, the decade in which Miller was born, amateur archaeology was a thriving hobby and searching for Indian artifacts a popular pastime. Publications like Hobbies: The Magazine for Collectors included classified sections in the back advertising arrowheads and stone tools for sale. You could order an Indian finger bone for a few pennies. A skull might run you $2.

In 1935, several pothunters cracked into a mound of earth in Oklahoma and unearthed a Native American burial crypt. Today, the raiding of Spiro Mounds is considered one of the great tragedies in archaeological history, scattering untold items to the wind. But at the time, it helped spur excitement over what many considered treasure hunting. “Most dealers and collectors, even some universities and museums, acquired many of their artifacts from the pot hunters who fanned out across the countryside in search of old Indian sites,” historian David La Vere writes in “Looting Spiro Mounds: An American King Tut’s Tomb.”

Pothunters, archaeologists, anthropologists and museum collectors could often be found working shovel to shovel. In some places like Utah and New Mexico, pothunting was a viable business where professional institutions came to the amateurs for finds. By the 1940s, the professions of anthropology and archaeology in America were coalescing. Amateurs like Miller were getting left out, so the hobbyists began forming clubs of their own. Archaeological societies bloomed across the country. Miller had a doctorate in electrical engineering and worked full time at Naval Avionics in Indianapolis, but he spent his free time securing the land for artifacts. Miller and his first wife, Sue, who died in 2000, would hop on his motorcycle and spend afternoons at digs, alone or with friends. Miller often wrote about their adventures in archaeological society magazines, including one article from the 1950s about digging into a Native site, titled “Fun on a Sunday Afternoon.”

“It was much more socially acceptable,” Carpenter says of these activities. “We have pictures of folks going out on the weekend with their families sitting next to graves eating their PB&Js and digging up graves.”

Miller was savvy at finding sites, particularly burial mounds where he knew that individuals had been interred with precious objects. He would seek out authorized archaeological digs run by universities and “get the skinny on the best sites and then go back to do his own illegal excavations later,” Carpenter says.

Miller had another amateur hobby, ham radio, and this allowed him to connect with people around the country and the world, asking about places to excavate. On one trip, in August 1939, Miller and his wife traveled to South Dakota in search of the Ogala Sioux. Miller “was impressed with all the evidence that the Indian had inhabited this land for many centuries,” he wrote in a few months later in the Central States Archaeological Journal, acknowledging that these sites were “in the same areas that the Sioux are located today.” This article was published under the title “Indiana Collectors Go on Vacation.”

One of the common defenses used by pothunters, even today, is that Native sites have been abandoned and that, by digging at those sites, they are not purloining but rather saving evidence of the ancient past. This ignores, of course, that Native lands were taken and people displaced onto reservations. It ignores, too, the way many tribes moved camps seasonally to conserve resources, and how they think about the burial process. “Once a body is done and the spirit goes back to the spirit world, the remains of that person and anything associated with them is meant to be left alone in the earth,” Mike Catches Enemy told me. “You want to allow the earth to absorb her again, and it becomes part of the cyclic system.”

On this South Dakota trip, Miller followed in the tracks of “several large universities and institutions” who were also “digging for evidence of ancient man” in the region. Soon, he and his wife came upon a remote area, where he saw what he believed to be bones protruding from the mud. “Feeling that we had located a human burial we marked the spot in order to find it upon our return the following morning,” he wrote. They came back with a trench shovel, and “during the cool morning hours it was pleasant digging.”

Miller dug until he came to a skeleton. He abandoned the shovel, got on his knees and began removing the soil with his hands. “The lower jaw had dropped down giving the skeleton the appearance of voicing objection to its removal from the grave,” he wrote. Miller disinterred the skeleton, which he believed to have been a man in his 30s. He took photographs. Then the electrical engineer on summer vacation dislocated the bones one by one and “carefully packed” them “to be later preserved.”

It would be another 20 years before Congress passed the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979, or ARPA, which governed archaeological excavations on federal and tribal lands and tried to curb illegal excavations. By the 1980s, though, pothunting had hit a fever pitch. One New York Times article from that era recounted how “you couldn’t walk without stepping on a bone” at one federal site because “the grave robbers were ahead of the rangers once again.”

Pothunters became increasingly sophisticated in the 1980s, using helicopters and stealth tactics to identify where to dig. While ARPA and some state laws tried to protect graves on public lands, graves on private property were not well protected. Miller was present at many of the greatest plunderings of Native American burial sites in American history. He was there in 1987 when pothunters paid the owner of Slack Farm in Kentucky $10,000 to allow them the rights to dig on his property, which was a known burial ground for Native Americans. Miller was among those who came in with tractors and heavy equipment to open some 650 graves, damaging the skeletal remains while nabbing the objects. Miller was in Indiana the following year when General Electric officials and pothunters leveled a Native American ceremonial mound. Items from these lootings were found among Miller’s haul.

That decade also gave us Indiana Jones, the swashbuckling archaeologist in the movie “Raiders of the Lost Ark” and its sequels. One archaeologist complained to the New York Times in 1984 that the movies heightened interest in artifact hunting and grave robbing. Larry J. Zimmerman, an archaeologist who consulted on the Miller case, remembers how even professionals in his field started dressing like the character: “I mean, they didn’t carry
American tribes on the repatriation of sacred objects and, as she told me, “to help protect ancestral burial sites and claim their ancestors, who are held in institutions around the world.”

There are 574 federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes and villages, each with its own set of beliefs and cultural truths. In some tribes, there is no time or distance between the living and the dead. Ancestors are entities in a spirit world who actively help their people and care for those on Earth. To disturb the bones is to not just put the dead into a kind of purgatory, but to forever disrupt the connection with the living, Carpenter says. In this way, Miller was a professor at IUPUI at the time. When Carpenter and Cusack-McVeigh showed Zimmerman photos from inside Miller’s home, “I could immediately see that he had grave goods,” he says. The morning of the raid, along with the SUVs, there were semi-trucks hauling a command center and a porta-john. FBI agents and experts set up climate-controlled tents and forensic labs on Miller’s land so they could safely sift through the items. People in town wondered what all the commotion was about. Articles in local papers had appeared over the years, like a 1998 feature in the Indianapolis Star under the headline “Rush County home is full of collectibles from centuries of missionary work around the globe.” Miller was a beloved churchgoing guy known in the community as an avid collector of artifacts and relics. Now South 850 West was blocked a half-mile around his home.

Miller owned hundreds of acres, but he had 10 of those dedicated to what Carpenter called a homestead. There was the main house, an old farmhouse, a barn, several smaller buildings and sheds. One building held an electronics repair shop Miller started in retirement, and clearly when it’s on private land and taking what they saw as Miller’s hard-earned collection. As a professor at the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, the Warren Anatomical Museum. Most are Native American, but at least 15 are actively partnered with Native American tribes during a recovery. That night Zimmerman received his first death threat over email. The FBI brought in Charmayne Champion-Shaw, a member of the Cheyenne tribe and director of IUPUI American Indian Programs, to advise on how to care for the remains. Zimmerman says he “watched as agents apologized to the pots and bones and loaded shotguns to scare off potential witnesses as they worked.”

Carpenter wasn’t part of that earlier investigation, and the FBI’s forensic team that did the work, was nicknamed Indiana Jones.

Miller’s house. A tip had come in to the Indianapolis field office from a report of human remains being excavated, and it was investigated. Zimmerman told me, “to help protect ancestral burial sites and claim their ancestors, who are held in institutions around the world.”

Miller’s wife espouses that the FBI was conducting a raid, but Miller had spent years working with Native American tribes on the repatriation of sacred objects and, as she told me, “to help protect ancestral burial sites and claim their ancestors, who are held in institutions around the world.”

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Miller owned hundreds of acres, but he had 10 of those dedicated to what Carpenter called a homestead. There was the main house, an old farmhouse, a barn, several smaller buildings and sheds. One building held an electronics repair shop Miller started in retirement, and clearly when it’s on private land and taking what they saw as Miller’s hard-earned collection. As a professor at the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, the Warren Anatomical Museum. Most are Native American, but at least 15 are actively partnered with Native American tribes during a recovery. That night Zimmerman received his first death threat over email. The FBI brought in Charmayne Champion-Shaw, a member of the Cheyenne tribe and director of IUPUI American Indian Programs, to advise on how to care for the remains. Zimmerman says he “watched as agents apologized to the pots and bones and loaded shotguns to scare off potential witnesses as they worked.”

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Miller died in March 2015, nearly a year after the raid. He had cooperated with the FBI on the search and seizure, and charges were never filed against him. A few months before he died, the Indiana Archaeological Society honored Miller with their Lifetime Achievement Award, which is bestowed upon a person who "...has given selflessly of themselves to the advancement of ... amateur archaeology."

This past May, Carpenter flew to Indianapolis from D.C. and met Cusack-McVeigh at the secure facility where, since 2014, they've been housing the items and remains recovered from Miller. They had completed international repatriations to Canada, China, Haiti and Italy, and one repatriation and burial to Native tribes in the Great Plains. Now they were preparing to return sacred objects, funerary items and human remains to seven tribes. The AAIA has an auction alert website that allows tribes to search for stolen goods and sacred items. A few federal agencies have begun to try to quantify the decades of theft. No comprehensive data on the world market for Native American cultural items exists, but in 2018 the U.S. Government Accountability Office attempted to calculate at least some of the export, theft and trafficking of Native American cultural items abroad. It identified several auction houses in Paris as primary markets for stolen goods, and calculated that between 2012 and 2017 nearly 1,400 items believed to have been illegally obtained from U.S. tribes were auctioned, fetching nearly $7 million. The GAO report covers just a sliver of the market. In May, Congress picked up a years-long debate around proposed laws meant to police the international trafficking of artifacts, many of which come from gravesites.

Increasingly, agents from the Bureau of Land Management, the FBI and the National Park Service have gone after pothunters. Some of Miller's buddies in the amateur archaeology world have been rounded up over the years for breaking antiquities laws. But by then, there had been so much theft over such a long period of time. And where do we do? Are we building a mass grave? Are we creating a sacred space where the ancestors can be buried, and the spirits to let them know that we are here and that whatever comes next for that spirit will proceed undisturbed.

The customs and rituals for burial in tribes are precise, as they are in most cultures. There are no rituals, though, for reburying the dead. Tribes vary in how they see the items that were taken. For the Hopi, some sacred objects are considered living deities, and they had to consider how to welcome them back in order to put them at peace. Others simply cannot rebury their dead or handle the funerary items because they are poisonous after being prepared by conservators back in the days when arsenic was thought to be an effective preservation chemical. The FBI had scientists on-site at Miller's property equipped with technology to scan for heavy metal poisoning, because that was something they worried about.

Since the FBI went public with more details about the Miller case in 2019 in an effort to help repatriate items and ancestral remains to tribes, calls into the FBI have gone up by 60 percent. "We're seeing a societal change as younger generations understand that what was done in the past wasn't okay," says Carpenter, who is now the supervisory special agent and manager in charge of the team. Art Crime currently has several active cases involving pothunters.

In recent years, boxes of broken pottery and sometimes bones have come back to the Hopi. People mail them or drop them off anonymously. "Some write that they believe they cursed themselves by taking them," Lomayestewa says. "Now they want to bring it back." Still, the Hopi are missing so many sacred objects, including entire altars where they once worshiped, and Lomayestewa hopes the right people might read this article and consider returning them. He also notes that the Hopi are waiting for skulls and other remains of ancestors to be returned from various museums and historical archives.

"A lot of … have an emotional connection to what they've recovered from Miller's property will never be fully identified. In May, Justin Pourier and Mike Catches Enemy traveled with several elders from the Lakota Sioux tribe to Indianapolis, to the secret location where the ancestors and funerary items have been kept. They were part of a delegation of tribes brought in to consult with the FBI about what should happen to the 100 ancestors whose tribal affiliations are not fully known, but who came from the Dakotas.

"We don't know where they all came from," he explains. "So what do we do? Are we building a mass grave? Are we creating a hundred new burials? And how do we know which of those ancestors will be happy in the next life?"

"We went into one room and it was so … He sighs deeply here and takes a moment. "I can't even think of the word. Disappointing? Discouraging? Disgusting? To be in there. And yet, we thought, we wanted to honor the ancestors and let them know that we are here to help, regardless of that man's wrongs, and whoever had touched them, and however they were mishandled. We wanted to talk to the spirits to let them know that.

"They identified themselves through their Lakota names, their spirit names. They prayed. "We told them that we're here to help them get home," Catches Enemy says. But where, exactly, is home? "We don't know where they all came from," he explains. "So what do we do? Are we building a mass grave? Are we creating a hundred new burials? And how do we know which of those ancestors are happy with what we're doing?"

And then there's the question of the ceremony. When people offer a prayer for their dead, no matter the language or the culture, the spirit is the same and they will rebury the soul and send it on its way in peace and in love. To believe, to hope and also to expect that whatever comes next for that spirit will proceed undisturbed.
A Korean gem that dares to be different

Strangers assume the best part of being a food critic is employer-paid meals in top-ranked restaurants. Let me set the record straight. As far as I’m concerned, the more interesting and challenging aspect is identifying something noteworthy early in its life, before the masses weigh in on social media and everyone and their dog walker knows about, say, Incheon in Annandale.

Googling the restaurant and its location. Not much but a website, Google posts photos of a couple of dishes but doesn’t bother even to identify them, let alone their names. Incheon posts photos of a regional Thai restaurant created by chef Alex McCoy, the self-taught Ahn impressed the owner with his deep thinking about food and cooking and his disarming graciousness — McCoy says Ahn would ask him if he could buy him a drink in the restaurant. Before long, the two became friends and Ahn volunteered to help out whenever McCoy needed an extra hand with special events, where his work left an impression on professional chefs. Who is this guy Justin Ahn, they wondered.

Ahn did for his friend when McCoy was invited to showcase his menu at a creative center Carousel? Whatever he cooked, “he crushed it,” says McCoy, who compares Ahn’s style to that of chefs with Michelin stars and went on to offer Lucky Buns, his burger phenom, as a place for his friend to stage his debut pop-up.

A massive stroke in 2018 interrupted Ahn’s trajectory, although part of his rehabilitation involved cooking, a forever passion that he says helped him “pay attention to minute details” again and led to creating his own restaurant. Incheon in Annandale.

On the restaurant’s way to acquiring a name, Ahn, 34, tasked his business partner, Brandon Kim, with sharing a bunch of personal information. What was his Zodiac sign? His high school mascot? His kids’ favorite colors? Ahn eventually settled on the name Incheon. The transportation hub outside Seoul suggested “international flair,” he says, which is more or less what the chef’s cooking is about.

The mistake is to think of the 45-seat restaurant as yet another Korean outpost in an area brimming with similar menus. Ahn was born in Korea but relocated to Southern California when he was a year old. He grew up watching his mother cook the food of their homeland and was raised to pick and choose the best of both Korean and U.S. cultures. Ahn, who says “Koreans are very parochial about their cuisine,” promises his “flavors are going to be Korean” even if his techniques are otherwise. “You’re not going to get the usuals here.”

That’s fine by some of us. My first taste of his restaurant was gyeran jjim, a silken steamed egg custard fragrant with sesame oil and finished with bird’s eye chiles, fish sauce and lime juice — a very Thai touch. Fried garlic chips balanced the otherwise oh-so-smooth eating. My second taste was a play on bibimbap, the colorful rice dish and one of Korea’s most recognizable foods. Ahn swaps out the rice for elastic wheat noodles (jjolmyeon) imported from the restaurant’s namesake city in Korea, arranged with a rainbow of cucumbers, carrots and onions plus tender sea snails instead of the traditional beef. Diners are instructed to mix the ingredients with a nearby sauce based on gochujang so that each bite delivers the taste equivalent of a little bugle blast. It takes skill and good timing to achieve jjolmyeon with the desired chewiness. Ahn delivers.

At least in its early months, Incheon has been slow enough that Ahn himself might introduce his menu, tailoring diners’ experience after some conversation. “Allegories?” he asks us one night. When we told him we had no restrictions, he cracked, “Just to bad food?” before disappearing into the kitchen.

Magic sometimes returns to the table. Ever had risotto in a Korean restaurant? Me neither. Ahn combines arborio rice and pecorino cheese as deftly as any Italian chef, but makes his risotto singular with the help of dashi instead of chicken stock and diced boiled abalone as the featured attraction. Ahn thinks of the dish as an enhanced juk, or Korean porridge. For sure, the classic has competition at Incheon.

More allure comes by way of ivory dominoes of soft-crisp pork belly, fanned onto a plate shared with julienne radish kimchi, a
There are no inferior dishes, only dishes you might want more or less of.

pungent ssamjang (paste) made with walnuts, and spears of lightly pickled napa cabbage. Ssam fans know where this is going: Diners add tastes of the meat and condiments to the cabbage leaves, which serve as crisp modes of transportation from plate to mouth. (Ssam means "wrap.") The resulting heat, sweet, cool and hot is a marriage of genius.

There are no inferior dishes, only dishes you might want more or less of. Between the two beef dishes, for instance, my heart belongs to the strip steak cooked medium-rare, sliced and striped with a "chimichurri" that once again nods to Thailand with chiles, coriander, fish sauce and lime. A bed of mashed sweet potatoes acknowledges Korea’s preference for the white variety. Short ribs sweetened in part with Mexican Coke and dropped off on a pool of soft polenta are pleasant enough, but beef and boiled cornmeal is fairly commonplace. Go for what’s different at Incheon. See: beer-battered cod teetering on a base of thick-cut daikon on a glossy pool of soy sauce shot through with garlic and ginger and spirited with mirin and sake.

Calls to the restaurant are returned by the hands-on chef, who will ask if you want to order his tasting menu. Agree to the $60-a-head proposition, which showcases pretty much everything on the list — seven dishes at last count — and sometimes a plate that’s not. The sense of someplace personal extends to the dining room, a long space with windows on two sides, a ceiling partially dressed with a canopy of faux greenery and video montages splashed on the wall as the evening wears on. Residents will be familiar with the address, which recently housed a watering hole, and surprised by the modern update to the storefront.

The restaurant’s youth and inexperience make themselves known from time to time. Most notably, the handful of staff tend to refer even basic questions to their boss in the kitchen. But Incheon is remarkable for the style and finesse it delivers, plate after plate and week after week. The deliciousness extends to the bar. Rare for a Korean restaurant in Northern Virginia, Incheon makes lovely cocktails. Ahn says he wants to give customers a city vibe in the suburbs. Mission accomplished with every sip of the egg-white-capped Lucky “Bok” Sour, which goes from whiskey-gold to rose with the addition of a shot of bokbunja, Korean raspberry wine, at the table. The wine list, while brief, embraces respectable South African rosé, French viognier, German riesling and pinot noir from California’s Central Coast; bottles average a budget-friendly $43.

My biggest reservation about Incheon has less to do with the restaurant than with how popular it might become as word spreads. For the sake of chef and customers alike, no rushing, please.

KEY TO THE PREVIOUS SECOND GLANCE JUNE 25

1. Taller
2. Un-dotted line
3. Reversed
4. Bigger sign
5. Extra support
6. Filled in
7. No grease
8. Missing white stripe
9. Lost top of ladder
10. Blue helmet
11. No grate
12. Thicker orange stripe

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE “ALTOGETHER SEPARATE,” JUNE 25

RARE I’AN RANUS RAIL
100 I’CAME ONANT ELS
GOI I’XING SEMIDUAXER
ORIENT NOLOPS SUNDAEB
RE TOADIER ROLESE IR
CROIL CONVEX IOWAN
GOUJINDUSTRIES ADVISE
AIKERA SACKS IPIK
NOATE GULF DEDUGINHOR
GREEN SNAKE EYES
STORMS SNAP TO
WEAR SUSHI KWO
CARBONADA TAMPE TOP
ALOE SENORS RAE TERE
PSALM 38B PRIME LENDER
SOUTHS FOR YOU LUXE
EXON DREGENT EM
SHOVES SENIOR ETCHED
NEW EDUTION OSACK HAY
OMER PERTO IYENS AIR A
BONE TREED NEST PENT
In the music studio

BY RANDY MAYS

Find the 12 differences in the photo of a music studio in Takoma Park, Md., in May 2020.

PUZZLE ANSWERS
See them online now at washingtonpost.com/secondglance or in next week's issue of the magazine.

SEE YOUR PHOTO
To submit a photo of the Washington area for use in Second Glance, email a high-resolution jpeg attachment of 8 megapixels or larger to secondglance@washpost.com. For information about our guidelines for user content, see washingtonpost.com/secondglance.
## Crossword

### ACROSS

1. Item for delivering aces
12. Slice with an avocado spread, perhaps
17. Diminutive, as dogs
18. Present in a new way
19. Modern mining asset, informally
20. One who’s not into thank-giving
21. Green stream?
22. Maker of More Buckets sneakers
23. Ship stabilizer (Final part of a process)
24. “The Facts of Life” actress Mindy
25. H.S. sci. course
27. Surface for some dancers
28. Sign of vaporization
29. Orca’s orifice (Interval between A and B, in music)
30. Record of the pedigree of horses, e.g.
32. Cartoonist Thomas
37. Abstract expressionist who painted “The She-Wolf” (Form of marching closely together)
40. Interest-free?
44. Swallow sound
46. Like some questions, with only two answers
50. Like a sonic boom
51. Deep cut
52. Labour Party foes
54. Great energy
55. “I guess so”
56. Auto racer Luyendyk
58. Supertatively steep
59. Like some defenses
62. DC____ (comedy club in the nation’s capital)
65. Has drawing abilities?
66. Original findings (Go past, as one’s bounds)
67. Belly, briefly
68. Opera house section
72. They’re accepted as true
74. Space on a diamond with no runner
76. With 88 Down, contraceptive innovation of 1960
77. With 93 Down, Like some defenses
79. Italian museum display
80. “At the earliest potential time” letters
82. Is employed by
83. Ivory/Coast setting?
84. Milano cookie shape
87. Bandaged patients in “Princess Mononoke”
89. Joey’s who’s friends with Christopher Robin
90. Those often criticized for their singing?
92. Inner tubes?
93. Snowboarder’s pair
95. “Glory” actor Braugher
96. Hawk, as in a store
97. It often gets closed at a dealership (Welcome mat’s place)
99. ___ Flashback (video game console)
102. Drink servers (Maintain the pace)
103. “Well, isn’t that special!”
104. Weighs (Dodge)
109. Thornfield Hall employee of literature
112. Combine
113. Palmas de Gran Canaria (island city)
115. Organic compounds consisting of single-bonded carbon and hydrogen atoms
119. Ones taking part in after-school activities?
121. “Found the answer!”
123. “It’s not gonna hurt that much”
124. Acid test stuff
125. Scold strongly
126. Sonnet conclusion
127. With 94 Down, “Weird”
128. Temporary currency

### DOWN

7. Idol state
8. Imprint, as on glass
9. Vacuum tube gas
10. National Mall planting
11. Put into a chamber
12. Shaking nervously
13. “___ Como Va” (hit for Santana)
14. H.S. sci. course with an exam for college credit
15. Wall Street security
16. Hit from a joint
17. Braised dish, perhaps
18. Second word of P.R.
19. Personal principle
20. Actress Isabelle whose surname anagrams the letters of 54 Across and 110 Down
21. Letter of Naïm Kattan’s memoir
22. “Farewell, Babylon”
23. “You were in on this too, Brutus!?”
24. Show trials?
26. “___ Como Va” (hit for Santana)
27. “One other thing…”
28. What a crane builds
29. Gets off the fence
30. Like dinosaur bones
31. “___ Como Va” (hit for Santana)
32. Like some defenses
33. “Magnifico!”
35. Unwind, with “out”
37. Penultimate part of “King Lear”
38. New Balance product
40. “One other thing…”
41. Serve, as scotch
42. Distinctive radianse
43. Some drawings that show a major contrast between light and darkness
45. Soap Opera Digest Award winner Kelly
47. ___ sheet (doc for a freelancer)
48. What a crane builds
49. Gets off the fence
50. “You were in on this too, Brutus!?”
53. Teen temps, at times
56. “___ Como Va” (hit for Santana)
57. Mansion’s many
59. Hip-hop subgenre of Lil Jon’s song “Get Low”
60. Pope’s feet?
61. “Moontide” star Lupino
62. ___ na tigela
63. Penultimate part of “King Lear”
65. Like some defenses
66. Penultimate part of “King Lear”
67. Like some defenses
68. Penultimate part of “King Lear”
69. Setting of Naïm Kattan’s memoir
70. “Farewell, Babylon”
71. “No Walls and the Recurring Dream”
72. “___ Como Va” (hit for Santana)
73. Balm for a burn
74. “___ Como Va” (hit for Santana)
75. “___ Como Va” (hit for Santana)
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121. “___ Como Va” (hit for Santana)
122. “___ Como Va” (hit for Santana)

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### SOLUTION TO LAST WEEK’S PUZZLE: PAGE 22. ONLINE: CLASSIC MERL REAGLE PUZZLES AT Wapo.ST/CLASSIC-MERL.
The CaseStudy®

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Our commitment to providing a safe, healthy, and respectful worksite and experience.
What I learned on my year-long vacation

I was on a bus recently in New York, returning to Manhattan after a fish dinner on an island near the Bronx docks, when three burly masked men boarded. They had angry-looking eyebrows and bazookas slung over their shoulders, and bomb-size wicker boxes bounced against their thighs. I tensed. For a moment, panicked, I tried to work out the pathetic mechanics of wedging myself behind the seat in front of me. Then I realized the bazookas were actually huge, marlin-ready fishing poles. Also, it soon became olfactorily evident that they had dead fish in those bomb-size creels.

It was at that moment that I realized something I’d noticed during the pandemic, but never quite focused on: Masked women tend to look enigmatic, intriguing, exotic. But masked men tend to look threatening. We make assumptions.

This got me thinking: As the pandemic wanes, what are some of our more interesting takeaways?

1. If everyone gains weight, no one has gained weight! We’re all exactly as hot as we had been before. It’s the Peter Paul Rubens paradox.

2. Pandemic ethics can be situational. When restaurants and other retail businesses are compelled to take body temperature to admit patrons, something odd happens: The numbers seem always to be very low, as though (I am not accusing anyone of anything here) by calibration adjustment. I never came in above 97.5 degrees, and once hit 91, a figure so Siberian it is, by medical definition, immediately life-threatening. They cheerfully let me in.

3. Some people breathe only through one ear! I figured that out because that’s where they dangle their mask.

4. We learned to appreciate old people more, within reason. Uncle Sid is still a jerk.

5. Hygiene standards become fluid, particularly regarding masks. In the beginning, you fanatically washed them before each use; by the end you were searching the floor for used ones, and sniffing, and using it so long as the stale halitosis stank was manageable. When we forgot our masks, we would resort to any available substitute, such as underpants.

6. We learned that we were very bad at handwashing before. We had the skill and standards of orangutans.

7. Coughing in public is now the equivalent of farting in public.

8. We learned to be thankful for small things; when we heard journalists report how many vaccines are “in people’s arms,” we were glad it hadn’t been developed as a suppository instead.

9. We all became movie directors, because of Zoom. We learned to angle down, slightly, to minimize the double chin phenomenon, but to stay high enough above the action that we create benign backgrounds, instead of pizza boxes, half-full cups of cold coffee, and bras. The new feng shui of home decor is that (a) the rest of your house can look like the innards of a renovation dumpster and (b) all that matters is the island of immaculate serenity within your laptop camera’s angle of view.

10. We learned how stupid handshakes were. They were a holdover from more proper and formal eras, but were awkward and kinda creepy and easily jettisoned, like the Nazi heel click.

11. It actually matters who the president is and if he believes true things.

Thanks to these people from the Style Invitational Devotees group on Facebook: Madelyn Rosenberg, Timothy A. Livengood, Dave Prevar, Brendan Beary, Cheryl Denney White, Daniel Helming, Robert Schechter.

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