

FORUM

Every season is a beautiful time of life



Nigel Alston
Motivational Moments

*"He who formed our frame,
Made man a perfect whole;
And made the body's health
Depend upon the soul."*

—Unknown

My wife and I made a discovery recently. We fell in love with a road.

Well, perhaps it wasn't the road we fell in love with. It was what was on either side of it.

It was nature and its fall fashion show of brightly-hued trees and contrasted against manicured emerald lawns that we loved.

Trees dressed in colors fit for modeling down a runway while all eyes marvel at their magnificence.

We actually found this stretch of road by accident when looking for a shortcut to our favorite restaurant. The shortcut is every driver's dream road — beautiful and less traveled.

A gazebo sits close to a bend in the road flanked by a lake which reflects the colors of the trees surrounding it. Ripples move through the water as the wind blows gently over it.

We drink in the scenery each time we travel this path. I think we know what is around every turn of the winding road. It's this knowing, and the anticipation that it produces, that makes the ride worthwhile.

I think we enjoy it so much because of the alternating colors of the leaves and the winding nature of the road. Each turn produces a different arrangement of awe-inspiring colors. It's a peaceful ride — and only a few minutes long.

Life is a lot like this ride and the seasons of the year with their predictable changes and developments at every turn. Just as the leaves change from different shades of green to the brilliant colors of fall, the seasons of life change too.

Sometimes we wonder if there is an underlying order in the progression of our lives. Do we change like the seasons from childhood to adulthood?

Daniel J. Levinson thinks so. In "The Seasons of a Man's Life" Levinson explores the periods of personal development through which all of us must pass.

He believes "the life cycle evolves through a sequence of eras each lasting roughly 25 years." An era is a "time of life" that often overlaps with another era. It could be compared to a

DJ making a transition from one record to another; as one is ending another begins.

Levinson's sequence of the times of life reminds me of the seasons of the year — winter, spring, summer and fall. Childhood and adolescence, ages 0-22, overlap early adulthood, ages 17-45. Before we exit this phase, we transition from middle adulthood, ages 40-65, to late adulthood, ages 60-?

We are moving in and out of the seasons of life seemingly without missing a beat.

Leaves begin to change — slowly at first, then a little yellow, some orange and a sudden maturity into this radiant rainbow of colors. Before we know it, another season is upon us.

Like that one strand of gray hair that multiplies before you know it.

I can identify with the comedian who warmed the crowd up before a concert recently. He has joined the group that is old enough to realize, as he explained, that something can happen between the bed and the bathroom. A hip joint suddenly pops out of a joint, a knee gives away and the joints ache — all without a warning.

We are fully in one season and a new one is being ushered in.

At some point, we have to recognize the importance of rest and pacing ourselves. At we grow older, we have to allow a little nap time between activities. Gaining an hour with the time change last weekend helped. It used to be another hour to party.

Now I notice, even when going nowhere, the sun hanging high like a spotlight in the sky showing off the breathtaking colors of creation, each tree enjoying the attention it deserves before the covering fades into another season.

After cruising down our new-found road, we appreciate God's handiwork. Sitting in our favorite seat I look out the window and notice a leaf falling gently to the ground. I wonder how it feels to float so effortlessly and dance in the air twirling around and around, up and down, and resting ever so softly on the ground.

"Have you ever wanted to float through the air like a leaf," I asked my wife as I watched the leaf's journey.

Every season is a beautiful time of life.

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Look at Moseley-Braun's character

Armstrong Williams

Guest Columnist

With the hope of improving the quality of life for Illinois residents, supporters sent hundreds of thousands of dollars to fund the 1998 re-election campaign of Democratic Sen. Carol Moseley-Braun. Allegedly, a portion of that money was used to finance a lavish lifestyle for the senator, her former fiancé, campaign manager Kgosie Matthews, and favored staff members. Although the Clinton-controlled Justice Department refused to dig into these allegations, now is the perfect time to investigate what could be Moseley-Braun's campaign law violations.

Sen. Jesse Helms, R-N.C., chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, is wielding his power to withhold support for Moseley-Braun's nomination to be ambassador to New Zealand. Although Helms has raised the campaign money issue, he also has been quoted as saying he opposes Moseley-Braun because she was key in defeating a matter dear to the North Carolina senator's heart. That was his 1993 bill to renew a design patent for the United Daughters of the Confederacy, a renewal the Senate had rubber-stamped every 14 years since 1898. Moseley-Braun opposed the renewal because the UDC's design contained a version of the Confederate flag, a symbol she and many other Americans equate with support for slavery.

It occurs to me that Sen. Helms should shy away from trivializing the process by butting heads with Moseley-Braun on the contentious Confederate flag issue. Instead, he should focus on her character



Carol Moseley-Braun, center, flanked by Hillary Rodham Clinton and C. Delores Tucker, accepts an award during a 1992 ceremony.

and hold a hearing to discuss possible corruption in her 1998 campaign.

Throughout the criticism, Moseley-Braun steadfastly has maintained that she never misappropriated campaign funds to fund personal indulgences. Her supporters insist (a la Clinton) that her public record overshadows any mistakes.

But look at the evidence.

The 1992 "Handbook of Campaign Spending" notes, "During the four-day 1992 Democratic National Convention in New York, Moseley-Braun spent \$22,445, including a hefty \$15,367 bill at the Le Park Meridian Hotel. No other Senate candidate, Democratic or Republican, diverted as much of their campaign funds to cover convention expenses."

According to a 1994 article

in the Los Angeles Times, Moseley-Braun siphoned off campaign contributions to pay for a lavish vacation to Hawaii: "Sen. Carol Moseley-Braun used campaign funds to pay a \$4,028 bill at the Four Seasons hotel on Maui in Hawaii, after her 1992 election but before she was sworn in as senator."

"It was shocking to some of us that two weeks before the election, when we had raised almost \$7 million, the campaign had to borrow hundreds of thousands of dollars to be competitive on TV," recalled campaign press secretary David Eichenbaum in a 1993 interview with The New Republic. "The candidate and the campaign manager were free-spending. Does that account for millions of dollars? I don't know."

"Moseley-Braun spent

\$39,000 in political donations on designer clothes, jewelry and a stereo," said longtime campaign treasurer Earl Hopewell in a 1996 interview with the Springfield, Ill., State Journal-Register.

Moseley-Braun drew further criticism for hobnobbing and passively supporting brutal Nigerian dictator General Sani Abacha. Moseley-Braun's then-fiance and campaign manager had once worked as a lobbyist for the Nigerian government, which has been linked to gross human rights violations, including trade in child slaves.

Moseley-Braun's supporters continue to maintain that the only thing of relevance is her record as a senator. They insist that a few indiscretions here and there should not outweigh her track record as a public servant.

See Moseley-Braun on A9

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