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I'll always be a momma's boy

It doesn't matter how old you are, mom will always be mom, watching out for your best interest and making sure you don't stray from the straight and narrow.

Sunday I celebrated Mother's Day by taking my mother to dinner and then planting flowers for her in the sweltering heat while still dressed in my church clothes. Nothing says I love you mom like sweating up your Sunday-go-to-meeting clothes.

I was reminded, with mom standing behind me pointing out where the flowers were to be planted, that you're never too old for your mom's advice. A perfect case in point was just over three years ago during a trip to Daytona Beach, Fla. I took mom, along with my two sons and another relative, as we accompanied a bunch of my friends to a condo there. Mom hadn't been to Florida in 60

years so I figured, being the good son that I am, that I would take her along. What could go wrong?

Now, let's keep in mind, at the time of this trip, I was 50 years old and mom was, let's say, somewhere in her 80s. Many of my classmates from the class of '83 already have grandkids so, while 50 isn't ancient, it also isn't young either.

Okay, let me start with a confession, so feel free to judge if you must. Being that we were at the beach and it was July and very hot, I decided to buy a six-pack of Land Shark beer. I figured it'd be relaxing to sit out by the beach at night with a cold one and watch the surf come in. So, I bought it and put it in a small cooler which I placed in the back of the fridge

in our condo, hidden behind the condiments and stuff like that. I know. It sounds like I was a teen-ager or something but I didn't want to upset the appcart. Well, it got upset anyway.

The following day I'm walking the beach with my buddies when I get a call on my cellphone. It's my oldest son Jack who, at that time, was 17. He could barely contain himself, laughing along with his uncle, who was 18 at the time.

"You're in trouble," Jack hissed over the phone, his uncle cackling in the background.

"What?" I asked innocently. "Granny found the beer," he announced, overjoyed that it was me in trouble for once instead of him.



THAT NEW GUY
by Duane Sherrill

I gulped. Sure, I was 50 but hey, it was mom and she had busted me with beer.

With a sense of dread I returned to the condo and stepped inside the dark room. In one corner, partly hidden in the shadows sat my mother, looking more like the Godfather than mom.

"How long have you been an alcoholic?" she pointedly asked.

"It was a six-pack," I argued.

"That's where it starts," she replied. "One six-pack, then a case and then you're a stumbling drunk on Wild Turkey. Get rid of it."

"But," I babbled before dropping my head and doing as I was told.

That's right. I'm in my fifties but I'll always be a momma's boy. Sorry Land Shark.

Contact Duane Sherrill at news@smithvillereview.com

Graduation day

The time of the year has arrived when seniors look forward to Graduation Day from college as well as high school. Many years of hard work and study result in a well-deserved diploma and a sense of accomplishment. But the end of one phase of life turns into the beginning of a new phase of life, with a new set of goals to be accomplished. Faithful attention and dedication to learning and preparation open the way to many brand new opportunities.

What is true in the area of education is also true in the area of faith in the Lord. Just as a formal education begins in a preschool or kindergarten classroom, the journey of faith begins with a formal commitment to God and to His kingdom. Just like students put their trust in a classroom teacher, just so followers of God put their trust in the Almighty God of the Universe, and become students of the Master, Jesus the Son of God.

Teachers not only pass on knowledge to their students, but they also serve as role models to their students. Not only was Jesus the best teacher of all times, but He also served as the best role model of all times. Jesus was, and is, an expert in the Word of God and in the ways of the Lord. He knows all things, and He has the ability to lead us into all truth through His Holy Spirit,

who lives within us as believers. Earthly teachers come and go, but Jesus lives on through His Holy Spirit living within us. When Jesus left this earth, He sent His Holy Spirit to take His place and to not only teach us everything that Jesus taught, but also to remind us of those teachings.

It has been said many times that learning is a lifetime experience, and the same is true of our journey of faith with the Lord. We continue to learn the ways of the Lord until the very end of our lives here on this earth. But just like a high school or college diploma ends one phase of our lives, and leads us to a new phase of our lives, just so the end of our lives on this earth leads us to the beginning of a new life beyond the grave. Our journey of faith on earth comes to an end, but we then begin a new life and a totally new existence. This is our SPIRITUAL GRADUATION DAY, but instead of walking across a stage to receive a diploma, we walk through the gates of heaven to receive our eternal inheritance, and a whole new set of opportunities.

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GUEST EDITORIAL
by Larry R. Steffee

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR TO THE POLICY

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Selfies for posterity

I've been traveling for the past few weeks, trying to cross a few things off my bucket list. Things like "find the Fountain of Youth," "find a new imaginary friend," "reconcile with family (but not Bob)," "visit a bunch of famous places that are so packed with tourists that all you see is other tourists."

I've learned that people don't travel now to see famous attractions or to learn more about them. No, the reason they pack four oversized bags, buy a plane ticket and take a taxi to a Wonder of the World is for the sole purpose of taking pictures of themselves in front of it.

And there's an entire process to it. First, you must position yourself looking away from the attraction, then you hold your phone arm out as far as it will go, knocking out anyone walking nearby. Then you snap your selfie and walk away. No, just kidding. You then look at the picture you just took, play with your hair, consider the angle and the lighting and do it again. Wait, somebody walked behind you; let's try that again. Now let's try it again with a friend. Or two. Then you send the picture to your friend who was standing right next to you.

Sure, tourists have taken pictures ever since the portable camera came along, but taking pictures today is a much, much different experience. And, it seems there's a much different motive behind it. There's a feeling out there now that the whole point of doing anything is to take a picture of it, to record it. "This is me at my birthday party at a restaurant" is now "This is me

getting my morning coffee at the drive-thru," followed by a vulgar emoticon. Thanks so much for sharing.

If you are just taking a selfie to prove you were there, what does that say about your friends? If they're not going to take your word for it, maybe you should be looking for new ones. Some think they're taking it for the memories. Do you really think you're going to forget that you flew to France, got from the airport to your hotel, walked to the Eiffel Tower and even stood in line to go to the top? If you did all that, I bet you can remember how hot or cold it was, how long or short the line was, all the different languages that you heard, all the street food cooking around you, the pesky scammers who ask you where the Eiffel Tower is -- and when you tell them they're standing under it, they are so grateful that they have a real leather coat to sell for just "\$20 U.S.," which is the European version of "it fell off the truck."

I think we're lucky the camera phone wasn't invented thousands of years ago. Yes, it'd be nice to have documentary photos of historic events, but if we took them with today's mindset, we'd have to look at the bizarre spectacle of Brutus' smiling face while his friends finish off Caesar in the background.

You'd be able to see everything BUT the really interesting stuff.

"Can you see that little speck behind me? That's Jesus giving the Sermon on the Mount. Doesn't my hair look good? I braided it that very morning!"

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VILLAGE IDIOT
by Jim Mullen