

Points East

By: Ike Adams

By the time most of you read this, January will be over. So far it's been 17 weeks long according to my biological calendar. Christmas already feels like one like something that happened in another era and I'm ready to believe that someone is going to ever. I can't even get any satisfaction out of browsing the seed catalogues anymore.

Daughter Jennifer blessed me with her presence most of Sunday afternoon. She sat down at the kitchen table and pulled out a thick stack of papers she intended to grade and a few minutes later she exclaimed, "I love this time of year!"

I strangled on my coffee and sprayed it across the room and the chair I was leaning back and toppled to the floor as I grabbed hold of the sink to keep my body from suffering serious injury. My mouth dropped open and I must have stared at her for thirty seconds before demanding, "YOU WHAT?!"

"I'm not talking about the weather," she said. "Just look at these papers and you'll see what I mean."

I glanced at the first two or three pages she handed over and they were filled with complete sentences hand printed far more legibly than I could manage if my life depended on it.

"My friend and I played outside today," the first one read. "I like my new house," said another.

"They're starting to put it all together," said Jennifer and she was beaming. "I look at these papers and I know that I'm doing my job well. When school started they barely knew the alphabet and maybe how to spell their names. Now they are putting together whole sentences without any help. That's why I love this time of year. The work is paying off."

Jennifer teaches first grade at Camp Dick Elementary school in Garrard County. But the day of "See Alice run. Run Jerry run" scrawled and wobbling across a sheet of paper are long gone. Jennifer's kids write between the lines and they have to be original in expressing themselves.

She used a big red felt marker to write "EXCELLENT!! GOOD JOB!!" etc. as the bottoms of the pages and it was perfectly obvious that she was enjoying herself tremendously and I sat wondering why it was that grading papers was the thing I hated most about teaching. I spent most of the week mulling around computers. I drove over to the north end of the county to help a friend get his computer online early Saturday afternoon and then came home to put some software on my pc.

This went on for nearly 24 hours until way past midnight Sunday, when I finally scanned in a report form and filled in all the blanks with x's to see if it would print out. In the meanwhile I discovered that there are a bunch of other cars worth the most not understood and literally hundreds of missing parameters, whatever that is.

They've told me at work that I can't have an intern this summer to help me catch up on my paperwork. I've been talking to a couple of colleges but now it occurs to me that if they can figure out how to get to Berea, maybe what I need is a couple of Jennifer's first graders in my office. I've already wasted 24 hours that one of them could have performed in minutes.

Our Readers Write

Dear Editor:

Your willingness to wade through rough waters always amazes me. I admit that. Of course, giving differing points of view is exactly how a newspaper educates readers. I respect people who speak their minds when they have not disconnected themselves from the brain. You were connected, but I disagree with your conclusion. Fully aware that it is dangerous to publicly argue in print with someone who buys ink by the barrel, please let me rise to the bait and give my thoughts on your well written editorial in last week's Signal about the proposed landfill on Little Clear Creek.

As you are aware, two people can have very different descriptions of the same view when looking from different angles. You reached the correct conclusion from your point of view, and argued it aggressively. I just don't believe that the angle from which you were standing allowed you to see the entire picture.

The ability to control one's own property is, as you say, a hallmark of our society. I agree with that. When a proposal is made, however, by a landowner to construct a facility that could have harmful effects on the environment, and the most important part of the environment, its people, it is the responsibility of our local government to carefully review the proposal and make decisions based upon what is learned. Here is what we learned:

First of all, the state gave McFarland a "permit-by-rule" landfill approval on Little Clear Creek to be used exclusively for construction debris. As we understand, the debris is to come from a 150-unit apartment (apartments) complex in Madison County. When the landfills fill, it is to be capped over, clearly delineated, forever more, shown on every deed, and it is never to be disturbed. Not even 500 years from now.

When talking with the state, I asked one simple question. What is to prevent some other person from clandestinely and illegally using the landfill for another purpose without McFarland's knowledge? The answer was that "such use would be illegal and the landfill would be, from time to time - monitored." To me, the answer is far too weak to bring comfort.

Again, Mr. McFarland's sugges-

tion that the water quality be monitored is a good gesture, but for how long? We need guarantees from the state - not well meaning gestures - to assure us that a barrel of hazardous chemicals will not be dumped in the landfill by an unscrupulous person. The state is not willing to give such guarantees. The barrel might just sit intact for a long time before polluting the streams. Once the damage is done, it cannot be easily reversed, and it would probably happen after most of us have forgotten about the landfill. Rockcastle County is in a first region - which means that almost everything that hits the ground can quickly find its way into the underground. Furthermore, almost all of Rockcastle County's residents (with the exception of the Dix River watershed near Brodhead) live somewhere downstream from Little Clear Creek. Little Clear Creek is, basically, the headwaters for all of Rockcastle County.

Again, I agree with your strong editorial protecting the rights of an individual landowner. But when families downstream can be possibly harmed by what a single landowner does, we have to come down on the side of health and safety for them and their children - without apologies.

Our fiscal court has a duty to act to protect and do what is right for our county's citizens - both today's and tomorrow's. If we are unwilling to fight to protect Little Clear Creek and all of Rockcastle County, we no longer deserve our offices. We don't need Madison County's debris here.

Most Respectfully,
Buzz Carlolius
County Judge Executive

Dear Editor:

This is to all who have loved ones at the Briar Field Cemetery. There are a lot of empty spaces being claimed with markers and no one dead. This is a community cemetery, no one pays for these plots, so why try and claim something that you don't pay for. This cemetery is a first come first serve basis so even if you have a marker up and someone dies that wants that spot, your marker can be moved. So why risk something that you don't own. If we keep letting people put up markers, the next thing that you know, we will have a cemetery full of markers taking up all the spaces and no where left to put the dead people. So we ask that nobody call and ask to put up anymore markers.

Signed by: Truman Reams.

Dear Editor:

I would like to clarify something that was in the Signal last week in regards to the report of the accident I had on Copper Creek hill. The statement that there was not supposed to be buses on the hill, might be misinterpreted to mean that I went down the hill knowing that it was closed, down to bus traffic. I did not receive any information to this effect, that this part of my midday route was closed down.

The safety of my students, the respect and confidence of the parents of my students is very important to me. Our students that we transport are indeed the "Most Precious Cargo."

Thank you,
Mr. Benny
Benny C. Craig
Rockcastle County School Bus
Driver

Dear Editor:

I read your recent editorial with interest. I don't know what all kinds of old buildings debris David McFarland plans to bury in this private landfill, but if it is to be located between his and his brother's home, must not be too terrible. I suspect if the county judge had a couple old buildings he wanted to scuttle, he'd not haul them to a licensed landfill; rather, he'd hire a cheap dozer operator and cover them up in a hole spot somewhere nearby, and that would be that, seeing as 'how he' is.

At least McFarland apparently has followed the rules and obtained a permit for his dump...something thousands of others never bother to do.

Sincerely, Max Phelps

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- Have you developed an agriculture water quality plan for this land?
- Do you need help developing your plan?
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For Additional Information, Contact:
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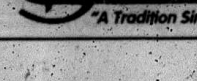
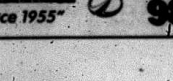
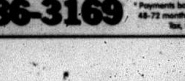
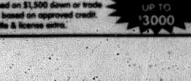
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