

The Grand Show Is Eternal

BY BILL FAVER



FAVER

Sometimes we get so involved in our own little corner of the world we forget about those things happening elsewhere. John Muir was one of the earliest preservationists and this caring Scotsman had an understanding of the environment which transcended his love of the out-of-doors. He could understand the vast interrelationships and inter-dependencies and communicate the need to save our natural areas for the enjoyment of future generations.

John Muir could see the big picture. He knew about the important forces at work in nature and the cycles that brought the seasons and the weather and the variety we find so appealing.

Consider these words written in 1913:

The Grand Show is eternal. It is always sunrise somewhere; The dew is never all dried at once; a shower is forever falling; vapor is ever rising. Eternal sunrise, eternal sunset, eternal dawn and gloaming, on sea and continents and islands, each in its turn, as the round earth rolls.

The show is eternal. It is always happening and we humans are an important part of it. We need to acknowledge our role and seek to understand how we can be more responsible as stewards and beneficiaries of our natural world.

We can thank John Muir for saving the redwoods, for making some of our national parks a reality, and for starting the first environmental organization, the Sierra Club.

And we can also thank him for the legacy of his writings, which poetically convey so many of the truths and concerns to later generations.



JOHN MUIR WROTE, "It is always sunrise somewhere!"

PHOTO BY BILL FAVER

Passing The Buck On Televised Violence

If television doesn't clean up its act, the government will do it.

The same government that lost the war on drugs.

The one that overwrote its checking account by several trillion dollars.

The one too clueless to figure out that no hard problem has ever been solved with a warning label or a slogan.

Apparently, the issue of what ought to be done about televised violence cuts across all sorts of political boundaries. I know this because I agreed with what Rush Limbaugh said about it.

I'm no Dittohead, but I had to nod along when Limbaugh was telling about, as a boy, having talked his mom into sewing a Superman cape into his jacket.

"How come Superman didn't lead me to believe I could jump off the roof and fly?" he asked.

"Because I'm not stupid."

Exactly.

Best I can figure, these are the



Lynn Carlson

premises driving the movement to have the government police television:

■ The Class of 2000 can't differentiate between cartoon characters and real boys and girls.

■ Kids are stabbing and shooting each other in record-breaking, rapidly-escalating numbers because their values have been fouled by watching too much HBO.

■ Life is imitating art, and art is powerful enough to annihilate all other influences on young people.

Would that the buck were that easy to pass!

Does this mean that if nothing

were on the tube but "Waltons" reruns and "Barney," we'd stop fighting and start hugging? Stop getting divorced and invite the in-laws to move in? Get real.

I know what's on television, and there's a lot to dislike. I check in on Rush and Geraldo and Howard Stern and "Beavis and Butthead" and "Ren and Stimpy" from time to time. I like to keep up.

Click. Here's Stern interviewing Grace Slick's daughter. He asks lots of puerile questions about her mother's sex life. I can't take much of this.

Click. Beavis and Butthead watching TV. A teenager is at the table with his parents. "Why's that dude having dinner with those old people?" Butthead asks. I have to laugh.

Click. The Nashville Network. A band is lip-synching a wretched song about its love for Texas; the members are surrounded by very chesty women wearing thong bikinis which appear to have been cut from American flags. I wonder if these country

boys make a distinction between burning Old Glory and putting it in the crack of your...never mind.

Click. A black-and-white cowboy movie, circa 1945, when men were men and women were glad of it. People get shot and they don't even bleed. The good guys win every time. How come that didn't confuse the kids of my parents' generation, who spent their childhood Saturdays glued to these horse operas in their neighborhood theaters?

How come indeed!

When I go channel-surfing I find programs that are rude, sophomoric and offensive, clever, artful and enlightening. Some are also violent—too much so for my own taste. Sometimes I give up and turn it off.

But I don't see anything coming out of my television screen powerful enough to be blamed for America unraveling at the seams, though that certainly seems to be happening.

If you and I are honest, we have no choice but to admit that the buck stops on the other side of the glass.

MORE LETTERS

If You Love Your Pets, Keep Them At Home

To the editor:

I would like to answer the lady who had her cat shot (*Beacon*, Nov. 4).

I also live in Forest Hills subdivision. I am also a cat lover. When I first moved into Forest Hills, I only saw two cats, and they were mine. They are never out of the house unless they have to go to the vet.

People have started letting their cats run loose, and you see cats all over. Some must be abandoned because they look sick. There have been five different cats in the last ten days that we have seen roaming.

We love our cats, but we don't want them to be a bother to anyone else. We also like to feed the birds and squirrels and we don't want your cat, or any other cat, in our yard bothering them.

You said your cat went into the woods to catch squirrels and mice. I've never had my vet tell me to feed my cats squirrels and mice. Cat food sold in the stores is a balanced diet and what your cats need.

My cats live in the house, and I have never had anyone come in and take a shot at them. If you had kept your cat home, this terrible incident wouldn't have happened.

I'm not sticking up for people who shoot cats or anyone's pets. What I'm saying is keep your cats, dogs, whatever, home. If you love them you will.

Leroy Tibbetts
Supply

TV 'Out Of Touch'

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following letter was to Robert Beall, station manager at WECT-TV in Wilmington. A copy was sent to *The Brunswick Beacon* for use a letter to the editor.

To the editor:

Nov. 6, NBC broadcast nationwide the biggest day in thoroughbred racing. The Breeders' Cup attracts the best horses in the world for the largest purses—more than \$10 million—yet WECT-TV elected not to show this program.

I am aware of your contract with the Atlantic Coast Conference to show the ACC game of the week from noon until 3 p.m., and there is no question that this is very popular in this area and should be shown. Upon completion of the football game, there was no reason not to join the Breeders' Cup in progress like many other NBC affiliates did. Your station's decision to program a

local show instead of joining the network is hard to understand.

I assume the same person made this decision that made the decision to program the preacher instead of the Ryder Cup golf matches. It is obvious that WECT-TV is out of touch with the viewing public in this area.

I know that nothing can be done to change what has happened in the past, but please consider in the future your viewing public's wishes and shown NBC's nationwide sports programs.

Herbert Holman
Sunset Beach

Was MM Libeled?

To the editor:

The president, Suzanne Osborne, of what is apparently an ad hoc organization (Brunswick County Anti-Mining Alliance) rallied supporters with the exhortation to "stand up for the citizens of Brunswick County, not a corporation that does not care what it does or how it does it."

So much for objectivity and engineering fact.

The judgment about Martin Marietta executives' motives is clearly libelous, and insulting of our intelligence, too. No responsible person could suppose men who seek to engage in such a technical business are indifferent to local consequences, especially in these days when litigious lawyers and victims are quick to seek compensation.

For the life of me, I cannot understand how such screaming irrational women get to be elected president of anything.

Karl E. Brandt
Shallotte

'Splendid Outcome'

To the editor:

On behalf of the University of North Carolina, I want to thank the people of our state for their support in the Nov. 2 bond referendum.

The university bond campaign committee, with inspired leadership from Chairman Thomas I. Storrs, made educating the voters a primary goal. We are grateful to your newspaper for its coverage of the needs of our 16-campus university and the issues involved in all of the bond referendums.

North Carolina's future appears much brighter than it has for years. What a splendid outcome!

C.P. Spangler
UNC President

GUEST COLUMN

Volunteers Can Provide 'Extras' For Patients

BY HELEN HENDRICKS

Has anyone of us seriously thought ahead to what our future may hold for us, to our so-called "autumn years?" We are all involved in the aging process, and none of us can escape it.

Just how do we expect to live those years after we retire—or, more accurately, what will be our actual capabilities? Will we physically and mentally be able to live out our dreams, surrounded by our loved ones, enjoying our prosperity? For many people, this dream becomes impossible due to accidents, illness or the actual aging process.

Although many of us think of a nursing home with disdain, a place of last resort, the end of living, it doesn't have to be thought of in that manner at all.

Most Americans spend their entire lives in family settings, retaining strong connections to our parents, older relatives and other persons throughout life. Surveys show that 80 percent of the community care provided to the aged comes from family members.

But what happens when you are heavily burdened with these care obligations and desperately seeking solutions and relief to this dilemma? What about that older person who has lost the capacity to make wise and safe decisions or continually puts himself in danger through his own behavior?

Most long-term health facilities provide attractive, caring atmospheres for people who can no longer safely care for themselves. Sometimes the stay in such a facility is temporary but, in most instances, these residents will live out the remainder of their lives in such a home.

These nursing homes provide a safe, healthy environment for each of their residents, and their goal to

each individual is to preserve their dignity while attending to their physical, mental, emotional and spiritual needs.

While today more in the past, older persons are encouraged to continue to be active and involved in their communities, physical losses of later life can be restrictive and certainly frustrating for them. More than 1.4 million older citizens live their autumn years in nursing homes, where 24-hour care under professional nursing supervision is obtainable. Occupational therapy, physical therapy, counseling and recreational services are usually offered.

Have any of you readers ever taken the time to visit a health-care facility? In most cases, you would be pleasantly surprised, not to say how "touched" you'll become. It takes a special kind of person to care for the residents of a long-term nursing home—one who is caring, loving, sympathetic and, above all, patient. They are required to take specific training classes in order to become qualified to receive state certification.

Although the professionals take care of their medical needs, the residents still need and require much more. That is where we as a community can help.

Can you close your eyes now, and imagine how you would feel if you were taken out of your home and placed in an entirely new and foreign environment away from your loved ones, your pet and lifelong friends? How would you react? Many of these residents are miles away from their loved ones, so frequent visits by relatives and friends are impossible.

Such a person is making the greatest change of his life, usually involving the loss of many lifetime associations, prized possessions and loss of contact with friends. This is a

very emotional trauma and needs very supportive relationships.

Older people look forward to visits from family and friends. When these become nonexistent, that senior becomes sad and depressed. This is where you and I, the community, can give our talents, time and services.

Intergenerational friendships are possible through shared interests such as church, sports, hobbies and neighborhood activities. Just talking to these forgotten citizens, sharing experiences and travels with them, touching their hand, reading to them and even hugging them to let them know you care lights up their old weathered faces and puts a gleam back in their eyes again.

Many are unable to speak clearly or maybe not at all, but they do respond with a smile or positive body motion. Naturally, some will be more active with more controlled body mobilization than others, but they all need to know that they are remembered, loved and still a part of the community.

They like playing bingo (and winning) so volunteers are needed to assist them. Small, inexpensive, appropriate prizes would be appreciated.

The wheelchair residents would love to be taken outdoors on nice sunny days just to stroll around and see the flowers and birds. Many are able to attend church if only some church member would take the time to pick them up and return them to the facility.

Others would enjoy and participate in an in-house Bible study and hymn sing-along. It's so gratifying to watch these seniors respond to the hymns, especially those familiar to them. They may not be able to carry a tune or remember all the words, they they sure can hum the melody and clap their hands.

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