Editorial

Fall is my favorite time of the year. What's yours?

Impressions

David Maxwell

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When it comes to the seasons of the year, which is your favorite? I suppose the definition of seasons really depends on where you live because they can differ from one place to another. I'm really referring to the four different seasons that we are used to in the southern parts of the United States. When you think of Spring, Summer, Fall, and Winter, which one stands out as your favorite time of year? I can't help but think of Fall - as long as there are not any major hurricane threats - as being the best time of the year for me for a number of reasons.

After a long hot Summer with warm temperatures and little rain in most cases, the temperatures begin to cool and the vegetation all around us begins to undergo a change. This change is what makes the leaves on the trees change color, providing us with amazing picture opportunities of the brilliant array of colors that the dying leaves have taken on. There couldn't be a better scene, especially after the year we have all had so far, than the one you get from rolling hills covered with trees with brightly colored leaves. The smells from the harvesting of crops, the changing colors and smells of forest vegetation, and the sounds of falling leaves and whipping winds all combine to provide, at least for me, the feeling of home and comfort.

One of the main reasons that the Fall season stands out to me is because of the exciting opportunities for outdoor activity that exist during this time of year. Fall means that football season has arrived and all the good things that come with it are here. And thanks to the age of technology, even if you can't get to a stadium because of COVID-19, there is a game on TV almost every night of the week, and if there isn't, you can do what I do and playback the one you watched last weekend.

With the changing of the temperatures in the Fall from warm to cool comes the desire to cook tasty meals for your family out on the grill - another reason the Fall season is so great - because all of the meals that you love to cook on cool days now sound so much better because of the changing weather outside. Meals just seem to taste better when you can still smell the charcoal in the air and your nose is red from spending time outside.

With all of the beautiful colors and scenery comes the perfect picture taking opportunities for those who love the art of photography. There are numerous possibilities and my favorite is to ride down and take pictures of just about any road side in southwest Georgia - enhanced by the breath taking colors that are produced during this time of year by the golden rod, black and brown-eyed susans and that purple spire stuff.

The numerous reasons mentioned, such as football, the brilliant colors, the wonderful smells, and the excellent outdoor opportunities, are just a few reasons why I prefer the Fall season over the others. It is during this time that everything outside seems to come to life, even though, in reality, the opposite of coming alive is occurring. Your favorite may be different, which is perfectly fine. In the end it comes down to personal preference and what makes you happy.

And what makes me happy is walking outside early in the morning and feeling that Fall has arrived and knowing that my absolutely favorite time of year, Christmas, is right around the corner.

On the shortest day of this year, Tuesday, September 22, the Autumnal Equinox will officially arrive. Make plans to have your happiest Fall season yet.

As a tribute to the much anticipated arrival of all things cooler, here's one of my favorite poems about my most favorite season . . .

Comments and Impressions are welcomed and requested at david@donalsonvillenews.com

Autumn, aka Fall

By John Clare

The thistledown's flying, though the winds are all still,
On the green grass now lying, now mounting the hill,
The spring from the fountain now boils like a pot;
Through stones past the counting it bubbles red-hot.

The ground parched and cracked is like overbaked bread,
The greensward all wracked is, bents dried up and dead.
The fallow fields glitter like water indeed,
And gossamers twitter, flung from weed unto weed.

Hill-tops like hot iron glitter bright in the sun,
And the rivers we're eying burn to gold as they run;
Burning hot is the ground, liquid gold is the air;
Whoever looks round sees Eternity there.

Sunrise. Sunset.

Ponderings

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Each evening for the past week I have patiently waited for the moon to rise in the east. In that direction there is over a mile of open water, providing me with a clear, unobstructed view of the moon's ascent.

The breeze each evening provided a welcome respite from the high temperatures of early September, but also allowed the moon's light on the lake to shimmer like a million twinkling lights all in the direction of where I was sitting.

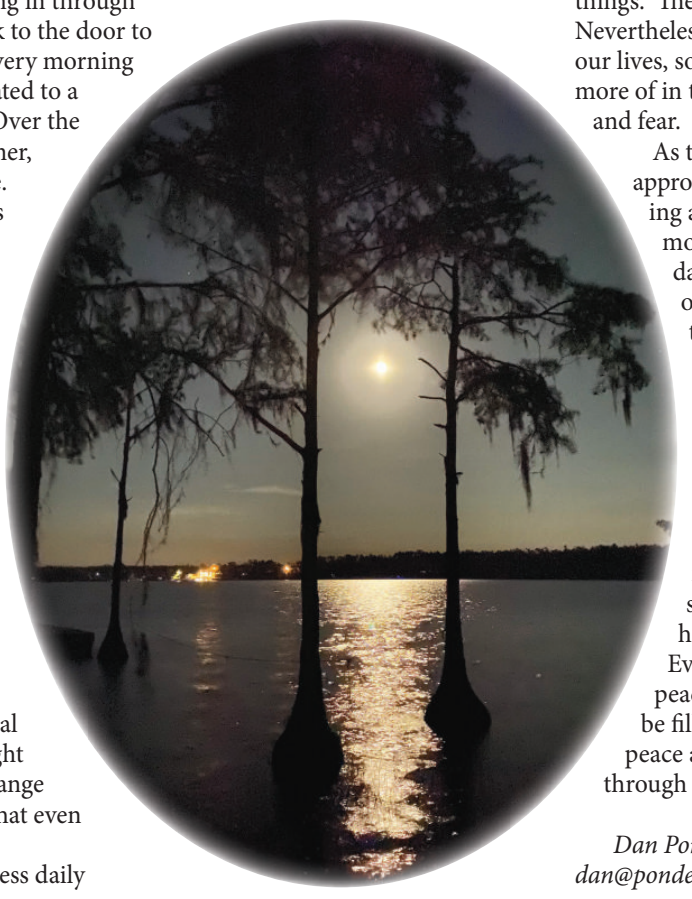
This has been my Summer of relaxation, respite, and reflection. I am entering my tenth week at Compass Lake, something I have not had the opportunity to do since my early teen years. In the many years since then, we would be fully engaged in peanut season by Labor Day. Later in life, we would be attending college football games. One of the side benefits of the pandemic has been the opportunity to slow down, whether I was ready or not, enjoying the lake on the cusp of Fall.

Each morning, my body clock wakens me at almost the same time. There is usually a faint sliver of light coming in through the curtains. I walk to the door to the upstairs deck every morning and am usually treated to a breaking sunrise. Over the course of the Summer, the sunrises change. The sun now comes up on a different part of the horizon than it did in June.

Each afternoon, we usually take a slow cruise around the lake. This allows us to see the sunset from across the other side of the lake. Each day is a different painting, with a variety of colors and strokes across the sky. My personal favorite are the bright combinations of orange and blue, proving that even God loves Auburn.

It is in this endless daily routine dictated by the sun that frames my day. Sunrise. Sunset. The lyrics of the song from The Fiddler on the Roof capture my thinking about life at this moment in time for me. "Sunrise. Sunset. Sunrise. Sunset. Swiftly fly the years. One season follows another laden with happiness and tears."

I sit on the dock with my wife and mother, marveling at the same sun rise and fall as my great-grandparents did from this very lake a hundred years ago. The seasons have changed almost 66 times here in my own life. They have been laden with some tears and much happiness.



A few times each year, nature provides us with another show. A full moon on a lake is no comparison to observing it in a city. Some months, the moon is obscured by clouds and the show is lost. Other times of the year we are at home, as sitting on the dock in the Winter is not always as pleasant.

A few times a year, like this past week, we are treated to clear skies, a full moon, and a gentle breeze. It is like an encore performance following a magnificent play or concert. Just when you think it cannot get any better than the daily combination of the sunrise and sunset, the full moon rises in majesty above the lake. It is breathtaking in its stark beauty against the dark sky, the gleaming moonbeam pointing across the water towards every eye that seeks to behold the sight.

We are blessed every day with a sunrise and a sunset. We may not see it. We may be sleeping, or we may be busy with other things. The sky might be overcast. Nevertheless, it is a constant in our lives, something we could use more of in this time of great chaos and fear.

As the next full moon approaches, consider watching a sunrise, sunset and moon rise all in the same day. It will remind you of how small we are in this world yet can inspire you at the same time.

No matter what our troubles or concerns are today, there will be the blessing of a sunrise tomorrow. A wise man once said "Every sunrise holds more promise. Every sunset holds more peace." May your days be filled with promise and peace as we all swiftly move through these years.

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You'll flip for these types of words

The Grammar Guy

Curtis Honeycutt

If I started to tell you about something called "ambigram," you might think it's one of two things: either a new graham cracker that doubles as a sleep aid or a new social media platform for people who are can use both hands equally well. In fact, an ambigram is neither of those things. Let's figure out what it is!

Unlike a palindrome such as "racecar," where the letters are the same if the word is reversed, an ambigram is a word that can be read as the same word from different angles. Other names used for ambigrams include vertical palindromes, designatures and inversions. For today's lesson, I'd like to discuss my favorite type of ambigram, the "natural rotational" ambigram.

In order for this to make sense, let's start with an example. The word "dollop" (with a lowercase "d") is a great example. If you rotate the word "dollop" 180 degrees, it reads "dollop." That's cool! What are some other natural rotational ambigrams? As we'll soon see, this depends on the typeface you're using. But, you're smart enough to turn your head (or newspaper or computer monitor) around in order to make sense of these examples: pod, mow, swims, solos, passed, paled and seas. Pretty soon you'll be dizzy from flipping words around in search of ambigrams.

Do you want to turn some more words on their heads? A "symbiotogram" takes one word when written regularly and becomes a different word when turned at an angle. Again, today we'll turn the words 180 degrees, which is the most common way people encounter symbiotograms.

Let's share some examples. Take the word "wow": when you rotate it 180 degrees, it becomes "mom." That's a symbiotogram. Others include deal/leap, sail/lies, sled/pals, dooms/swoop and pies/said.

There are plenty of other types of word designs that form different words — whether they are held up to a mirror to reveal a different word or they are designed by calligraphers or graphic designers, who have more creative license to bend the letters. Pretty soon you'll start noticing these unique word designs in logos and in print and you'll feel like a bonafide word nerd. Either that, or you'll start to go cross-eyed as if you were staring at one of those magic eye posters from the '90s.

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