

California Breeze

COLUMN LEFT

Tale of Two Cities

Finally, I have decided what to write in this column. After going through a dry time, the idea that will spill forth came to me after a phone call that arrived this morning from San Diego. It was from Henry, an old friend of mine who went to the North American College with me, and who is still a happy and busy priest in San Diego. We were chatting for about forty-five minutes, catching up on things, and I told him of my desire and effort to move back to his city--*my city*--this year. Hopefully, my transfer request will come through sooner than later. It has become increasingly evident that living in Los Angeles leaves something to be desired. Not that earthquakes and floods and fires aren't enough, the fact that this city is such a sprawling place means that the friends I have here are so spread out, that it is not easy to get together with them to enjoy my days off. This leads to the inevitable loneliness that I cannot deny is feel at times. I can bury myself in my job, and I do spend most of my time with colleagues at work, but that does not constitute friendship and intimacy. I have lived here almost six years, and I still miss most the friends I made when I was in San Diego.

When I went to visit just before the Super Bowl, I tripped down memory lane, and stopped by my first job, Dixieline Lumber, to see if there were any familiar faces left. I ran into Steve, a guy who started about the same time as I did, back in 1977, who has stayed with the company, moved up its ranks, and is happily married with two kids. We chatted about old times, and he gave me another old friend's phone number, to call when I got the chance. After leaving Dixieline, I drove down the street to have a burger and a beer at Foggy's Notion, one of those noisy little local bars we used to hang out at after work. It used to attract a lot of the Navy boys, looking for a good time on leave from the now closed Training Depot. The burger was great, the beer cold and cheap (used to be 49 cents a mug!), and I reminisced by myself of good times long gone.

I called Keith, the other guy who started at the lumber yard with me, and with whom I have had no contact in over six years. We chatted like it was only yesterday that I would have dinner over at his house, with his wife Ellen. Informed of my intent to move back to San Diego, he, of course, in-

vited me to drop by and have dinner, catch up with the billion stories that have been accumulating, and even spend the night, if I desired.

This is the reason San Diego beckons me once again. I left in 1989 because the Church had no use for me, and I realized that selling lumber wasn't satisfying anymore. The friendships I built there have survived the time and the distance. They will be still there when I return. They are relationships I want to go to the grave with. I guess I have never fully rooted down in Los Angeles. I never felt comfortable cheering for the local pro sports teams, and when the Chargers made it to the Super Bowl, I was ecstatic!

To be fair, San Diego and Los Angeles are very different cities, and comparisons made prove that. There is so much to do here--theaters, restaurants, museums, college and pro sports to follow, beaches and mountains, and so on--that San Diego is too small to be able to match. But what is lacking here in El Lay is the intimacy and the beauty that San Diego excels in. The folks there are different too. Not as many phony, plastic types with their Jaguars, Mercedes, and Rolls Royces, with their salon tans and face lifts. Of course, Hollywood *is* in Los Angeles, and the other city doesn't have anything like it to attract that kind of crowd. Thank God.

This is not to totally bash the city I have lived in for the past six years. It does have its good points, but for the kind of guy I am, my heart is still down south, and that I cannot deny. So, country roads, as John Denver used to sing about, take me home!



SOUTH LYON

Back Home... With Dad

We are enjoying an abnormally mild winter so far in South Lyon. We've had some very cold days but none near zero and most in the 20's and 30's with a few even up to 50.

There is a newly formed "Knife and Fork Club" at the P.B. Putters restaurant in New Hudson. We tried it in January and it was very good. Many friends attend. It's for seniors of this area and was started by a few good people from Colonial Acres in cooperation with the owners. It is held in the private 2nd floor dining room (very nice!) and should become very popular. For a flat \$7.00 plus tips you get a selection from a 3 to 5 item dinner menu, including a preselected dessert. All beer and wine drinks are one dollar each. We had veal parmesan with pasta, vegetable and salad and it was very good. The next is Feb. 6th and will include a wine tasting session.

Another nice activity we attended for the first time in January is the Movie of the Month in the Senior Center at the high school across the road. It is shown on a VCR/TV at 1 p.m. and the staff prepares goodies like popcorn, cookies, candy, and chips to go with pop, juice, or coffee. All this for one dollar person. We saw the very exciting and tense movie "Speed".



A Couple of tips that work:

1. I awoke with an itchy back recently. I could not reach it with the skin cream I wanted to use it on what I figured was dry skin. I had an idea. I put a plastic sandwich baggie on the end of our long handle bath brush and secured it with a wire bread wrapper tie. This provided a good flat surface to apply several dabs of Vaseline Dermasil lotion, a soft, spreadable skin cream. By golly, it worked! I went back to bed and wasn't bothered again for several days.

2. Milk and chocolate pudding mix was cooked in a pan on our stove and a film burned onto the bottom of the pan. Soaking it with detergent and water overnight still left it firmly affixed to the pan. So I tried this: I poured in about a spoonful of dishwasher detergent and mixed in about an inch of water and heated it at low heat for about a half hour or little more, pan covered. I then took the lid off and discovered the burnt deposit had mostly

lifted from the metal surface and it took just a touch to loosen the rest. The whole mess was easily washed down into the disposer and the pan was as clean as new. Maybe this will work on baked-on meat drippings next.

Next time we may have some stories about our visit with our Houston clan, including the baptism of young Gregory II.

Remember to pray for each other every day. God loves you and so do Mother and I.—Dad

Birthdays of the Clan

(clip and save for future reference)

JANUARY:	Gregory II
FEBRUARY	Jason
	Arianna
	Dad (Lou)
MARCH:	Ron
	Mother (Audrey)
APRIL:	Greg and Michael
MAY:	Lynn
	John
JUNE:	Troy
	Melissa
JULY:	Mark
	Jim
AUGUST:	Bill
	Marylou
SEPT.:	Prince
	Sherwood
OCT.:	Stefani
	Devin
DEC.:	Robin

AUNTS AND UNCLES

Sr. Marilyn Schneider:

Eveann Dillon:

(Mary) Sue Ambrose:

Jim Lynn: 11/19/30

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

Mom and Dad:	June 19, 1948
John and Melissa:	August 29, 1981
Marylou and Ron:	September 10, 1983
Greg and Frinee	April 23, 1988
Lynn and Sherwood	September 24, 1994



Mom's Corner of the World...

Sitting down here in our "gathering space" I smiled as I re-read Greg's thoughts on his adopted state of Texas. To each his own, I thought. For myself, there are so many wonderful places for me to experience, whether for the first time--like the Canadian Rockies--or the second time when Hawaii comes immediately to mind, but also Ireland in a month warmer than October. It would be lovely to return to Italy. The northern part this time, although I really did love Rome!

Does this sound like a name dropper or what? Anyhow, It would be nice to have been born *rich* instead of *beautiful*! Now please hold the polite

snickers. My little corner of the universe has always been great to come home to, even though I am a displaced "hillbilly", as Mark is wont to call me. Driving across the Ohio border into Pennsylvania seems to be approaching the hills of home.

After the 18th of February, I will have a new little reason to fly down to Texas. Little Gregory or Young Gregory or Gregory the Second or G.C. will be next on my brag list. Are not big families wonderful!? Ours numbers about twenty now, right?

Mike mentioned seeing "Dumb and Dumber" with Michigan's own Jeff Daniels. He and his family lives in Chelsea when not making movies. He owns and runs the "Purple Rose" theater there and it is on our list of places to go this year. Lou and I saw "Speed" last week and it kept me on the edge of my card table chair. We saw it at the high school's senior center--all six of us! Cost us a dollar but the slightly burned popcorn, cookies, and pop were free. It was worth every penny. Did I mention being beautiful instead of rich??

Tonight it is out for a wine and cheese tasting dinner at a local eatery.

Now I ask you, who needs earthquakes or floods in their life when you can have excitement like this? My life is beautiful!



As I sit in front of my terminal, rain once more pours down on our soggy landscape. It's been a funny winter--beaucoup rain in January, followed by 80 degrees and sun for a week or so, and now another front moving in to add to the woes of Malibu-ites, joy to the ski resort operators, and optimism to the DWP types, who worry whether our water needs will be met each year.