A Simple Change In Routine Can Often Clear The Mind

I sometimes think Mark and I could have been famous movie stars with our names plastered forever on the sidewalks of Tinsel Town.

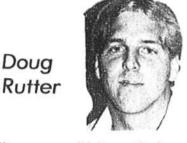
In the five months we've been roommates, we have shared some pretty action-packed adventures, some of which have already been related to you, the reader, while others have remained under wraps.

Anyway, the latest of our adventures came as a result of Mark's newfound interest in fossils and began in the wee hours of the morning a few Sundays ago when we departed from Holden Beach.

Since Mark's car has no radio, I was forced to drive. That was fine with me because I love driving, and it was great for Mark, too, because it meant he could doze off to sleep every so often and intermittently interject some comment about how one goes about hunting fossils.

After a three-hour drive through eight counties, we reached our destination of Aurora, N.C., home of what Mark said is the largest fossil pit on the east coast.

I was pretty charged up and ready to hunt after the long drive to Beaufort County, but soon learned we had some more work ahead of us before we bagged any old relics.



You see, we didn't exactly have permission to go and help ourselves to those fossils. It's not as bad as it sounds, though, because the old bits and pieces would have gone to waste just sitting there with nobody to admire them.

Anyway, after waiting for traffic to clear, we scampered across the highway with buckets and bags and snacks in tow and headed for the pits. We dove through the brush, crouched down momentarily and then bolted for the next row of bushes so as not to be spotted. We were now behind enemy lines and the adrenalin was flowing faster with each passing moment.

It wasn't long before we came upon our first major obstacle. It was a long, metal pipe, probably about 12 inches in diameter, which crossed over a swift-moving moat of sulfur water some 10 feet below.

Mark had made brief mention of this pipe when he explained the permanent rust stain on the behind of his jeans left over from his last trip, but the reality of this gateway to fossil land was much more intimidating than what I had imagined.

Something you should know about me right off the bat is that I've never demonstrated a great deal of balance, especially when it comes to falling off logs and what not, so this was a real challenge for me.

I briefly considered sliding across the pipe on my behind like Mark had done the week before, but I hadn't traveled 150 miles to stain my pants. And after watching Mark dart right across the pipe in no time flat, I really didn't want to behave like a wimp, even though President-elect George Bush would have approved.

So I kicked the dirt from the bottom of my sneakers and tentatively tiptoed my way along the pipe, moving one inch at a time across the 20-footwide moat.

It was hard enough to begin with, and when Mark started chuckling and telling me we didn't have but a few hours to collect fossils, it suddenly became more difficult.

With my heart in my throat, I somehow made it across and let out a

heavy sigh.

The relief lasted about three seconds, however, as we jumped through another row of bushes and came to another moat and another pipe and another challenge which needed to be tackled.

Again, Mark made the crossing look easy and I followed at my same slow pace after being assured that there were no more pipes waiting on the other side of this one. I made it again, and gave thanks that I wouldn't have to face those suckers again until the end of the day.

After gaining access to the fossil pit itself, I realized that Mark was probably right about it being the largest on the east coast. It reminded me a little of the Grand Canyon I visited some 12 years ago, only it's not quite that big.

Overall, we spent about six hours in the pit, climbing and descending steep cliffs, picking up treasures from years past, wading through chilling spring water to small islands sprinkled with fossils and scouring the ground for shells, shark teeth and whale bones that were millions of

vears old.

When all was said and done, we had both found what we were looking for. We each had a bucketful of fossils and could have brought back many more if they hadn't been so heavy.

But more than that, we got outdoors and away from everyone and everything else in the world. For me anyway, the vastness and the mood of the fossil pits did wonders. It cleared up every jumbled thought that had been cluttering my mind for weeks. A simple change in routine, I have noticed, can often do just that.

Help Combat Violence On Television

(Continued From Preceding Page) become more agitated after such viewing whereas children watching a family type program behave more harmoniously.

As concerned Christians, we would like to ask those reading this letter to join us in combatting screening of these violent programs by writing letters to the editor of their local newspaper and also to the managers of those television stations showing programs of violence.

Perhaps we can join forces to

create a united front against such television programming by making our objections known throughout North Carolina in a manner other than by turning off our television sets.

We would welcome any and all suggestions from individuals or groups who feel the same as we do. Write to us, giving us your ideas. Hopefully, together, we can make a real statement to the bettering of television viewing.

Jacqueling C. Phillips

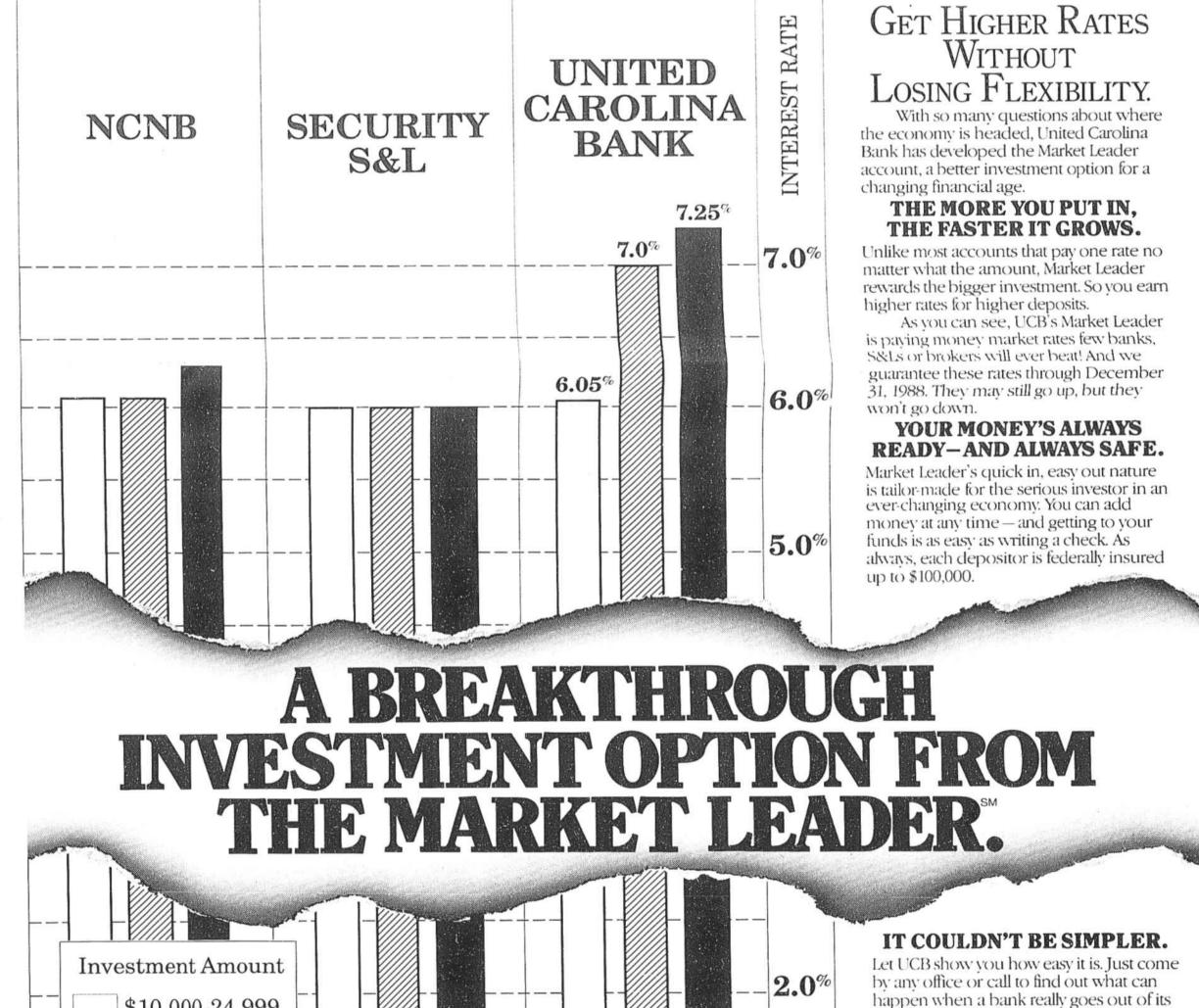
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