

Just Write

Gloucester County Library System

Logan Township Branch

Writers Group

Selections

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Freeholder Director, Robert M. Damminger | Freeholder Library Liaison, Lyman Barnes



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Today I

Yesterday I heard that our trailer family is pulling out this weekend. Today I found out that they have nowhere to store the trailer. They don't have anyone to take Magoo-a German Shepherd assistance dog. And what are they going to do with their two horses? Watching their lives over the past year has been an exercise in what no to do when you get a sizable settlement plus several thousand monthly. Don't spend money on a house fixing it up if you don't plan on living there. Don't move into a friend's garage with your two kids. Don't homeschool the kids but not homeschool the kids. Don't buy a new vehicle without a mechanic checking it out first. Yep, I've learned (or knew already) these things from watching them over the past year.

By Pam Champagne



Picture by Marian M. Fay

Thought Waves

(from the blog, "Tea and Reverie")

By Marian M. Fay

My thoughts roll in, my thoughts roll out
Like ocean waves they crash about!

Sometimes they're like a puff of smoke
Not much substance and easily broke
Sometimes like honey they coat
My mind and moods at varying intervals they float

My thoughts roll in, my thoughts roll out
Like ocean waves they crash about!

My thoughts can be violet or dark or bright
In meditative states they fade to white
My truly peaceful thoughts seem to come
While sitting and soaking in nature like a sponge

My thoughts roll in, my thoughts roll out
Like ocean waves they crash about!

Sometimes fiery and passionate red
With not much control over what is said
And sometimes mellow and thoughtful yellow

Like rounded tones played on a cello

My thoughts roll in, my thoughts roll out
Like ocean waves they crash about!

The Taxi Ride

by Brenda Sabol

New York City in the summer months is hot and humid; tourists are always surprised at the humidity which is almost tropical. Walk out the front door in the morning and by the time you reach the corner, it's like you never took a shower; the sweat is running down your face, into your eyes and your clothing is soaked through. By evening it's even worse, the buildings hold in the day's heat, releasing it during the evening; bringing no relief after the sun sets. There's only one thing worse than being on the street and that's being in the subway. The temperature underground must be at least 20 degrees hotter than the street and the trains passing through the tunnels push the hot air ahead of them into the stations. Combine the heat with dozens of sweating commuters, crammed like sardines into a sometimes un-air conditioned train car and your trips to and from work are a very unpleasant experience.

I was working on West 35th Street, behind Macy's flagship store and in the summer would often take advantage of the shoppers exiting taxis in front of the 34th Street entrance to flag down the rare, available, rush hour cab. A cab ride home wasn't cheap, but sometimes it was worth the cost just to avoid the subway.

Leaving work one hot, steamy evening, I walked around the block and flagged down a cab that had just dropped off a fare in front of the store. "85th and York, please" I told the driver.

"Would you like me to take the Park Drive?" he asked.

A trip through Central Park with its trees and lawns was just what I needed that day. Yes, absolutely" I replied.

We proceeded west on 34th Street, making a right turn to go up 8th Avenue. We chatted as the cab made its way to Columbus Circle and the park entrance. I learned that the driver was a recent emigrant from Pakistan and we discussed his homeland. He asked me questions about upstate New York, where I had grown up and he expressed a desire to explore the country. It was a very pleasant trip, made all the more enjoyable by the fact that the cab had air conditioning.

The Park Drive between Columbus Circle and the 6th Avenue entrance runs parallel to the south end of the park; turning north just past the traffic light at 6th Avenue. In New York City, a yellow light means speed like hell and that is just what my driver did, passing through the intersection just as the light turned red.

Immediately there was the whoop of a siren and flashing lights behind us. "I should have stopped for the light" the driver lamented "traffic tickets for taxis are triple what they are for private cars. Now I will lose an entire day's wages! I should have stopped, I should have stopped!" He banged his head on the steering wheel in dismay.

For safety reasons, police cars in New York are always manned by two officers. One of the officers went to the cabbie while his partner came over to my window.

"Step out of the cab, Ma'am" he said.

Being a jaded New Yorker, I wasn't going to comply without knowing why I had to exit my cool, comfortable ride. "Why" I asked "you're giving him a ticket for running a red light, why do I have to get out?"

"Please Ma'am, just get out of the cab and come back to the patrol car with me."

Again, I asked "Why do I have to get out?"

At this point the officer's tone changed "Get out of the cab and come back to the patrol car; NOW!"

"Ok, ok" I knew better than to keep resisting and not wanting to get arrested, I complied. Once we were at the patrol car, the officer started asking me questions.

"Where did you pick up the cab?" he asked. "In front of Macy's" I told him.

"How did you get into the park?" he wanted to know. "We entered at Columbus Circle."

"Did you come up 8th Avenue?" "Yes we did."

"Was there anyone else in the cab" "No."

"Did you make any stops on 8th?" "No."

"Has he been your driver since Macy's?"

By now I had figured out that this was not a routine traffic stop. "Yes he has and why are you asking me all these questions?"

"Someone robbed a store on 8th Avenue about 15 minutes ago and commandeered a cab. We have a partial license plate number and it matches part of the license on the cab you're in. For your safety, we needed you out of the cab; just in case he's the guy we're looking for. We didn't want a hostage situation, especially if he has a gun."

At this point the other officer was walking back to the police car and his partner filled him in. "He's not our guy; she's been with him since he picked her up on 34th Street."

"Good thing he has you as an alibi, or we'd be taking him in for questioning." I was told "You're free to get back in the cab."

As I climbed into the backseat, the driver was told he was also free to go. "This is my lucky day" he told me "I didn't get a ticket!"

"You're right" I told him "this is your lucky day. They were going to arrest you on suspicion of armed robbery; I'm your alibi." I repeated to him what I had been told about the robbery.

"Are you serious? Oh my" he exclaimed "this truly is my lucky day. I can't believe what you are telling me! Thank you, thank you for being in my cab!"

We proceeded north on the Park Drive and the cabbie made a point of stopping for the light near 66th Street. The police car pulled up alongside us and again, there was the short whoop of the siren.

My driver, now in a panic, rolled down the window. "Yes officer?"

"Turn the meter back on!" He was told.

"Yes officer, of course, right away!" When we were stopped, the driver had been kind enough to turn the meter off instead of letting it run up a huge tab as most other cabbies would have done and, in a state of shock, after learning why he had been stopped, had forgotten to turn it back on. I hadn't noticed it was off either.

The light turned green, the police car pulled ahead of us and we exited the park at 72nd Street. The rest of my ride home from work was uneventful. When we reached my destination I gave the driver an extra-large tip. Partly because of the distance we had traveled with the meter turned off, but also because he had given me a most memorable ride home.

July 2015

HOPE

Surely we hope
How does this work?
We wonder
Life is many things – unabiding
Games and their rules
Laws Regulations
Purely. Smile \
Football has downs
Basketball has lifts
Baseball comes with strikes, balls, hits
Errors runs\ Chess
Decisions made; issues learned
Truly. Adapt is good
Keep the better, better than good-
\compromise, acceptance, no projections
\Doing next right thing – team play
Bitter – has the pace only come because
Things started to work – come together
A new life again
Another relist here on earth.
When does doing good become the enemy of the best ?

Trails of trials.\<\
Better truths!
Rebirth

Redone. Hope.

Parenting: Ideal and Real

By Marian M. Fay

The Ideal

Parent: Talk to us we're listening

Child: I'm so blessed to have parents who listen

P: Talk to us, we'll try to understand

C: You guys have always been so understanding

P: Talk to us you have our undivided attention

C: You always give me all the attention that I need

P: Talk to us because we're here for you

C: With all you do you are always there for me

P: Talk to us because we care

C: I've always felt cared for

P: Talk to us any time, anywhere

C: If I need help you are there for me no matter where I am or what time it is

P: Talk to us even though sometimes we're busy

C: I appreciate that you always take time from your busy schedule to listen to me

P: Talk to us even though sometimes we're weary

C: I love that if I have really needed to talk you are there even when you seem tired

P: Talk to us when you have a problem deary

P: Talk to us and we'll help as best we can

P: Talk to us and explain your situation

P: Talk to us and we'll talk to you too

P: Talk to us and together we'll figure out what to do

C: You always try your best to help no matter what the problem is

C: I love you guys

When you dreamed of being parents isn't that how life was supposed to be?

You love your kids and they do their best to make you pleased?

At least that's how we thought it should be.

And then they become tweens and teens.

Their changed behavior we didn't foresee.

LONE PINE SPLAY

The lone pine-
Ay! its limbs splayed -
Against morning's blue sky
Caught my eye.

The tales stored in its trunk
Belle its girth plus height
There it lay young not old
Will its truths be told?

On display thirty years or so
vs elements of wind rain heat some cold
Quietly staunchly seemingly at rest
A sentinel la best!

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Splay play lay ay a

La =interjection or French = the



**General John A. "Black Jack" Logan – Namesake of Logan Township,
New Jersey (Part III) – by Ben Carlton
(Continued from *Just Write*/April 2015)**

Logan was given a 21-day furlough to recover from the rigors of the Vicksburg campaign and headed home to southern Illinois. Instead of resting quietly, however, Logan used the time away from the army to stump for the Republicans, delivering stirring, pro-Union speeches throughout the state. In speech after speech, Logan denounced traitors and Copperheads, while praising General Grant, the Army of the Tennessee, and the Lincoln administration. Grant extended Logan's leave until after the November elections.

Finally returning to the army, General Logan was placed in command of Sherman's old corps when the latter officer was elevated to command of the army in November 1863. Grant, in turn, took charge of the western armies near Chattanooga. Logan was now in command of a corps of 17,000 men.

Logan assumed command of his corps in the wake of Grant's raising the siege of Chattanooga. Braxton Bragg's outnumbered Confederates had been soundly whipped at the Battle of Missionary Ridge and were sent reeling headlong into northern Georgia. As the victorious Union troops were again given their full rations, the armies north and south marked time in their camps for the winter, anticipating the spring of 1864 and the decisive year of the war.

Ulysses S. Grant had been promoted to Lieutenant General and been given command of all Federal armies. He traveled east to Washington and thence to command in the field with the Army of the Potomac that would advance against Lee's army in Virginia. General Sherman took overall command of the 100,000 plus men of the Army of the Tennessee, the Army of the Cumberland, and the Army of the Ohio. These combined armies would march against Confederate forces in Georgia in what would become known as the Atlanta Campaign. Contesting every mile of Sherman's advance was General Joe Johnston's outnumbered, but battle hardened Army of Tennessee. Author Shelby Foote would describe the maneuvering of the opposing armies through rain-soaked northern Georgia in the spring of 1864 as the "Red Clay Minuet."

Sherman was successful in flanking Johnston from out of one defensive position after another. The incessant rainfall swelled the creeks, streams, and rivers the Union army had to cross. At one rain-swollen stream, Logan did not wait for engineers to build a bridge, but stripping off his uniform coat and vest, swam across with the skirmishers under enemy fire to establish a bridgehead on the other side. At the Battle of Dallas, Georgia, Logan was slightly wounded, but did not miss a beat, only retiring long enough to have his arm bandaged by the surgeon.

Sherman's only setback during the campaign was at Kenessaw Mountain. There, Sherman ordered an ill-advised frontal assault against strong Confederate earthworks. The Federals were repulsed, suffering over 2,000 casualties. When Sherman flanked Johnston out of his strong position and moved inexorably closer to Atlanta, Confederate President Jefferson Davis replaced Johnston with the more aggressive General John Bell Hood. True to form, Hood attacked Sherman's troops on the outskirts of Atlanta. Logan's men were initially pushed back, but riding

furiously on his black steed, Logan rallied his forces for a counterattack that succeeded in restoring the Union line and driving back the attackers to their entrenchments. One of Logan's men described him as a "hurricane on horseback" during battle. Everywhere he rode, the soldiers stopped to doff their hats and cheer their commander.

In the next issue of Just Write: The end of the Rebellion; Logan becomes a Republican and moves to Washington, D.C.; Logan has presidential aspirations; Logan establishes Memorial Day; the death of John A. Logan

Just Write

Meetings Held 2nd & 4th Wednesdays @

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