



America's Heartland

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As the story goes, a fellow had been depressed for so long that he finally decided to go see a psychiatrist.

The psychiatrist asked a few questions, took some notes, and suddenly, his eyes seemed to brighten with understanding. "I think your problem is low self-esteem," the psychiatrist said. "It's very common among losers."

That old joke portrays a psychiatrist totally lacking in bedside manner. I'm glad there are far more good-mannered medical professionals than bad. The need for kind, loving, thoughtful doctors, nurses and other medical professionals seems to be at an all-time high these days. With the senior population soaring, we need compassionate caregivers who take to heart Leviticus 19:32, which exhorts us to honor and care for the elderly.

As a reminder of this great need, I hope you enjoy this very touching poem written long ago by a nurse named Phyllis McCormack:

What do you see, nurses, what do you see?

Psychiatrist: Low self-esteem very common among losers

What are you thinking when you're looking at me?

A crabby old woman, not very wise,
Uncertain of habit, with faraway eyes?

Who dribbles her food and makes no reply

When you say in a loud voice, "I do wish you'd try!"

Who seems not to notice the things that you do,

And forever is losing a stocking or shoe.

Who, resisting or not, lets you do as you will,

With bathing and feeding, the long day to fill.

Is that what you're thinking? Is that what you see?

Then open your eyes, nurse; you're not looking at me.

I'll tell you who I am as I sit here so still,

As I do at your bidding, as I eat at your will.

I'm a small child of 10 with a father and mother,

Brothers and sisters, who love one another.

A young girl of 16, with wings on her feet,

Dreaming that soon now a lover she'll meet.

A bride soon at 20 -- my heart gives a leap,

Remembering the vows that I promised to keep.

At 25 now, I have young of my own,

Who need me to guide and a secure happy home.

A woman of 30, my young now grown fast,

Bound to each other with ties

that should last.

At 40, my young sons have grown and are gone,

But my man's beside me to see I don't mourn.

At 50 once more, babies play round my knee,

Again we know children, my loved one and me.

Dark days are upon me, my husband is dead;

I look at the future, I shudder with dread.

For my young are all rearing young of their own,

And I think of the years and the love that I've known.

I'm now an old woman, and nature is cruel;

'Tis jest to make old age look like a fool.

The body, it crumbles, grace and vigor depart,

There is now a stone where I once had a heart.

But inside this old carcass a young girl still dwells,

And now and again my battered heart swells.

I remember the joys, I remember the pain,

And I'm loving and living life over again.

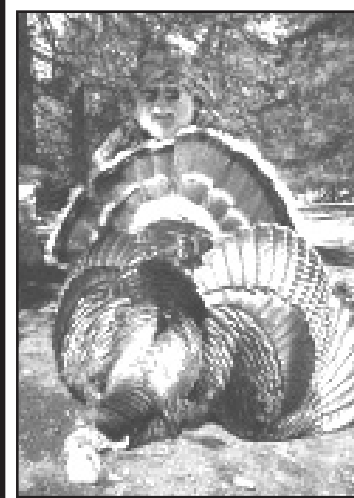
I think of the years, all too few, gone too fast,

And accept the stark fact that nothing can last.

So open your eyes, nurses, open and see,

Not a crabby old woman; look closer ... see me.

Roger Alford is pastor of South Fork Baptist Church. Reach him at 502-514-6857 or rogeralford1@gmail.com.



Just Hunting

by Steve Brewer

I first want to thank, Steve Gross, of Gross Tire, for being a Just Hunting fan and reader. My wife Sharon, picked up what looked like a railroad spike, on her Volvo tire; it wasn't, it just looked like it. A call to Steve; help was on the way. The tire on her car was ruined, Steve replaced it, in no time flat, excuse the pun. Thank you Steve Gross, and I will bring him some Watusi meat, on my next trip to Irvine.

I want to remind every hunter reading this column, squirrel season will reopen on the third Saturday in August, which is August 15th. Please take a child, and teach them about this great place the Good Lord has let us borrow, the "Great Outdoors".

Through this season please share with everyone your favorite stories about your youth and hunting with your family member. Just give me some facts, dates, ages, etc., and I will write you the story. I will also be sharing some of mine with you.

On some of my sporting pages, I have seen several hunters asking if someone is going to squirrel hunt; so far all the answers have been yes. Let us keep it going, and enjoy taking a child, grandchild, son, daughter, whomever, and enjoy squirrel season. Remember, use it or lose it.

Till next week, stay safe, and please be careful.

You can email Steve Brewer at <Steve@EstillTribune.com> and message is forwarded.

A FISH TALE

The Search for 'The One That Got Away'

How many times have you gone fishing and met someone leaving with a string of big fish just as you arrived?

You may have said something like, "Those sure are some nice fish," and the other guy might answer, saying, "Ah, they's O.K., but you should have seen the one that got away from him."

Once there was a novice fisherman who had not yet experienced losing that big fish; so, when he read an interesting fish story in a sports magazine, he began retelling it to his friends under the pretense that it had actually happened to him.

One day, he told the story to the proprietor of a bait shop and was stunned when the man showed no emotion whatsoever. He was offended and asked the man about his lack of emotion.

The bait shop owner told him, "That was a good story when I read it in that sports magazine, and it was still pretty good when a fellow told it to me last week, but I've heard it seven times since then."

There is an old saying that states, "Fishermen never lie."

Never, never!
Not ever!

But a fellow fisherman once caught a catfish so big that he could not sleep that night... not until he got up, switched on the light, went to the mirror and looked himself straight in the eye and said, "Don't you think you have stretched it a little far this time, Harry?"

Another fisherman, named Frank, once became so angry with people talking about 'that fish that keeps getting away from everybody,' that he 'went off the deep end.'

"I'm sick of hearing everybody talk about that fish," he said one day. "I'm going to catch that fish and then everybody will shut up about it."

From then on, Frank began spending more and more of his free time trying to catch 'that fish.' He must have fished in every decent fishing spot along the Kentucky River and all its tributaries in search of that fish.

I accompanied him on several occasions and personally saw Frank catch such large, beautiful fish I would have 'traded my right arm' to catch one of them, but he would just look at them and say, "Nope, that's not the one," and threw it back in the water.

"How do you know that's not the one?" I once asked.

"If it was that fish that keeps getting away from everybody, I couldn't have caught him," he answered.

Frank continued his search for that fish for several years until one day, for no apparent reason, he held a yard sale and sold all of his fishing equipment at ridiculously low prices.

Several of Frank's friends were concerned about him after this show of strange behavior but when they questioned him about the matter, he refused to talk about it.

He kept the whole matter a secret for quite some time before he was coaxed, after consuming several ounces of alcoholic beverages one evening, into telling a tale that to this day he swears is true.

"I was so determined to catch that fish, I would go to any length," he began his story. "I had to keep getting bigger line and bigger hooks until finally I was fishing with a fine



steel cable and a hook so big a baseball could rest in the curve of it. I would anchor myself to a tree using a harness that I had special made just in case I caught something.

"Then one day it happened, I did hook a big fish. He was huge! I could tell by the pull on the line.

"I played that fish for hours without every catching sight of him. He would pull on the line until he was tired and then I would reel him in until I was tired. Several times I dropped my rod and reel and would have lost him except that it was fastened to the harness I was wearing.

"It was early in the day when I hooked that fish and I was still fighting him as the sun was beginning to set. In all that time I hadn't been able to get him one foot closer to the bank than he was when I hooked him.

"That's when it happened. My line went slack, and I thought it had broke. Then, I saw that fish!

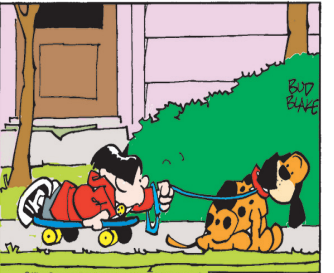
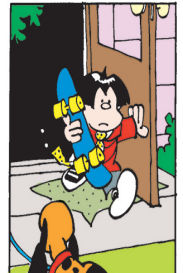
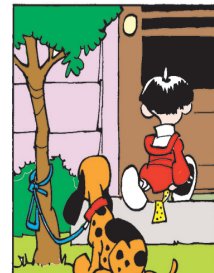
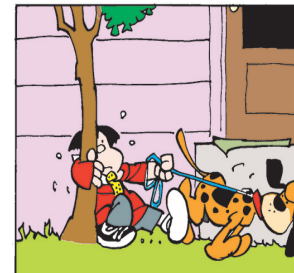
"He was swimming straight toward me. Just a few feet from the bank he flipped himself completely out of the water and landed on his tail fins directly in front of me and looked me straight in the eye.

"He pulled the hook from his mouth, using his front fins like they were hands, and threw it on the ground! Then he slapped me up the side of the head until I couldn't see straight before he jumped back in the water."

Now, when you hear a fish tale like this one, always remember, "Fishermen never lie!" ... But they 'stretch the truth' a little far sometimes.

-- from Irene's Archives

TIGER



by BUD BLAKE