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Voices from your Valley

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"Diary of an Unemployed Housewife" by Merri Johnson is taking a break this month. Actually, Merri is in the middle of getting settled into her new home and starting a new part-time job. She plans to be back in June.



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The Nemaha County Flower and Garden Show

The show will be held Thursday, May 22, 2008 at the 4-H Building in Auburn. The entire day will be full of opportunities to enjoy beautiful plants, flowers and garden accessories at the Flower Show, as well as the displays of local businesses. Anyone in the area is invited to enter his or her garden flowers, houseplants or arrangements in the Flower Show.

Wednesday evening, May 21, horticulture and arrangement entries may be made from 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. at the 4-H Building and entries will continue from 8:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. on Thursday morning, May 22nd. Everyone in Southeast Nebraska is eligible to participate and enter exhibits in the Horticulture, Houseplant or Arrangement Divisions. Judging will begin at 8:30a.m. using the Danish System in which an exhibit is scored as to its own merits based on a standard and not in competition with each other.

Local businesses have been asked to participate by providing a display of their merchandise that would interest gardeners. The vendors will be set up in the 4-H Building at 11:00 a.m. until the close of the show and will be available to the public to purchase items on display. Outstanding plants will be available to purchase that day.

A Salad/Sandwich Luncheon will be available to the public for \$6.00 and will be furnished by the Auburn Christian Church Youth Group as a fund-raiser for their group. They will serve from 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. (for those wishing to catch the Flower and Garden Show over their lunch that day), in the 4-H Building with tickets available at the door. At 12:00 p.m. Lauritzen Gardens of Omaha will give a PowerPoint presentation on their Botanical Gardens. The program will consist of taking a walk through the beautiful gardens through the PowerPoint presentation. Following the program, door prizes donated by participating businesses will be drawn and awards from the Flower Show will be announced. A special award, *The Outstanding Exhibit for 2008*, will be awarded by the Auburn Garden Club at the conclusion of the awards for the outstanding exhibit of the Flower Show.

The Flower and Garden Show will remain open to the public for viewing and close at 3:30 p.m. when entries are released. For a schedule of events for the day or to receive a list of rules and entries for the Flower Show, stop by the UNL Extension Office-Nemaha County in the lower level of the courthouse in Auburn, visit one of the participating businesses or contact Carin Gerdes, at 402.274.5740.

Your
**COUNTRY
NEIGHBOR**
Voices from the Valley of the Nemaha
Published by Stephen Hassler

Writers this month

Devon Adams	Karen Ott
Frieda Burston	Joe Smith
Vicki Harger	Josh Whisler

Thank You

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VISIT

Dramatic Expressions Photography

on the 'web'

by *Your Country Neighbor* Photographer,
Stephen Hassler

www.yourcountryneighbor.com/photoblog.htm

Pawnee City High School Art Awards

(photos submitted by Deb Kubik)

Nebraska State Visual Arts Competition juried winners from Pawnee City Public Schools - These works were in the top 25% of the 2000 entries from across the state of Nebraska. It took 25 local art professionals to jury the works over a five-day time period.



Front row: senior Skylar Leatherman – bronze medal – digital photography; junior Mackenzie Spitsner – bronze medal – chalk pastel
back row – sophomore Christian Farwell – silver medal – digital photography and sophomore Rachel Valenziano – silver medal – digital photography & gold medal – sculpture.



Rachel receiving her silver medal at the Nebraska Visual Arts Ceremony in Omaha with a picture of the digital photo called "Quenching Christian".



Christian receiving his silver medal at the Nebraska Visual Arts Ceremony in Omaha with the digital photo called "Nicole at the Beach".

Country Scenes



This is certainly not like my father's operation. His tractor was an F-20.



Great Blue Herons can be seen this time of year around ponds and river banks "fishing" for frogs.



End of the Parade...looking East down Central Avenue, Nebraska City.

PENCIL PORTRAITS

BY DEVON ADAMS



Artist Devon Adams will do a pencil portrait of *children, adults, graduation, wedding, pets, or wildlife.*

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MAKING LISTS

by Devon Adams

How long is your list?
Do you make lists every day,
and cross things off
when they're done?
What come first,
the tasks you hate,
or those you like?
Do you procrastinate,
hoping that scary items
will disappear if you just
ignore them long enough?
Does that ever happen?
If you do a frightening task,
have you noticed the relief
that floods your heart
and gives you temporary peace?
That relaxation sets the stage
for your mind to ponder blessings
that you can't see
when you're blinded by worry.
So, save your energy and time
by being brave today,
and learn to savor what you have
before you ask for more.

Editor's note:

You can find poetry previously published by *Your Country Neighbor* online. Just click on "publications" at:

www.yourcountryneighbor.com


TONIC

by Devon Adams

There is a natural plant
that grows like weeds
and is potent fresh or dried.
It is winter hardy, staying green
with even a small snow blanket
to insulate against the cold.
It begins to grow at the slightest hint
of sunshine, even in January.
Unfortunately, it fails the test
to be included in the lists
of illegal drugs that send
humans to other planets
without NASA's help.
However, it does benefit
a certain category of creature
who shares this planet
with less than perfect humans.
The lives of cats are enhanced
to a limitless degree if they
have access to a substance
known as catnip, a pretty plant
with square stalks and ruffled leaves
that smells like the essence
of concentrated mint mouthwash.
This drug of cat choice
can turn a sedate and haughty feline
into a wild-eyed clown
on a three-day drunk.
They sniff it, eat it, roll on it,
throw it up now and then,
and are likely to carry with them
little felt mousies stuffed with dried leaves.
Gaze into the dilated pupils
of your drug dependent friend
and you'll see how high
a high can be.

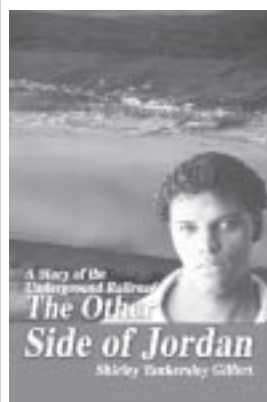
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Available from the Book Clinic at Nebraska City, on line at Barnes and Noble.com and Amazon.com., or call 1-800-Authors. Author contact (402)269-3550 or sg34245@windstream.net

When I Was Young

by Joe Smith

Way back there about sixty years ago (how can a fellow remember that far back?), I guess we were having fun and being fascinated by the old-timers of that time. The things that the old cowboys and old ranchers did would scare the pants off us now. One of those fellows was named Bill Fahrlander, if I spelled it right. He had a boy just about my age whose name was Joe, just like mine. I went to school with him when he got to high school. But the story is about his dad, Bill.

Bill had a small ranch, maybe 20 sections northeast of Roswell, New Mexico. His ranch was just north of my granddads place. My great uncle's place was just to the south of my granddad's place. They all homesteaded in the early 1900 era. (Remember, a section has 640 acres in it.) Bill was a real character. He loved to hunt arrow heads and anything to do with the Indians that used to live there. He had table after table of artifacts including a lot of stones that the Indians used to grind corn on. He had mules and we borrowed them to pull a wagon to get wood with. His mules were each about as much of a character as he was. Bill collected rattlesnake rattles. He would kill the snake by catching it by the tail and popping its head off like a bull whip. He had many boxes of them. After you kill the snake you cut off the rattles with your pocket knife, the same one you used to cut a piece of jerky. Of course he wiped it on his pants leg to get the snake blood off. Snake didn't bleed much any way.

Some of his ranch was on the breaks of the Pecos River. The breaks were where the land started falling from the high plains down to the river some 10 miles away. It was rough and not good pasture land. But it was full of Indian artifacts and that fit Bill to a 'T'. Of course, that is where most of the snakes were also. One time bill saw a rattler go in a rats nest and he reached in to get it and the snake bit him on the hand. Bill spent some time in the hospital over that boo-boo. Rattle snakes are real poisonous. Bill just whacked his hand open with his good pocket knife and proceeded to suck the poison out and then spit it out. If he hadn't he might not have made it to Roswell an hour away. His poor old hand really swelled up. That impressed me to no end. Don't stick your hand in a hole after a snake. Oh, to be young again.

We helped Bill brand his calves and work his cows. All the neighbors went together and helped each other. We had a propane burner for the branding irons and enough help that it didn't take all that long. All the ranchers in the neighborhood would help each other, A little of that has carried up here also. The way it used to be.

My great uncle and I went over to Bill's one day to borrow a team of mules to gather wood down on the breaks. That night they disappeared. We trailed them back to Bills place. They crawled under the fence while yoked together and went home. We had to go over to Bill's place the next morning and get them again. But I still remember those days and all the different people that lived and worked there. Those "younger days" stuck with me, and I value what I learned from that time in my life. I have killed a lot of rattlesnakes, but never by popping their heads off. Joe Smith

Editor's note: *You can read previous articles by Joe Smith online in Your Country Neighbor archives; just click on "publications" at: www.yourcountryneighbor.com*

"My Life & Times as Harve Bodine"

by Joe Smith

If you like the stories I write, you would love this story. Harve Bodine was in the Confederate Army, riding for the Quantrell Raiders. He didn't like anything that guy was doing so he and another fellow left before the end of the war and went out West. It seems he turned lawyer.

The story has a lot of human feeling in it, honest emotions, true love (sorry, no hot sex scenes). The story takes place in an area I am somewhat familiar with. Other parts came from Harve himself. I had no idea where it was going. I just wrote it down like Harve told me to. Whether it actually happened or not is for you to decide. Joe Smith.



Available at
The Book Clinic
in Nebraska City
Or call Joe Smith at
402-868-6795

WINDOW ON FIFTH STREET

by Stephen Hassler

(This article is reprinted from May, 2002)

Dear Mom,

This past winter I watched the snow blowing by my window on Fifth Street. I watched with a coffee mug in my hand and a warm blaze in the fireplace. No cows to milk anymore nor calves to feed. I live in town now and I can walk to the grocery store.

Not that I don't miss the farm! Someday I'll have a place in the country big enough for a garden with sweet corn and cantaloupe, plus a few acres for alfalfa. I really miss the fragrance of alfalfa blooming in June, and I miss our walks through the fields on summer days.

A lot has happened since we last talked. I raised some children, like you did, and I married above myself, like Dad did. And not too long ago I returned home to Nebraska. You lived here most of your life, but I wanted to try different things. I lived in Colorado, Arizona, Texas, New Jersey, and of course, Iowa and Nebraska. And now I'm back. Can you believe that I missed Nebraska blizzards? It took me a long time to realize that I love them.

And guess what? I published a magazine! I'm very excited about it and I know you would be proud. I am fortunate that I know so many talented people who help and support me. They help make my publication possible, but they also make it special.

Happy Mother's Day, Mom. I wish we could talk again.

Love, your son.

P.S. to all my country neighbors:

When we were small children, we followed our parents everywhere. When we were teenagers we tried to get away from them. As young adults we were too busy for them. As we become older we want to know them better and be closer to them. Don't be concerned as to how to go about it. Just take your parent to lunch or coffee or go camping or shopping, and let the magic happen.

Give your Mom a rose, and don't wait for Mother's Day.



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The Yellow Magnolia in Brownville was beginning to bloom April 25th.



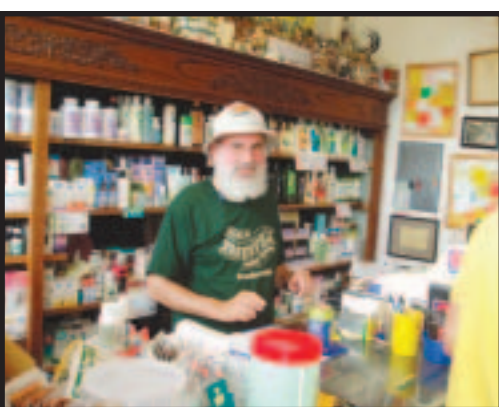
I snapped this of the "Little Red Schoolhouse" and Alice's Windmill



It seems to me we've had to wait too long a time to see tulips again.



Picturesque pond, with a Blue Heron above the water to the right of the tree.



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Whisler's Hunting & Fishing Report



by Josh Whisler
(Photo provided by Author)

Fishing:

The Missouri River has stabilized at a pretty high level (most of the rock dikes are just covered with water) and looks like it's time to get down to some Spring fishing. I've seen a few boats out and it seems like more and more each weekend are shaking off the cabin fever. The sun is warm when you can get out of the cool Spring wind, which can be pretty healthy this time of year. Night crawlers and dough baits are still what they are hitting, with live bait just starting to come around. Small Channels are hitting for the most part and some fair size Blue Cats. Soon the water will warm up, opening up a whole gambit of fishing action.

Hunting:

2008 Spring Turkey Seasons are open and in full swing. The bird have been splitting up and gobbling. That means it's time to call one in. In past years the abundance of birds, namely the hens, have made it hard going on local turkey hunters. It's hard to call the tom off of all the live hens to come to your decoy. But patience usually prevails when more and more of the hens go to lay and set on their nests. This leaves the toms looking and with a little luck your decoy will welcome him in for a shot.

NEW for 2008 is that the hunter can obtain three Spring permits of any type (Bow & arrow or Shotgun) this year. All permits are still available online at www.outdoornebraska.org, by mail through the Lincoln office or over the counter at any Commission Permitting office.

2008 Spring Turkey Season Dates are:

Shotgun: April 12 – May 18th.


Archery: March 25th - May 18th.

The 2008 The Spring Turkey Season is here and it's time to get your permit. The groups of turkeys seen earlier are split up and wandering around. There is a lot gobbling going on and thats encouraging. The time is now if you want a Spring Tom. Remember I'm not an expert but I have my share of luck. I wonder if the experts are having any luck today? So until next time "Happy Hunting & Fishing."



This month's picture is of the US Coast Guard Bouey Barge setting the channel marker boueys for this year's barge traffic on the Missouri River.


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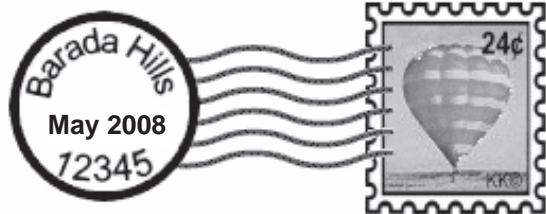
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It was a day we won't soon forget. A day that lives in infamy—the Day of the Balloon.

My father called the crew together in the early morning hours, directing us to a newly-planted cornfield at the far corner of the farm. Nearly everyone was there—the kids, grandkids, in-laws and siblings. Even Grandpa came along, to keep watch over his cornfield if nothing else.

Dad hauled out his tattered treasure... a huge gray-green bag that looked more like a bloated sow than a hot air balloon. It didn't have a riding basket, but that was a small matter to Father.

He made us help him as he dragged the huge balloon to a wood-stove that sat at the edge of the cornfield. We watched him build a blazing fire with cobs and kerosene. None of us questioned the method to this madness. The fact that our father had survived 58 years of this sort of thing seemed proof enough that he knew what he was doing.

Following Dad's instructions, the crew draped the mouth of the balloon over a teepee of ladders standing above the wood-stove. We stepped back and waited, our hands grasping the ropes tightly.

Nothing happened at first, then life surged through the balloon as it took a breath of hot air. The crew burst into cheers, laughing and clapping.

Our joy was short-lived.

Like a genie rising from a bottle, the balloon swelled to monstrous proportions in a matter of seconds. We gaped at it, amazed to see the pitiful balloon become a monster before our eyes. It tugged hard at the ropes, demanding freedom.

We hung on, gritting our teeth and digging our heels into the soft earth. But it was no use. The balloon only pulled harder.

"Hold on," Dad shouted. "HOLD ON!" His words ended in a clatter.

The hot air balloon wrenched free, taking the ladders along with it. No one but Dad had the courage to hold on to the errant monster. With ladders banging against him, Dad was pulled across the cornfield, his leaping gait growing longer and longer as the balloon picked up speed.

Both my father and the balloon were headed straight for the road and the power lines.

Closer and closer they came till the balloon was within a few yards of the lines, then at the last moment, Providence intervened. The winds shifted and the balloon veered southward. Across the field it went, pulling the hapless owner in its wake.

My father was shouting, but what he was saying was anyone's guess.

Everyone came to their senses at once and hurried to help. We managed to catch up with Dad and the balloon in the middle of the newly-planted cornfield. Scrambling for the ropes, we galloped about madly, colliding with Dad and with one another—doing more harm than good.

Out on the road, trucks slowed to a crawl. Farmers shook their heads as they passed by—lamenting the destruction of a perfectly good cornfield. But we were oblivious to it all.

"Hold it down!" Dad was shouting. "Get inside the balloon if you have to. Just hold it down!"

Fearfully, we did as we were told—crawling through the mouth of the monster and into its bowels. The balloon responded in wrath, mauling us mercilessly—tossing us from side to side like scraps of laundry in a dryer. My sister and the others collided with me in the intense heat, panting and gasping for air.

"I'm losing it!" my sister yelled, "I'm losing it! My bladder's going to bust!"

Indeed. In the course of time, our bladders emptied and so did our pockets. Wet and bruised, we somersaulted about in a hail of coins and combs and trinkets, tumbling end over end.

At last, Dad yelled from the mouth of the balloon. "I've got the thing tied to the truck now. You can come out!"

Warily, we scrambled our way to the entrance and stumbled outside. Relieved of our weight, the balloon immediately began to roll across the field once more, straining at the ropes. Reaching the full length of its tether, the balloon turned on us with a vengeance. Swinging around, it careened toward us, threatening to bury us alive.

We all scrambled out of the way—everyone but Grandpa. With the balloon in hot pursuit, our grandfather hobbled off as fast as he could, muttering to himself as he stumbled along the corn rows. "Heck," Grandpa was saying. "Oh heck."

The balloon chased him halfway across the field, breathing hot air down his neck, threatening to overwhelm him at any moment.

The crew watched helplessly until Father began to shout once more. "We've got to do something!" he hollered. "...Got to get this thing off the ground. The balloon is smashing the new corn."

Indeed. We hadn't noticed the mess we were making.

Dad was sure he could remedy the matter. "Somebody go and get me a bucket of coals from the wood-stove!" he said.

Someone ran and got it.

Dangling the bucket of coals from a long wire, Dad held it to the mouth of the balloon. Smoke billowed. Sparks flew. Flames shot skyward. Father was oblivious to the danger. His eyes gleamed as he followed the restless wanderings of his balloon.

Pushing the bucket deeper into the opening, Dad sent the balloon surging up and up. "More corncobs!" he shouted. "Get more corncobs!"

Mindlessly, we ran to do his bidding, adding cobs and kerosene till the flames leaped four feet in the air—dangerously near the fabric. The balloon soared higher, tugging at the ropes that bound it to the truck.

What happened next, I'm not certain—it all happened so fast. We heard a tremendous pop as a rope broke, and the balloon lunged forward, straining at the one remaining tether. The truck began to slough sideways, churning up the cornrows as it went—narrowly missing Grandpa.

We heard a yell and looked up to see someone soaring overhead. It was the son-in-law. The one who loves

flying. Although usually content to be airborne, he didn't seem happy about it today. The balloon had snarled his feet in ropes and was now toying with him—tumbling him through space—turning him one side up then the other, like a puppet on a string.

"Oh heck," said Grandpa. "Oh heck..."

The balloon at last grew weary of its puppetry, and somersaulted the young man to the ground before resuming its restless wanderings. The son-in-law lay on the ground, holding his battered head. "That's it!" he was mumbling into the dirt. "No more flying for me!"

Out on the road, a burly farmer got out of his truck and came toward us. "I'll be doggoned," said the farmer. "What in the world you doing...? Getting ready to go to the moon?"

Dad grinned. "We've got a tiger by the tail and we can't tame him!"

The farmer shoved back his hat. "You get a good strong wind and it'll carry this thing away—truck and all!" That sobered Dad up some. He quit grinning and started thinking.

"Tell you what..." said the farmer. "I'll help you wrestle it down if you want."

Dad thought about it another minute and decided to take the farmer up on his offer. He called the rest of the crew together and we all lit into the monster with a vengeance. But the balloon had plenty of fight left in it, foiling us at every turn—rising up and up whenever we thought we had it licked.

It was like trying to cram a genie back into a bottle.

I don't know how long we fought the thing, but at last it collapsed. The gray-green monster lay throbbing and writhing amid the cornrows. The crew slumped to the ground, too, panting.

"Well," Dad said, wiping his brow. "I don't know about you, but I've had about all the fun I can stand for one day!"

The crew lay back motionless, gazing at the sky. Silence enveloped the cornfield. For the first time, we heard the whisper of the katydid and the song of the lark. It seemed rather good to be alive.

Grandpa stood there with hands pocketed in his bib overalls, surveying the sorry state of his cornfield. He looked at it long and hard...then pushing back his hat, Grandfather summed everything up in one word.

"Heck," sighed Grandpa. "Oh heck."


www.VickiHarger.com

Editor's note: You can read previous articles by Vicki online in Your Country Neighbor archives; just click on "publications" at:

www.yourcountryneighbor.com

The Face

of Drought

A Farm Report from
Western Nebraska

by Karen Ott

On Wednesday thunderstorms piled up castles of clouds on the horizons but the sky above us remained clear...and maybe that was for the best as the storms were full of swirling tornadoes and damaging hail. This afternoon it looked like rain, it smelled like it, it felt like it. But instead, after a few promising sprinkles, the clouds turned ragged and transparent, like colorless, threadbare kitchen curtains which have suffered too many Friday wash-days and hot summer suns.

Will it ever rain again?

The Mitchell Irrigation District flushed their canal this week from the Wyoming State line at Henry to Gering (where the water empties back into the North Platte River), once that's accomplished they'll begin delivering water for a spring hay run. There's still no storage water though; once the other canals open their gates the Mitchell District will shut down.....unless there's a miracle rain/snow like last year's timely storm.

If that storm had come two days later the water which accrued in the Glendo dam wouldn't have belonged to the Mitchell District but to some other irrigation entity.

In the west we live and die by the letter of water law. Wyomingites are known to complain that because of Nebraska's lawyers they don't even own their own snow!

Most of the sugar beets have been planted in the valley; corn planting is just getting a good start. The beets went in a week late... for good reason. For the first time ever round-up ready seed was available...but just enough for one planting. If a damaging freeze comes along and kills the emerging seedlings there won't be enough of the new seed to replant. After last year's June freeze we're all gun-shy; to lose another crop would be devastating....especially when

you consider the cost of inputs.

And speaking of farm inputs.....

The tire shop received notice this week from one of our major distributors that Ag tires would be priced on the day of shipment...not before. It's all about supply and demand....and the fact that American tire manufactures have cut their ag tire production in favor of huge mining tires....which are exported to China. In return the United States imports cheap Chinese ag tires...which weather-check in 6 months and crack out in a year. (We put a set of imports on one of the farm's tractors....big mistake.) Throw escalating transportation costs into the mix and there's bound to be trouble.

The global economy....you gotta love it.

I've finally started my Spring yard work. The lawns are mowed, watered and fertilized and the flower beds cleaned. I sprayed the area around the machinery for weeds a couple of weeks ago and was surprised to find full grown grasshoppers already bouncing around, not babies mind you...big ones with

wings! I've never seen grasshoppers so early.

My mother, who any other year would be gardening alongside me, has yet to spend much time outside....and it's all because of a bird. Our grey doves, which until this spring sounded as if they were cooing "My Daddy's sick, my daddy's sick" now cry, "My son is dead, my son is dead."

Pray for rain, warm weather, and for us as we continue to grieve.

Karen

Editor's note:

You can read previous articles by Karen Ott online in Your Country Neighbor archives; just click on "publications" at: www.yourcountryneighbor.com

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I slept with a Muslim

by Frieda Burston

Well, maybe not exactly. Neither one of us did much sleeping. But not from kissing and hugging.

Her bed was across the room from mine, and every few hours someone would come in to take our vital signs, or to measure whether what dripped out of me equaled what had been dripped into me. She moaned and groaned every time she turned over—a freak freeway accident had cracked ribs and turned her face into a puddle of color. So we didn't get much sleeping done. Come daylight, we didn't get any sleeping done either. But we got a lot of talking done, and I found out how little World History I had really learned back in Missouri.

Me, I was coming out of a severe staphylococcus infection behind my ear, probably from my scratching it absentmindedly some day. I had my choice of taking antibiotic, which I always refuse because it side-effects me—or dying before either cancer or cardiac tabbed me. Wanna guess what I chose?

I told her God had saved her for some important purpose. She said no, her old Mercedes had saved her, and she was going to point this out to her son, who kept telling her to buy a new car.

I let her know that I had spent 20 years in Israel, so she could decide whether or not she wanted to know me, and she brightened up some. She was Turkish, she said, and had spent considerable vacation time in Israel. She had been an airline stewardess in Turkey, married an American pilot, moved to Los Angeles, raised a family, took a degree in fashion design, and had a wonderful life. Was I Jewish? she asked.

Yes, I said, and you? "I am Converso", she said with pride. "We keep the tradition."

Well, I knew what conversos were. I met some in San Diego years ago who were looking into their Jewish identity. But in Turkey? Queen Isabella of Spain financed Columbus' jaunt to America by tossing Jews into the torture chambers and confiscating their property. She preferred to have them convert to Catholicism and avoid the torture, but Jews preferred to take their chances with Jehovah, and they fled.

From Spain, Jews fled all over. North to France, south to Morocco, east to Italy and Greece—resident aliens everywhere, sojourners. They stayed Jewish. Then the Ottoman sultans offered full citizenship in Turkey, to any Jew who would come to Istanbul with his savings." So you traded your heritage for legal rights," I said. "Why to Allah and not to Jesus?" She twinkled back, "Allah doesn't eat pork either. We didn't have to change the cookbooks—"

"So where do you go to worship?" I asked. "What God do you pray to?"

"I am Turkish, so I am automatically Muslim," she said. "But that is only Religion. Religion is only politics and finances, it is not the soul. Everyone carries his own God in his own heart. God did not create Man, each man creates his own God according to his own nature. A good man creates a good God. An angry man creates an angry God. Hold a mirror to your soul. That is God. And you, what are you doing here? There is a cross above the door you entered."

I told her, "I didn't walk in—like you, I was carried in...." and then we dropped religion and she taught me geography and history for her part of the world. We spent four days looking through each other's eyes, and I came out feeling that I had touched on an unknown world, bright and interesting, but not one that I wanted to live in.

Sleeping with a converso was fun, though the setting wasn't. Dunno about a REAL Muslim. I suspect it might have been a little bit different..... Regards, Frieda



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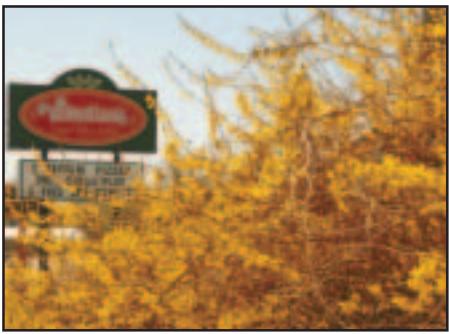
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