



SON OF A GUN

by Joe Lanier

As a teenager, I moved to the Sunshine State of Florida. That was many moons ago. I had expected the place to be filled with palm trees, banana trees and jungle growth. . . There were a few such places but most of Florida was just plain old pine trees, scrubby ones at that. The only place you found palm trees was where someone had planted them. I was disappointed. But, the thing that disturbed me most was the seven working days. . . To most in Florida, there was no Sunday — that is Sunday as I had been brought up in Duplin County, North Carolina, to believe. Even the bootleggers closed on Sunday in Duplin. Not so in Florida. People cut their grass, washed their clothes, painted their houses, and did what ever they wanted to do. Most went to church, but after church it was work as usual. I just knew everyone in Florida was going to Hell. I was too young to realize they had to work six days a week, husband and wife, to make a living and on Sunday they did their thing around the home. Nor did I realize then they had no immediate family around to go to visit on Sundays as we did in Duplin County. Everyone was from some place else. . . Whatever the reason, I felt uneasy when I saw someone working on Sunday. For the past few years, I have noticed this seven-day work-week happening in Duplin County. For the past two Sundays I have seen farmers on tractors in fields. I feel uneasy about that sight. I don't know why I do when I see stores open every Sunday and they don't bother me. I mean, if one is wrong, both must be.

I have taken up walking for exercise. It's a good thing I am not walking to lose weight. In the late afternoon as you walk about Warsaw, everyone, it seems, is cooking supper, charcoaling a steak, or some other wonderful scented thing that just boils out of the homes and into the streets. . . In the early morning everyone seems to be cooking biscuits and ham or sausage. Walking around Warsaw's streets makes me hungry. When I get back home, I am about starved. . .

I read this recently, and think it is worth repeating. . . A man who was 18 in 1979 can expect to earn \$845,000 by the time he retires at 65 if he has less than a high school education. If he has that diploma, he can expect to earn \$1.04 million. With a college education, his earnings would amount to \$1.39 million. For women, the news is not so good. With a college education a woman can expect to earn \$746,000 by the time she is 65.

I was in Leon's the other day eating a cheeseburger. . . This lady came in and ordered a sandwich and asked Leon why the traffic lights were off. . . Leon said, with a straight face, "It's to save on electricity. The town is having a problem paying its light bill. . . So, when traffic is low, they put them on flash so it won't cost as much." . . The lady says, "Are you sure?" . . Leon says, "Would I lie." . . She says, "I think I will ask someone else to be sure." After a bit she says, "Leon, I am not going to ask anyone else cause I just don't believe you."

Bennie Wilson had an Easter Egg tree in his yard. It was quite good looking. I took a picture of it, but only a color photo will do it justice, so I didn't print the photo. If you missed seeing it, you missed quite a lovely sight. I said Bennie, but I imagine it was his wife Mae who did the tree with all the eggs, bunny and flowers. . . Son-of-a-Gun. . .



The unicorn, a strange animal described in ancient Greek and Roman myths, was said to have a white body, a red head and blue eyes.

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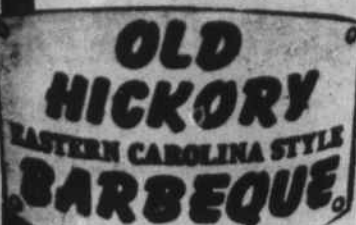
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