

OPINION

Heaven Is A Lot Like Kentucky

The Last Of A Breed

We live in interesting times, dear reader.

A student of history would note that our current age is one that embraces social and technological changes to our culture, which our nation has never witnessed before.

The diversity of our political leadership (or lack thereof, according to some), coupled with our insatiable hunger for quicker and more complex technology, is intimidating for a graduate of the old school, such as myself.

Although these changes are shaping our entire nation, it is within our commonwealth where I believe the changes are most profound.

As a graduate of Fleming County High School in 1961, I saw little of advanced technology and the practical application of such, in comparison to the class of 2010.

We weren't allowed to use calculators. And I'm speaking of the lucky three or four of my classmates who actually possessed such magical and expensive things.

I purchased my first calculator, a Texas



Charles Hester

Heaven is a lot like Kentucky.

Instrument, in 1962, as a student at Eastern Kentucky University.

Many of the households today surround themselves with disposable items and are quick to toss their technologically superior items into the trash with the same indifference as they would an old raggedy pair of shoes.

I believe many of us are becoming lazier as technology and admittedly, in the publication business, if you've got computer problems, then you've got serious problems indeed.

With the reliance, appendulum-like, swing of the weekly deadline above my head, coupled with the constant onslaught of technological failures that plague every publication, and a vast majority of our everyday lives, I did the only thing I could to get my mind back on track this weekend.

"Rebooted" myself and went camping along a desolate stretch of ground

near the Fleming/Nicholas border miles from any man-made noise.

My significant other, and myself found a nice little spot for most of a week along Fleming Creek and made camp.

I'm no Daniel Boone, but I was raised in the woods and along the streams of northeastern Kentucky by a father who was a master outdoorsman and a child of the depression who later served his country at the tail end of WW II and the beginning of the Korean War.

Dad was also an unequalled provider of the forest.

I would say he graduated from the old school, but he actually never did graduate from high school, being instead to volunteer for service as a military policeman while a sophomore at Fleming County High School in 1944.

It wasn't until I was almost 40 years old that I began to realize in earnest the sacredness my father and mother's generation endured.

They lost over six dozen of their Fleming County classmates to the war. Yes, a few were a year

two older and a few were a year or two younger, but they were not completely annihilated.

Respectably, most of that generation, that greatest generation, including my father and mother, are gone.

My late father used military jargon and expressions his entire life and I suppose, like many of us, he never completely re-adapted again to civilian life after being honorably discharged.

I understand that better now, having also worn the uniform and having been a soldier too.

Dad had a photo album crammed full of photographs of himself and his Army buddies taken in Japan and Korea.

I must have looked at those pictures a million times, but I never once saw him look at them and he only commented once about a particular picture of utter destruction when I insisted.

Mom and Dad understood things myself and my siblings couldn't possibly comprehend. I didn't know that then. I know it now.

My late father drew much happiness by spending his weekends and streams of northeastern Kentucky. He had remarkable knowledge of firearms and was a marksman with a shotgun, rifle or pistol, but in all other aspects of the woods he was a novice. Perhaps I'm the last of 40-pound catfish from a brood.

of Hineshima after we dropped the Atom bomb on Me and my brother Wheeler were together when I took that photo.

The war had just ended and we were preparing to occupy Formosa, he said before walking out of the room.

I rarely heard him speak directly of incidents of his service, but as a child growing up during the Vietnam War the discussion around the supper table, which held my three older brothers, my older sister and myself, often grew heated.

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with his bare hands, but I know an Indian trick or two myself.

And so, dear reader, I roasted pork tenderloin for my brother Wheeler to grab a flashlight and stroll into the creek and see if there were any bass within gapping (pear fishing) range.

I saw a couple, but didn't spear any.

You never know when a Game Warden is waiting for you, I thought to myself leaving the woods and streams with him.

My cell phone got wet in the process (when I slipped the woods and completely under the water) and didn't work for about 30 hours.

It didn't bother me though.

I was seeking an escape world from an advanced technology of only for a little while.

And now I learn to return to the woods again. I broke them open and I'm not sure how much of the technology of only for a little while.

Events at Blue Licks

Blue Licks Farmer's Market EVERY FRIDAY from 4 to 6 p.m.

Support local farmers and buy your fresh vegetables, herbs, eggs, corned beef, jams, jellies, etc. at the park every Friday throughout the summer and the fall from 4pm-6pm. Use plastic, cloth, paper, and a wide variety of other local items are available for purchase from farmers in Robertson, Nicholas, & Fleming Counties. Everything sold on the market is produced and made locally.

18th Century Shoe Making Sep. 30  
Visitors will learn 18th century methods of soap making and will have the opportunity to assist with the process. Join our Museum staff outside for the Pioneer Museum of 2pm in Robertson, Nicholas, & Fleming Counties. Everything sold on the market is produced and made locally.

Overnight Canoe Trip Sep. 12-13  
This trip is an all-inclusive 23-mile excursion on the Sleeping Bear. Park will supply canoe, tent, sleeping bags, bad rolls, snacks, evening meal, and breakfast for \$197 per person. You will cover 14 miles on the river the first day and will return the following day to park by 1:00 pm. Space is limited. Contact Paul Tierney, Park Naturalist, for a reservation and additional information. Contact Paul Tierney, 800-443-7000 or 859-289-1507.

20th Annual Robertson County Farm Bureau Car Show Sep. 20  
This is a well-established event with music provided by a DJ and food vendors. Top 60 scores with prizes awarded at the end of the day. Contact Keith or Joanne Ellis @ 606-724-2247 for more info. The motion about the car show.

Join our musicians from 6pm-8pm for a relaxed evening of fun, friends, and music. You never know who will show up! This is an informal and unstructured event. It is open to all musicians and to the general public. There is no cost to attend this event. Come early and enjoy a meal at Hidden Waters Restaurant. See you there the last Monday of the month about the car show.

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OBITUARIES

Delia Burgess Becraft 88, of Sharpsburg passed away on Monday, Sept. 7, 2009 at Johnson Mathers Health Care in Carlisle. Mrs. Becraft was born Dec. 12, 1920 in Meane to the late Henry and Ollie Pergrum. She was also a homemaker and a member of the East Union Christian Church (Marvin) Becraft of Montrose, Colorado; brother and sister-in-law John and Paula Straw of Bayfield, Colorado; nieces and nephews Dr. Amy Straw McKee, Eric McKee, Gregory Straw, Lauri Straw Aubert, Jessica Straw, and Susan Straw, and great-nephew Logan McKee.

Friends and family are invited to share in the celebration of Michael's life at a visitation on Friday, Sep. 11, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. at the Chambers & Grubbs Funeral Home, 11382 Madison Pike, in Independence (859-356-2673) followed by a memorial service at 11:00 a.m. and a burial service at the Independence Cemetery immediately thereafter. Flowers are gratefully declined. If friends so desire, donations may be made in Michael's memory to an appropriate cancer charity.

Michael Straw, 67, passed away peacefully on Sunday, Sep. 6, 2009 at his home in Independence in the presence of his wife Bill Straw and Lois Gerard of Ogish Harbor, Washington; brother and sister-in-law John and Paula Straw of Montrose, Colorado; brother and sister-in-law John and Paula Straw of Bayfield, Colorado; nieces and nephews Dr. Amy Straw McKee, Eric McKee, Gregory Straw, Lauri Straw Aubert, Jessica Straw, and Susan Straw, and great-nephew Logan McKee.

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Steve's Report

Everybody Loves a Buffet

Now that September is here and the growing season has come to an end, I owe everyone an update on our "not a garden."

As you might recall, we had decided not to plant much "of a garden," this year, but to ease the time to work the soil, building it with grass clippings and compost and digging out some of the rocks that seem to grow so well here in Nicholas County.

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with one when you can have ten," kind of a guy. That's how we ended up with 20 hills of unidentified melon plants.

A couple of weeks later, the vines started running and the small fruits began appearing at the base of the golden blossoms. The tell-tale lines let us know they had to be cantaloupes.

Late August rolled around and we had about 40-50 good-sized melons. The problem was, I had never grown cantaloupe before and had no idea how to tell if they were ripe. In the store, it's easier. They have a hollow sound to them and when you sniff the end, they smell like cantaloupe. But when they're still on the

vine, it's a little harder. "Waiting for the outside to lose all the green didn't work. For two of the melons, we waited so long that the rinds began to split open. Those were a little overripe, but the rest of them were just what we needed for a little too firm still. We had to leave them on the kitchen counter for about a week to let them ripen a little longer and soften up a bit.

I didn't think