

Eastern Echoes

By
Gail Roberson



Two county road commissioners died and simultaneously applied for admittance at the pearly gates. St. Peter acknowledged they were at the right place, but also informed them that space was temporarily short. Each was given the suggestion that he go back to earth for about three weeks and await a new summons. While waiting, they could be anything they chose, except themselves as they had been in life.

Commissioner number one said that he had spent his entire life sponsoring public works, but had not had a chance to really see the results of his achievements.

"I would like to return as an eagle," he suggested, "and fly over my district and admire the roads, bridges, and lakes I've helped to construct."

"Done," said St. Peter, and the temporary eagle soared off. But commissioner number two preferred a different lifestyle.

"I want to go back as a stud," he said, grinning wildly with anticipation.

"No problem," replied St. Peter. "Your wish is granted."

Three weeks later, the new heavenly subdivision was opened and St. Peter prepared to send for the commissioners. The angel asked, "How in the world am I ever going to find these guys?"

St. Peter replied, "Well, Charlie will be easy enough. He's an eagle. You'll find him soaring over the Mississippi Valley. Fred, though, will be a little harder. He's nailed between two wall boards at a construction site in Kansas City."

Now and then, some poor wandering soul had rather just stay put where he is than to chance arriving somewhere other than the Pearly gates. Examples:

An evangelist was approaching the finale of his fiery discourse, his voice rising as he thundered out . . . "Do you want to go to Heaven? Do you want to stand before those pearly gates? Everyone who wants to go to Heaven, stand up!"

The congregation rose except for one man, the local jack-of-all-trades. For a moment the preacher was speechless, and then demanded, "Brother! Don't you want to go to Heaven?" And the still seated brother looked up and drawled . . . "Nope. Missouri's good enough for me."

It was a Sunday morning church service and the clergyman had talked a little about every book in the New Testament, determined to preach his congregation right through the pearly gates. It was also approaching high noon, and his flock was restless. At the stroke of twelve, the minister finally finished with the book of revelation. He paused a moment . . . suddenly remembering that he'd completely omitted the entire book of James. Thinking aloud, he stated, "Now what am I going to do with James?" Promptly, a very impatient man on the front row growled, "You can give him my seat. I'm going home."

A great discussion took place between a group of distinguished scientists pertaining to the subject of heaven and hell. It seemed there was much doubt as to the existence of the pearly gates in the first place. So, to find out what really happened when the earth was created, engineers spent weeks gathering information, checking and rechecking, and feeding it into their gigantic computer.

The great moment arrived. Everything was completed. All the world's greatest scientists gathered around. A button was punched, and the great computer whirled into action. Relays opened and closed. Lights flashed. Bells rang. And then, finally, a typed message emerged: "SEE GENESIS 1:1."

The pearly gates. Fact or fiction. But something each one of us will have the chance to find out first hand . . . sooner or later.

Commentary

What Does A Guy Do To Win Here?

Perhaps it is not the most important snub in the history of the world, but it is still a snub and an undeserved one at that.

Last week the Coastal AAA All-Conference Football Team was announced and who do you think was left off? Only the conference's top rusher. Maybe his being a sophomore had something to do with it—voters may have thought he has two more years left to make the team.

But West Craven High School's Lee Becton in our opinion more than earned a spot on the team. Becton, named the state's 3-A Player of the Week early in the season, rushed for almost 1,200 yards. He missed breaking the school's single-season rushing record by about 25 yards. The record was made just a few years ago by former West Craven player and current ACC Rookie of the Year Jesse Campbell.

Those who saw Becton run know leaving him off the team is a snub. In the sophomore running back's first two starts this season, he responded with over 200 yards in each game and had two touchdowns in one and three touchdowns in the other. In fact, in his first start he piled up 244 yards and scored three touchdowns. He was also a receiving threat, scoring several times on long pass plays. And he added excitement to the game.

Sure, the Heisman Trophy goes to seniors, and on rare occasions, to juniors. It has never gone to a sophomore. Perhaps the voters decided Becton could prove his worth in the next two seasons. But strange things can happen and Becton, for whatever reason, might end up never playing football again. Such a thought is chilling to Eagle fans and probably won't happen, but one never knows. Should he be denied because he has not "paid his dues?" We think not.

The record speaks for itself. Becton earned a spot on the team. Those who denied him the spot should rethink their positions the next time an athlete is in a similar position. It is too late for Becton's benefit, but maybe another young and deserving athlete can reap his just rewards in the future.

To be sure, he made the usual mistakes inexperienced players make. But he showed poise and talent beyond his years. And when opposing defenses began keying on him, well, that just opened the door for others players to show their wares.

Becton not only out-rushed two of the all-conference team's running backs, he had more yards than they had combined.

If we could throw a flag and penalize those who selected the team, we would do so. And it would be a major penalty.

Bassin'

Understanding Bass Pattern Fishing

For years, the top tournament bass pros in America have been using the term "pattern fishing" to tell how they catch fish. In its broadest sense, it describes where bass are, what they're doing, and what it takes to catch them.

The problem every angler faces, of course, is how to "establish a pattern" on bass.

"Basically, what the tournament pros do is use both lures and a location to establish a pattern," explains Evinrude Outboards Pro Staff member Zell Rowland. "We fish as fast as we can until we catch one or two bass on that lure, then slow down and fish much more thoroughly to see if additional fish are present in that type of area."

Rowland recommends anglers begin their search for a bass pattern by fishing with a fast-moving lure that can be worked quickly, such as a crankbait, spinnerbait, or even a buzzbait.

Then he suggests anglers simply put their trolling motor on high and start fishing a shoreline that has a lot of visible cover.

"This could be the shoreline of a large cove, a tributary creek, or even part of the main lake," explains Rowland. "The idea is to find bass in shallow water, and the more cover available, the more likely they will be shallow."

Once a fish or two is caught, says Rowland, it's time to change lures and slow down to see if more bass are present.

"When I'm doing this, I tie on a jig or a plastic worm, turn the boat around, and carefully start fishing the very same cover I've just moved through," the Montgomery, Texas angler explains. "What I have established with my first one or two bass is that some fish may be located in the type of water I'm working."

"By moving through it more slowly a second time, I have a chance to 'fine tune' a pattern and locate bass more precisely. They may be holding only on cer-

with the pros

tain types of cover, such as the ends of fallen trees or along the deeper edge of a grassline. By using a worm or jig, I may be able to determine this."

"At this time, too, I can also determine exactly how the fish may want a lure presented."

Normally, most bass pros feel confident they have a pattern established when they catch three or four bass on the same lure and around the same type of cover or structure. A single small fish, or a single large one, is rarely a positive indication additional bass are present.

"Of course, there are times when you don't catch any fish while casting to heavy shoreline cover," says Rowland. "Then the best thing to do is change tactics completely and try something different. My two recommendations would be to worm fish a long point so you can probe different depths, or crankbait a deeper creek channel."

"One of the things I always try

to do," explains the Evinrude pro, "is look for an area bass will be moving to or from. This can include not only shallow feeding areas in coves or wide flats and points, but also holding areas along channel drops and break-lines."

"Shallow water is nearly always productive if deep water is located nearby, and conversely, deep water is good if there is shallow water nearby."

When river fishing, Rowland advises anglers to remember fish move with currents or tides. They tend to utilize shoreline cover, such as brush, pilings, or rocks that offer calm water refuge in the current.

"The majority of professional bass tournaments are won by anglers fishing less than 10 feet deep," Rowland explains. "Some bass certainly do hold in deeper water, but it's always better to establish a pattern in shallow water whenever possible."

Good Packaging Techniques Can Speed Holiday Delivery

GREENWICH, Conn.—Sometimes it is tough to choose just the right holiday gift. But it is easy to ensure that the gift arrives on time and intact, according to United Parcel Service, the world's largest package delivery company.

"During this time of year it's not unusual for us to deliver 15 million packages worldwide a day," said UPS vice president, Joe Tranfo. "We plan years in advance to handle the deliveries we receive during the holiday season, which is several million more packages than our regular daily volume. Our customers can have a more joyous holiday by also planning ahead and shopping early."

Much of the holiday volume comes from people who ship infrequently and who may be unfamiliar with good packaging techniques. The following guidelines should enable anyone to develop strong pack from home supplies to ensure that gifts arrive safely.

— Use a corrugated box: Use corrugated cartons in good, rigid condition, with all flaps intact, and no punctures, tears, rips or corner damage. Select a carton large enough to allow room for adequate cushioning material on all sides of the contents.

— Cushion inside the box: Use enough cushioning material inside the carton so that the contents cannot move easily when shaken. Good cushioners are heavy brown grocery bags or newspapers, crumpled and stuffed several inches all the way around the item. Use extra cushioning for fragile items especially near the corners and sides of the carton.

— Close carton securely: To close a carton securely, use a strong tape that is two inches or more in width. The best tapes are pressure sensitive plastic tape, water activated paper tape at least three inches wide, and water activated reinforced tape. Masking tape or cellophane tape

are not strong enough. String and rope are not effective closures and may snag on automatic sorting equipment.

Use proper labeling: When addressing packages, keep these points in mind:

Always include the ZIP Code of the receiver with the complete street address.

Include the apartment number for all multi-unit dwelling addresses.

Place the delivery label on the top of the carton.

Use only one address label. Remove or cross out old address labels or markings on a used carton.

Do not place the label over a carton seam or closure, or on top of sealing tape.

Always include a complete return address, including ZIP Code and full street address.

For added protection, place a duplicate label or other delivery information inside the package.

Christmas Programs Offered By Churches

Juniper Chapel Free Will Baptist

Juniper Chapel Free Will Baptist Church will present a Christmas program Dec. 18 at 7 p.m.

On Christmas, the church will hold regular morning worship services with no Sunday school or evening service.

Vanceboro Free Will Holiness

The Vanceboro Free Will Holiness Church will present a Christmas program Dec. 19 at 7:30 p.m.

The public is invited to attend the Christmas program.

Unity Christian Church

A Christmas play, "Break Forth Into Joy," will be presented by Unity Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Dec. 10 and Dec. 16 at 7:30 p.m. at the church.

The church is located at 3880 Saint's Delight Church Road in New Bern.

The production is an original play written with music and lyrics by the members of the congregation. The public is invited to attend.

Vanceboro Church Of God

The Vanceboro Church of God will present a Christmas cantata titled "Love Sent A Child" at 5 p.m. Dec. 18 and again Dec. 19 at 7 p.m.

The program will be directed by Rhonda Riley from Clearwater, Fla. The public is invited to attend.

The Vanceboro United Methodist Church invites the public to the following events:

The Adult Choir will present a program, "Meet Him At The Manger," at 4:30 p.m. Dec. 18.

The children's program will be presented Dec. 20 at 7 p.m.

A live nativity scene will be presented Dec. 21 and Dec. 22 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

The church will hold regular services Christmas Day.

Vanceboro Christian Church

The Vanceboro Christian Church Adult Choir will present the Christmas cantata "Come To The Manger" by Joe E. Parks at 11 a.m. Dec. 18.

The program is directed by Marion Allen and she is assisted by Barbara Allen, pianist.



Birthday

Bobby Lee "Little Bobby" Register Jr. celebrated his eighth birthday Dec. 14 and received best wishes from his father, the rest of the Register family and Pat Jones. He is a student at Farm Life Elementary School in Vanceboro.

American Heart Association

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Letter To The Editor

To The Editor:

The Vanceboro Brownie Troop 177 would like to take time out from its busy schedule to say "thank you" to the Vanceboro Volunteer Fire Department for entering the fire truck in the New Bern Christmas parade. The Brownie leader, Mrs. Peggy Mitchell, had the understanding that if a ride was provided the Brownies could ride in the parade. So with that understanding, we contacted Mr. Linsey Smith who agreed to drive the fire truck. When we got to the parade to line up we were told that the girls had to march; that no one would be riding. The girls were very disappointed that they were not allowed to ride. So at this time we want to say a very special "thanks" to Mr. Linsey Smith.

We also want to say a special "thanks you" to Mr. Marvin Wiggins for transporting the girls back and forth on the rescue squad vehicle to their line up designation. So to both the Vanceboro Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad, Mr. Smith and Mr. Wiggins, we, the Brownies of Troop 177, say "Thank you, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you and yours."

Anne Baker
Assistant Leader
Troop 177

DECA Student Receives Honor From Pizza Hut

Lorinda Lee Flynn of West Craven High School's DECA (Distributive Education Clubs of America) chapter received the Employee of the Month award for November from the Pizza Hut on U.S. 17 in New Bern.

She earned the award in her third month of employment at the pizza restaurant.

Christmas

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