

California Breeze

It Didn't Come With the Place, But...

Hammocks are great for wasting time. I can attest to that personally, as my new roommate, Greg, has put one up on the patio at our new apartment. I was in it the other morning, after taking a quick dip in the pool which is a few yards beyond the patio. The morning afforded me some time before heading off to work, so I used it to lay in the hammock and feel the cool breeze as it wafted through the pine trees around me. My thoughts ran back to the days of my youth in Inkster, for some odd reason. I guess because I had originally planned on flying to South Lyon this month to coincide with Lynn and Woody's trip. Finances weren't on my side at this time, having just moved and bearing some costs of doing that. Anyway, with closed eyes, my mind turned back the years as I traced my steps down Colonial Dr. to Inkster Ave., on up past Avondale to Woodlawn, and the sight of St.

Norbert Church and school, where most of us went for our elementary years. I could remember many of the businesses we would pass on the way, such as Economy Market, and Leon's Party Store, (where Mom would buy her Canadian Club!); Alongi's Bakery, where white bread cost a quarter, and I could hear his Italianized English, which sounded strange to this American boy. The dentist at the corner of our block (how convenient!), Our Master's Lutheran Church right next door to St. Norbert, the old priests that we served under as altar boys—Msgr. Horkan, Fr. Boyce, and others. The U-shaped halls of the school, the tiny drinking fountains, the principal, who always looked mean! The convent, that seemed to have a kind of sterile smell to it the few times I was allowed to pass beyond the front door. (I was such the teacher's pet—most kids *never* got to go inside!)

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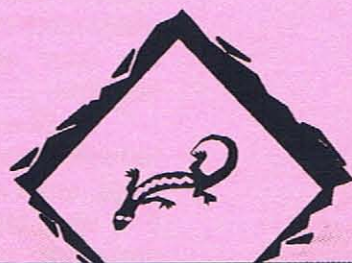
The Beauty That Surrounds Us



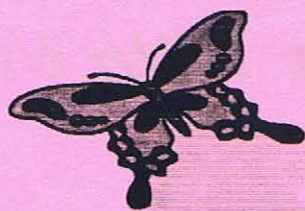
All around us it exists, found in some of the most simple and often overlooked things that make up our lives. It is called beauty, and it takes different forms for each one of us. What I would consider beautiful, others may not; what I would say was plain, someone else would find it to contain beauty. In the eyes of the beholder takes its residence, sometimes only to exist for a scant second, sometimes to exist forever. No matter how long it thrives, it may be unique in its essence to the person who takes the time to recognize it. Beauty is there for us to enjoy, and even though the pleasure it gives can be shared by many at the same time, it is still our own to possess. A sunset that christens the oncoming evening can only be beautiful when we take the time to look up and absorb its brevity. It is there for the masses to view, but it can be our own introduction to another starry night. While beauty surrounds us in various ways, we have to take notice, for it has a purpose given to us by God. It can soothe the nerves strung out by another stressful day. We can find solace in its company, an oasis no matter how briefly enjoyed.

I find beauty in the early mornings, when the sun pours in through the windows, making the grass glisten with dew, and the caladiums come alive with fire as the rays penetrate

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Keeping the Family Informed!



their red leaves. The sight of a fresh and well-manicured lawn, so green and so thick, knowing that in less than seven days it will grow up and lose its infant beauty. Just watching the girls play in the backyard, laughing and yelling, as they enjoy in ways that only kids can. I find beauty in making my son smile broadly, exposing pink gums not yet visited by little whites. Mornings of past, whenever I was up before the kids, and drinking coffee while gazing out into the backyard, seeing the beauty in the fruits of my labors, the house still quiet inside, but knowing that the busyness of the day had already started for the world too small to see from my seat, that was beauty!

Sometimes this beauty is given to us to enjoy for just a short while, and other times it slowly evolves right before our impatient eyes. For all of us, it does exist, we only have to recognize it when it is right in front of us. For beauty balances out the ugly of this world, and can actually tip the scales in its favor, if only we just open our eyes.

Gregory T. Schneider

Tidbits FROM TEXAS

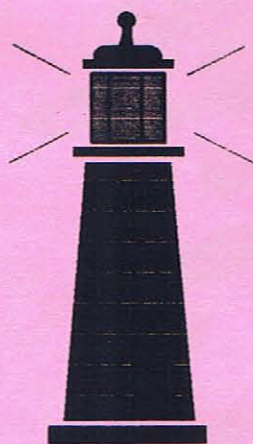
The trip back home at the last minute was the beginning of the end in one way for me. Ever since I moved to Texas, away from family and friends, I have frequently reminisced about times past, including high school days, and growing up on Colonial Drive. Lots of things here in Houston prompt memory flashes, especially in raising my kids, and realizing that as the years go on, influences of Mom and Dad come out in me, and those times are when I do the most "looking back." A couple months ago, when I opened up my invitation to Heidi's wedding, I began wondering what my cousins looked like after all these years. Normally, an invite for an event out-of-state would have been discarded with nothing more than a card of congrats as a reply, but this one lit a fire of curiosity inside me, and I knew that I had to make an exception and fly up to Detroit for this occasion. I have always enjoyed seeing the Dillons when I was younger, so I knew that I had to see them again, perhaps for the last time.

Seeing those dozen or so familiar faces again was really great, and I remember thinking that they were still recognizable in their grown-up bodies. The younger ones, like Claudia, Carol, and Heidi did not remember me too well, but the older ones—Cathi, Jennifer

(and of course, Eveann) did. I did get an opportunity to visit with them all the next day at Carol's, when they invited me to a barbecue. It was nice to talk to the three that I never really go to know: Madeline, Jimmy, and Bill. After then was my curiosity satisfied about the Dillons, now knowing how they all were, and other details of their lives. It was nice to see Aunt Sue and Sr. Marilyn for the first time in a long time, as well.

Rounding out the trip back was my revisiting the old neighborhood of Inkster. I was sort of tentative about seeing it again, because I did not want to spoil memories by its current condition, but again, curiosity got the best of me. Sadly enough, my feelings of its demise were well-founded, as we drove through Inkster, and especially down Colonial Drive. Block after block in the 'hood had deteriorated immensely, and I found myself shaking my head, mentally, at its condition. With a bit of luck, we happened to drive past an old friend's house at the exact right time when he was coming over, so I was able to have a brief reunion with the guy I hung around throughout high school. Leaving Inkster behind and heading back to South Lyon left me with a gladness that I grew up there when I did, when it was a nice little town. With Cherry Hill High School long

closed, and the rest of the area in advanced stages of decay, my feelings of reminiscence for my past have closed now. No longer will I look back with some wishes of going back in time, to relive those days of nothing but fun in growing up. Those doors have closed, and my life continues on ahead, trying to build memories for my own family in Houston.

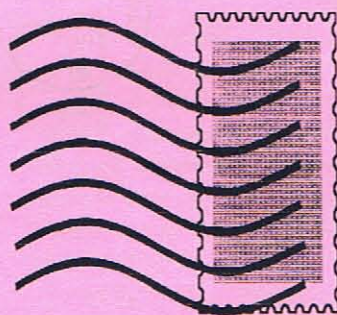
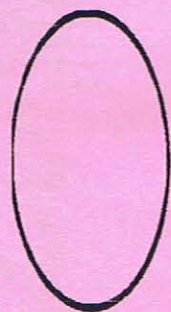


*Congratulations
to
Mom and Dad:
47 years of
Marriage.
June 19th
WOW!!*

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Part of my journey took me to the front of the radio and T.V. repair shop where piles of the *Detroit Free Press* lay waiting for us to stuff in our bags and deliver while our customers slept. My route started along one edge of Inkster Park, which at times could be kinda scary. Who knew what evil lurked in those woods, waiting for the opportunity to scare or kill an innocent young paperboy? I hated collecting on Saturdays during winter. The "considerate" customers would invite me in to warm up a bit, while they hunted down the \$1.25 due me. Of course, instantly my glasses fogged up, rendering me more vulnerable than I was walking past those dark and scary woods!

Well, my quiet reminiscing came to an end, and I had to leave my patio to shower for work. That hammock served its purpose, and I believe I shall return to it another day soon. That morning under the pine trees was my quiet time, a time to reflect on the past, to put my present into a perspective, and to wonder where the future will lead me. I thought of some of you, my family, and where you are at. Some of you have a growing family; for some, raising kids doesn't seem to be an imminent reality; for others perhaps, the desire is there to have roots put down that will support a family. Then you will have your own Colonial Dr., Inkster Rd., Leon's Party Store, Alongi's, and St. Norbert, all to become part of the fabric of life like we experienced so many years ago. I'm pretty sure I won't be in that position, something that doesn't need to be interpreted as a sad reality, just reality. I think I would like to put down roots eventually, to settle down with someone I love deeply and who loves me. Maybe that is what my 40's will be for. I wonder, so the next time I am drawn to that hammock on the patio, I will contemplate what might be and what hopefully will be.



I have been put in charge of our company's Employee Appreciation barbecue next month. I will have to coordinate the feeding and entertainment of 180 employees, a feast to be held on the back receiving docks of Costco...

Mark, Greg and I are planning an Open House party after July 4th. Anyone who wants to fly out for this event is more than welcome!

Being that this is prime vacation time, where is everyone going this summer? Some of you must have *somplans* to go somewhere!

It would be nice to hear from some of you so that I can fill this newsletter with articles of interest. How about a Prose/Poetry contribution from you creative types; or How I Plan to Spend My Summer.; or good jokes? (I thought the Judge Ito one was pretty funny! And clean, too!)

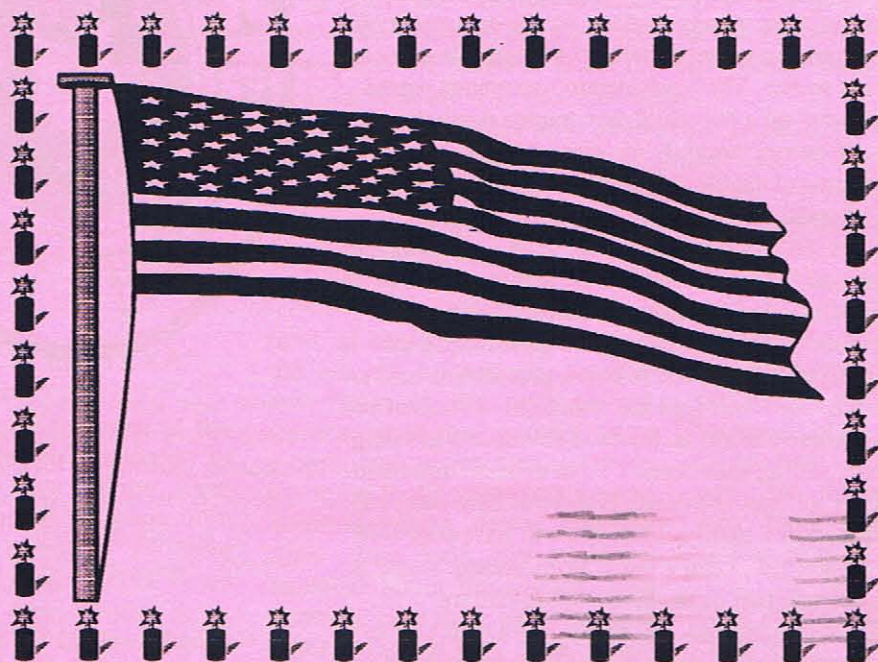
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Hey, how about those Houston Rockets and those Detroit Red Wings! The Rockets are the NBA Champs and the Red Wings are on their way to winning the Stanley Cup. Wimbledon begins July 1st, and the duel between Pete Sampras and Andre Agassi should be lively once again! Go yanks!



my new address:
13539 Wyandotte St.
Van Nuys, CA 91405
(818) 994-4916

Happy Fourth of July!



California Breeze

Michael P. Schneider
13539 Wyandotte St.
Van Nuys, CA 91405

JOHN & MELISSA SCHNEIDER
3266 ROSEDALE
ANN ARBOR, MI. 48108