

Editorial



Burned biscuits do not have to be a deal breaker

I originally ran this column in June of 2016. Each June since I have rerun it to make the annual point that life isn't perfect, but it is so well worth living. Enjoy.

*Life is like an unsharpened pencil.
Without a point, its mark is less clear.*
- Erica Chan

We have all heard that life should be about the journey and not the preconceived destination. In our quest to make a better tomorrow out of the failures and successes of today, sometimes we need to step back and reassess the direction and the paths we take as we travel along that journey. If we did not realize it before, the events that have occurred so far this year have shown us that things do not always work out as planned, and often times, we fail and fall flat on our face in our attempt to keep moving forward. I know from past personal experiences that when we fall, and when we fail,



Impressions

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the important point is that we get up and don't give up. I have learned lessons and achieved some of my greatest accomplishments by failing – royally. Doing it wrong, failing, figuring out what happened and not doing it that way again was and is a learning process. The process of failing, recovering, correcting the mistakes and continuing forward can open previously locked doors. When things fall apart and do not go as planned, don't get discouraged, get inspired. Look at it as a challenge and not a setback. Because of the failure, you now know another way not to do something. Keep moving forward, and developing new, exciting and very uniquely your own ways to make lemonade out of the lemons of life.

Everything we do shapes a part of our tomorrow and sometimes it takes the process of cooking up quite a few bad recipes before we finally put it all together, mix everything up just right and serve the absolute best meal of our life. It's how we grow and mature in that process that will ultimately measure our worth, to God, to our fellow man and to ourselves.

The message of the following story puts everything I am saying into perspective, and I hope that I have become the type of person and role model, that someday, my grandchildren could write something similar about me.

When I was a kid, my Grandma liked to make breakfast food for dinner every now and then. And I remember one night in particular when she had made breakfast after a long, hard day. On that evening, she placed a plate of eggs, sausage and extremely burned biscuits in front of my Granddad. I remember waiting to see if anyone noticed!

Yet all my Granddad did was reach for his biscuit, reach for the syrup, smile at my Grandma and ask me how my day was at school. I don't remember what I told him that night, but I do remember watching him smear butter on and pour syrup over that ugly burned biscuit. He ate every bite of that thing and never made a face or uttered a word about it!

When I got up from the table that evening, I remember hearing my Grandma apologize to my Granddad for burning the biscuits. And I'll never forget what he said: "Honey, I love burned biscuits every now and then."

Later that night, I asked him if he really liked his biscuits burned. He wrapped me in his arms and said, "Your Grandma put in a hard day of work today and she's real tired. And besides – a little burned biscuit never hurt anyone!"

Life is full of imperfect things and imperfect people. I'm not the best at anything; I just want to be the best at trying to become the best me. But what I've learned over the years is that learning to accept faults, mine and those of others, and overcoming failures and accepting them as challenges, are essential qualities to living a life well.

Take the good, the bad, and the ugly parts of your life and keep moving forward. Burnt biscuits aren't a deal-breaker nor are any other of life's daily problems. Just think of them as opportunities to add some more syrup.

So, pass me a biscuit, and yes, the burned one will do just fine.

Comments and impressions are welcomed and requested at david@donalsonvilnews.com

Joyful, joyful

The rainbow was framed between two cypress trees as I walked out on the dock at Compass Lake. It was a bit unexpected since it had not rained, but in the distance, I could see the rain cloud across the lake that was refracting the light.

Two days later, Mary Lou and I were in church when the minister read the scripture for the day. It was the story of Noah, the Ark and the flood and God's covenant with mankind. In Genesis 9:16, God says "Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and all living creatures of every kind on the earth."

I still think of that story from my earliest days in church every time I see a rainbow. God is faithful to us. He remembers us. He never forgets His promise.

This past Sunday was the first Sunday that the entire choir had been able to perform in the 11:00 service at our church. There was finally no masks and no social distancing unless you chose to do so.

The service began with "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desire", one of my favorite pieces of music for the organ. It was written by Johann Sebastian Bach, who once said that any music that was not written for the glory of God was just noise. This piece was played at our wedding and for most of the 35 years I played the organ at the First Presbyterian Church in Donalsonville, I played this music on the Sunday closest to our anniversary date.

The first hymn was "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee". It is one of our favorite hymns and was particularly meaningful this past Sunday as everyone present seemed to truly be embracing the fact that the church had survived the challenges



Ponderings

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of the pandemic. God remembers us and loves us.

The full choir, the mighty organ, and the full-throated voices of hundreds in attendance joined together to make the music soar and the lyrics touch everyone present. It brought chills to my spine, and I realized this was about to be a special service.

The choir did an assortment of special music pieces, all of which showcased their talent and released the frustration they must have all experienced by not being able to collectively bring a joyful noise for more than a year. They were inspiring and inspired.

"Amazing Grace" was played with the organ, a bagpipe and a drum, a magical combination. This arrangement, combined with the voices of the choir, was the most special of the special music. The choir was speaking to me, and to all those who have heard those words over their lifetime.

Each stanza tugged at your heart in a different way. You could

feel the Holy Spirit fill the room and embrace those who have been longing for a touch, a hug, a smile, and all the other things that make the church a family in the truest sense of the word.

As the song came to its dramatic climax, I glanced around the room. Any woman who had a tissue in her purse was dabbing her eyes. The men around me were more discreet as they touched the corner of their eyes to wipe the tear away. The sniffles came from every direction, from every age, from every gender, from every soul that has been hungry for the ability to worship fully and openly.

Music often opens the heart and prepares the mind for worship, putting you in a place where you can feel the presence of the Holy Spirit and your heart is more receptive to God's message. Music truly enhanced the worship at Auburn United Methodist Church this past Sunday.

My weekend started with a random rainbow over a lake. It was filled with some of my favorite music that opened my heart. It finished with a good pastoral message about rainbows and promises. Coincidence? I think not; at least, not for me.

More importantly, Sunday was an affirmation to me that God keeps His covenant with His people. His love is steadfast and endures forever, even during pandemics. In the aftermath of the worst year of our lives, Sunday was a reminder to me that God remembers us, all of us. He always will.

Sometime a song can say it all. Joyful, Joyful, indeed.

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Pardon my harsh letters

My wife and I are in a stage of parenting where we can't get away with spelling words aloud around the kids anymore. Our son is a great reader and can sniff out a secret-parent-spelling code faster than you can spell i-c-e-c-r-e-a-m.

Because of this, we use a language where we spell out words, except that consonants are pronounced with their letter plus the sound "ong" at the end of them, while vowels are just pronounced normally. So, my name would be "Cong-u-rong-tong-i-song." The kids will never catch o-nong.

Letters are powerful. In fact, in polite society, many people are still too shy to say delicate or harsh words, opting instead to use initials. Have you ever heard someone's boss described as a "real S.O.B.?" Believe me, "S.O.B." doesn't stand for "super outstanding boss."

When we use initialisms like this as a substitute for harsh or bad words, it's called a "eusystolism" (pronounced yoo-SIST-o-lism). A eusystolism is the offspring of an initialism and a euphemism.

Eusystolisms have made it into popular culture. Kenya Barris, creator



The Grammar Guy

Curtis Honeycutt

of the ABC sitcom "Black-ish," created and stars in a Netflix sitcom called "#blackAF." Let's just say the "AF" doesn't stand for "Abercrombie and Fitch." In fact, people avoid uttering this particular profanity by merely saying, "Oh F!"

Mr. T portrayed the memorable character Bosco Albert "B.A." Baracus in the 1980s action-adventure show "The A-Team." Although "B.A." were the initials of the character's first and

middle name, the "B.A." supposedly stood for "bad attitude." I agree that the "B" stood for "bad," but my opinion is that the "A" stood for something you couldn't say on TV in the '80s. Perhaps it's still unacceptable in a newspaper in 2021, so I'll just say the "A" is the animal that talked to Balaam in the biblical book of Numbers chapter 22.

Eusystolisms serve our texting culture well. The briefer the better, right? Chat room culture of the late '90s gave us LOL, which means "laughing out loud." Today, if someone texts "LMAO," they're sending you a eusystolism stating that they are laughing their Balaam's animal off. While we're at it — no — WTF does not stand for "why the face?" Instead, it's a eusystolism for "what the (fill-in-the-blank)." Using these initialisms gets around the loophole of George Carlin's "Seven Words You Can Never Say on Television." Pardon the harsh letters, but now you know all about eusystolisms.

—Curtis Honeycutt is a syndicated humor columnist. He is the author of *Good Grammar is the Life of the Party: Tips for a Wildly Successful Life*. Find more at curtishoneycutt.com.

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100 WAYS TO
CELEBRATE OUR
Centennial!

The Centennial celebration has been rescheduled for the Fall of 2021. The dates of planning and organizational meetings for the scheduled events will be announced in the near future. Watch this space for details!

Join the planning committee
for Seminole County's rescheduled
2021 Centennial celebration.
Call the Donalsonville-Seminole County
Chamber of Commerce at
229-524-2588 and volunteer.

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