

Questions surround county's involvement in landfill matter



Richard Anderson
Editor
Mount Vernon Signal

Rockcastle Judge-Executive Butz Carlotis said this week that his conservative side was showing, because I told him that I didn't really agree with the county's action concerning a proposed landfill at Little Clear Creek.

I know that will not make some people in the area happy, and I understand their position - but I am of the opinion that in most cases I don't need government telling me, every move to make and I don't think the fiscal court has any right to tell David McFarland what he can and can't do on his own property after he has complied with all state regulations.

McFarland's permit for a landfill, that will be used to dispose of construction debris only, was approved by the state this week.

But Carlotis and the fiscal court have vowed to fight him to the end to stop the operation.

McFarland told me this week that he was willing to set down with anyone concerned about the operation and come up with some type of agreement.

He also said that he did not have any problem with the water in Little Clear being monitored to make sure that it was safe. He said that samples could be taken above the landfill and below it and sent off to a state certified lab.

The point is, McFarland has apparently done everything according to the book.

He describes himself as someone who is concerned about the environment and has spent thousands of dollars cleaning up the area where he lives at Little Clear Creek.

I don't live in the area and I'm sure many will say that I would think differently if I did, but I wouldn't.

The man has said that he would

try to come up with a solution that everyone could live with. But he pointed out that although he was willing to show the site and explain his intentions in detail, only one person has even called and no one has asked to look at the proposed site, including the Judge.

Carlotis was concerned because he said that any farmer in the county could build a landfill less than an acre, because of the lax state regulations.

That may be true, but all situations and all cases are different.

In David McFarland's case, he has done what he has been required to do to build a small landfill on his own property, off a private drive, that will not house any household garbage.

If Carlotis is so concerned about the environment in the county, he should do more to clean up the illegal dumps that are spread out throughout Rockcastle.

In fairness to the Judge, he has cleaned up some areas, but some have also been neglected and there is a lot of work to do.

In my opinion there are a number of illegal dumps which are polluting streams and creeks throughout the county. I don't think McFarland's private landfill will do such, but he has said that he would allow monitoring of the water on Little Clear Creek to make sure that doesn't happen.

I don't think the Judge would want to monitor the water in and around many of the dumpsites in the county, because he wouldn't like the results.

In short, the county should get involved to the extent that they are satisfied that everything is being done properly - on the other hand if I were Mr. McFarland and I knew that I had done everything according to laws and regulations and I was going to make sure the landfill did not become contaminated, I would greatly resent the county's interference.

Sometimes it is hard to be an advocate of the people and not step over that fine line of governmental interference.

is and Frank McCourt's Tin make the list along with Elizabeth George's *In Pursuit of the Proper Sister*. Probably another half dozen had some redeeming value.

Mostly though I waded through at least twenty thousand pages of bound print wondering what kind of political pull the writers had at the publishing houses. A lot of snuff gets published these days because the author was either born or married into the cliques that run Random House, Warner-Books, Harper Collins et al. At least, if it isn't nepotism, it sure isn't talent that gets two thirds of the stuff between covers and on the fiction shelves at Barnes & Noble this day and age.

But every once in awhile I come up on something that I know, without looking at a review, I will relish. And at this very moment, I hope that Barbara Kingsolver is somewhere at a keyboard writing a sequel to her latest published work entitled *Prodigal Summer*.

I received the book in December and postponed reading it until January so that I could start my reading year off on an upbeat. Kingsolver, as my tastes run, is not only the best Kentucky writer, living or dead, but perhaps the top my all time list of favorites world wide. That she is an Appalachian makes me crow even louder.

Prodigal Summer is her fifth major work of fiction and easily her best even though comparing it to her previous books brings to mind the old

apples and oranges cliché.

Maybe you have to be Appalachian to appreciate it as I did. Maybe you have to have lived a large portion of your life in the woods on a hillside farm on the Kentucky/Virginia line and maybe you have to have had some long term exposure to more cosmopolitan culture along with your upbringing to appreciate the book the way I did.

I have never been so close to home in a book. That is sort of what *Prodigal Summer* is all about but there is much, much more to it.

There is an understanding and appreciation of Appalachian Culture here that is subtle on the one hand and intricate on the other like a finely crafted quilt where careful thought is given to every piece and stitch.

At least eight characters are so well developed that I honestly believe I'd recognize them on the street and at least another dozen remind me so much of folks I've known that I wonder if Kingsolver and I don't have relationships in common.

There are some biases and maybe a tad of naivete here and there in regards to personal values but I found myself grinning as I took issue with them. How boring life would be if we all thought alike.

How much better life would be if we could learn to love the folks with whom we don't often see eye to eye as Kingsolver so aptly demonstrates she can do in this wonderful book.

Half way through it, I started hinting myself to one chapter's night because I didn't want to get to the end of it. I can count on my fingers, the books that have gripped me so tightly and Kingsolver wrote two of them.

I already know that this is the best piece of writing that I will have in my hands this year and maybe, even in the decade.

If you haven't read Barbara Kingsolver, clip this column out of your newspaper or at least write down these titles. I want you to read them before you get to *Prodigal Summer*. Read them in this order: *The Bean Trees*, *Pigs in Heaven*, *Animal Dreams*, *The Poisonwood Bible*. You will thank me later because you will love all these books and you will be richly entertained.

But when you finally get to *Prodigal Summer* you will stay to yourself. "This time she's broke the mold."

In the meantime, I'm hoping that Barbara Kingsolver is working on *Prodigal Fall* because I have never read anything so deserving of a sequel as *Prodigal Summer*.

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Points East

By:
Ike Adams

I read a lot of fiction. And not just in the newspapers, even though, from my observation there's not nearly as much emphasis on responsible, truthful, unbiased news gathering at the big city papers as there was when I was 30 years younger.

But I digress. One of the problems with getting older is a tendency toward digression after writing a single sentence seven words long.

Oops. I've done it again.

This column is really going to be about a good writer and an especially

good book that I just finished if I can ever manage to find the launch button.

Anyway, over the weekend I was going through the pile of stuff that I read during the last year of the recently ended millennium and the stack adds up to 46 volumes and there's actually half a dozen worth recommending.

Three old Zane Grey books including *Riders of the Purple Sage*, *Arizona* and thick collection of short stories. Billie Letts' *Where the Heart*