

Sweet and Sour

By Zi Graves



One never gets too old to learn. I have been told that since I was a child and have remembered the message well. I am still trying to add to my meager knowledge and the other day when I heard a word that was new to me I immediately looked it up in the dictionary. My curiosity was aroused when the word, karma, was being discussed on the Oprah Winfrey talk show. Now I know what it means: the force created by our actions or, simply stated, what goes around comes around. Our attitude toward others will be reflected in the way we are treated, and history will be repeated. So much for new knowledge! The fact, what goes around comes around was one I already knew and was quite evident in that task that I was performing when the impact of the meaning came to me as I was cleaning up a mess left by construction workers when my front yard was dug up to install a new sewer line.

I thought I had left this kind of work behind when I moved to town. Roots half severed from the tree that had caused the damage, various sizes of rocks, and deep tire tracks, a hazard to lawn mowers had to be taken care of before grass seed could be sown to hide the scar of improvement. So, someone had to finish the job, and that someone was me. After having waiting several months to see if it would disappear, or some fairy godmother come in the night and remove the unsightly mess, I realized it was my job and began searching for

tools to do it with. I needed a rake, hoe and or, mattock to loosen the dried earth and rocks and cut off the exposed roots. Simple problems seem to have a way of piling up on me, so when I began my search I discovered my garage door wouldn't open (another problem I would have to cope with later). So the only thing left to do was see if I could borrow something from a neighbor. Soon I was picking up rocks and roots loosened by the strong metal rake from Bea's garage. This is when I remembered the word, karma, "what goes around comes around" and the days on the farm when we were settling in there came to mind. Those awful days when I was trying to learn the ways of country living. The many rocks I removed from the garden before we could even plant a crop and hoeing around the ones I didn't remove. The backbreaking work of filling a truck bed with rocks from any spot we happened to be parked close to and later used to fill in the chug holes of the road we were trying to build between our house and Highway 80. It is still hard for me to believe any spot in the Appalachian Mountains could have as many rocks in one place as there were on our farm. For some strange reason I thought maybe we had made a mistake and was living in the Rocky Mountains.

Today was the assurance the Appalachian Mountains have an abundance of rocks and are not choosy

(Cont. to A4)

Points East

By:

Ike Adams

My daughter, Genny, who now lives in Boulder, Colorado was home for Christmas a few months back and I was at a loss about what kind of present to get her. Like yours truly, she won't spend much money for clothing nor would she be impressed if someone else bought her anything to wear that cost a lot of money.

Some people call us tight wads. We prefer the term frugal. We aren't above wearing designer pants, but we like to be safe in the knowledge that we acquired them from a consignment store for a modest fraction of their original price, or, in my case, from an eBay auction for darn near nothing.

I haven't bought clothes anywhere except eBay since I got online and I haven't paid more than three bucks for a pair of britches either. The people I work with ask me why I'm always wearing dress pants to work and I keep telling them that I can't afford jeans.

One of these days I'm going to write a column about trading on eBay, but this isn't it.

We started out shopping for Genny a Christmas present as I recall.

So Genny has taken up vegetable gardening out in the Rockies and I decided to get her a hoe. I don't know who makes it and I've never seen them anywhere except Bluegrass Hardware in Richmond, but I found a hoe last year that is sort of shaped like a half moon and bolted onto the handle. It's the hardest thing I've ever had in the garden and I still don't know for sure what it's called but it will almost dig by itself.

I got the hoe but for whatever reason it just didn't look right under the tree.

Then a couple of weeks before she came home, Genny and I somehow

got onto the subject of food prices and the fact that organically grown food costs more than caviar in Colorado. Genny is a vegetarian.

She relishes lentils and split peas and all sorts of dehydrated stuff as much as I do a rare t-bone steak. I try not to eat meat in front of her though, because at I hope is pretty much done cooking as far as I'm concerned when it stops saying moo. The way I like my steak cooked is not appealing to vegetarians even if they secretly harbor a craving for meat.

Be patient now, because I'm eventually going to tell you what I got her for Christmas and if you don't like my way of telling the story, go read something else.

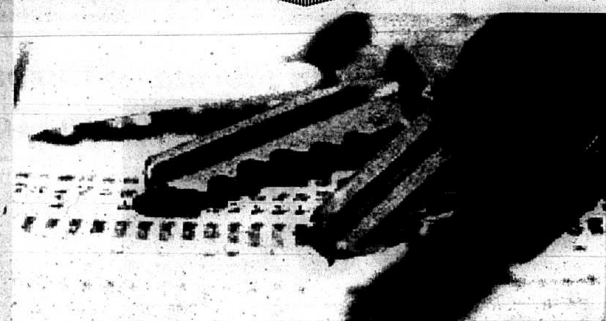
So I found out that Genny was paying more for lentils and black beans at those upscale food places in Boulder than I was paying for ribeye at Winn Dixie on a pound for pound basis. I decided that what I needed to do was drive over to Casey County about an 180 mile round trip to the Amish Community and stay with one of those dehydrated veggies for my daughter.

I called up Junior Helton to see if he wanted to ride over with me and Junior told me that there was an Amish store within five miles of my house if I didn't mind taking the over the hills and through the woods route to Crab Orchard.

I found Granny's Country Store about half way between Crab Orchard and Lancaster on Highway 39 and that's also where I found just about anything that you can dry and still eat. At least a dozen different kinds of beans, the aforementioned lentils and split peas, barley for your soup, raisins, prunes, apples, apricots, ba-

(Cont. to A4)

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