

Opinions...

Yours, Ours, Others

Quote of the week...

"Opportunity may only knock once, but temptation leans on the doorbell.."

Unknown

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Front Porch Forum

The perfect country western song...

Ron Isbell
Columnist

David Allen Coe, step aside. If anybody is going to write "the perfect country western song" it's gonna be me. I've already penned the lyrics for a couple: "I'm Tired of Bangin' My Head Against the Writing on the Wall" and "I Carry My Family Portrait on My Driver's License".

The first because I like mixing metaphors almost as much as I like puns.

The second came from an old motorcycle riding and camping friend. He had been divorced for more years than he had been married but was still in love with his ex, and he rarely saw his daughter. He felt like his drivers license photo was his family portrait. In his last months as he dealt with cancer he found out how wrong he was. His family was huge. His daughter cared for him and his hundreds of friends cared about him. If being his friend was wrong, I don't want to be right.

Still, it's a great country song, don't ya think?

I'm working on another one now for all you smokers out there that are having a hard time finding a place to light up. It goes like this...

Tobacco's become a mortal sin.
Now it's against the law.
Soft pack or hard, carton or tin.
Or a wad tucked in your jaw.
They've taken all our rights away.
They search us in places ain't meant to be seen.
We have to protect the other guy.
But who's looking out for me.

Joe Camel ain't Kool no more
Winston's name ain't on the Cup
Nobody's callin' for Phillip Morris
Nobody's lightin' up.

Nobody told The Duke to snuff it out.
And no doctor ever told him to quit.
I know that's one cowboy, pardner,
That wouldn't put up with it.

Joe Camel ain't Kool no more
Winston's name ain't on the Cup
Nobody's callin' for Phillip Morris
Nobody's lightnin' up.

Then I've got a few more that I can't keep from rattlin' around in my brain...

She's hot. I'm not. Think I've got a chance?
More beer. No fear. Gonna ask her to dance.

Or how about...

Martinis and Manhattans
Wine from the right year.
Or Jack and Coke,
Pretzels and beer.

Or maybe this one...

If I held four kings
I'd still lose the hand.
If I had two nickels to rub together
I'd be a lucky man

or...

It's against the law to eat anything fat.
Burger gets you 5 to 10. Want fries with that?

or...

Opie's freckles and Aunt Bee's pies.
Andy's gone, but Mayberry never dies.

Yes, you may have read some of this before. But I wanted to re-introduce you to an off-the-wall idea. More on that in my next column. Be sure to check in. I think you're going to like it.

Greener Pastures

Rat Tail Cow

By Shelley Proffitt Eagan

"I heard a farmer is sending some nice cows to the sale," the buyer said over the phone as dad described what he was looking for. We were looking for 8 cows to add to the Shelby herd, a while back. What we ended up getting was seven nice cows and one very elusive one. At the livestock auctions a cow is walked into the ring and the bidding begins so it's nearly impossible to tell anything about a cow's personality in the 30 seconds to minutes that they are in the ring! So, I'm sure the buyer did his best. The purchased cows were delivered the next day to our farm and dad headed out to check out the new additions.

Oddly enough, there were only seven there! Not eight, as we had been told were purchased and delivered. That's because the eighth one decided she didn't like her new digs and took it upon herself to relocate, out of that pasture. She had already escaped the small holding pasture with her calf and headed to the woods! It was nearly two weeks after their arrival before we even got the chance to lay eyes on her. Finally, we caught a glimpse of her from the rear as she made for the woods. As soon as we would step foot in the pasture this became her routine! We arrive.....then...she departs, quickly! But we got enough of a glance to see the rat tail on her.

Ever since then that's what we've called her: "Rat Tail". Leggy and with a barrel-shaped belly her rusty color and horse shaped face makes her distinct. Rat Tail has no ear tag, I'm sure because she is nearly impossible to get in a head gate! She appears to be mostly a Limousine cow and has the face of a horse, long and narrow. She had a good-sized calf at her side when we got her and she calved again within a few months of arriving here. Both her steers have been gorgeous.

"Everyone has one," the vet told me today. The cow that is impossible to catch and runs away every time we appear while the rest of the herd happily awaits us. The sane ones calmly watch as we refill the minerals, kelp and salt, or walk around them and make sure they are well and work on the water. We have brought that herd into the barn to pregnancy check or castrate bull calves or put in ear tags at least a dozen times since her arrival on the farm. Never, not once, have we been able to catch her up and keep her in the barn to load her onto the trailer. If we do manage to get her into the barn she jumps as many panels as it takes to escape. Until.... the week before Thanksgiving. We had a crew of our farm hands, about a bazillion corral panels set up funneling into the barn, and had reinforced the barn interior to the likes of a



prison. Rat Tail has an uncanny ability to find the weak spot in a fence and bust out. She has escaped from this same barn numerous times taking out wooden gates made of 2 x 6, hurdled 5-strand barbed wire effortlessly, and pushed through several bull fence panels! Our own Houdini of the ranch.

The corral panels she can hurl herself against but not budge, unless they are rusty. These are typically found only around working pens on livestock farms. With the barn shored up and corral panels everywhere we finally had her. Her most recent calf was weaned and we were ready for her to leave the farm!

We transported her to the Kings Mountain farm and held her a few days until the sale barn was open, pacing the fence line, head up, searching for her possible escape. Only to find that they were closed the week of Thanksgiving! Darn it! We were forced to hold her for another week. I could not wait to get her off the property. Because of her presence we had to skip the headgate portion of the farm tours we give on our customer appreciation day the day after Thanksgiving. Having people that close to the catch pen would have driven Rat Tail mad and been potentially dangerous for our guests. When you have one insane cow in a herd it can make the entire group act nutty. She is a terrible influence on any younger animal near her. Bad vibes all over the place.

The following week we head to the barn at sunrise to load her onto the stock trailer for transport to the sale barn. As she runs around the catch pen, because of our presence, I notice that she has a clear fluid coming out the back end, not urine! Since this is a family friendly blog I'll just say that this is a sign that a cow is going to calve soon.

Oh NO! Oh no! We can't send her if she's calving, that would be cruel. We called it off. We're stuck with her again. This was getting to be comical! Looked like she was going to calve any day. We did the math and her current weaned calf was old enough that she could have been bred back right after she had him and be ready to calve again. I'll give her points for being a calving machine. Still I wanted her out of here. It has been a week now and no calf! The vet came today and said he wouldn't be able to tell if she was 3 weeks away or closer. So, if there is no calf at her crazy side as of Wednesday of next week she will be off to the sale and to another farmer.

If I could put a sign around her neck, I would. It would read, "Fear Me! Strong Fences Required! Good Luck."

Letters to the editor

Clarity of historical fact

In Wednesday's July 25, 2012 edition of The Herald the letter entitled "Few Misconceptions in Last Weeks Letter" argued that I had been mistaken in the July 4th letter "Thoughtful Independence Day" with my comments about the reasons for the Revolutionary War including unfair taxation and religious freedoms. I'd like to offer Cerese Feagans and readers of The Herald the following information taken from our own government's websites: In 1620 Separatists came to the new world to avoid religious persecution in England. In 1629 the Puritans came for the same thing and to establish a place to set an example of how God wanted people to live. Both came because the King of

England dictated how people had to worship.

In 1775 the colonists rebelled against the King for erosion of self-government and increased taxes which royal authority needed to pay expenses for the French and Indian War (seven year war). Other issues included an alleged plot to increase the authority of the Anglican Church in America. The Revolutionary struggle subtly interacted with religion then quickly produced changes that transformed traditional European relations between government and religion and made America a beacon of religious freedom for people everywhere.

Historians emphasized that religious revivals during the so called "Great Awakening" of the 1740s helped usher in the Revolution. Excerpts from a transcript of the Declaration of Independence include:

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".....necessary for one people to dissolve political bands....to assume ...the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them...."

".....all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights..."

".....That whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter it or abolish it...."

Based on all the above I would say that my original letter was correct in all aspects and that we do need to change out all the liberal Democrats including Obama. So Cerese, we can agree on one point, we need to vote our preferences.

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