So Many Reasons

The last few months have seen some extraordinary events on the farms of Smyth County. We have seen a drought, a flood, damaging winds, followed by more dry weather. Several friends and neighbors are going into the Thanksgiving holiday with a lot less than they had last Thanksgiving.

Still there are many reasons to celebrate all the people and things in our lives that were spared. Let’s look at just a few of the things in our lives that continue to bless us, even in trying times.

Friends. We can be thankful for friends, both near and far. The outpouring of people wanting to help flood victims was at times overwhelming in and of themselves. Trying to coordinate deliveries of necessary items was and continues to be a challenge at times, but still we are thankful.

Freedom. We again survived a contentious election season, and we should be thankful we live in a nation of freedom and liberty. We are free to vote our conscience and go on with our lives regardless of the outcome.

Education. Smyth County is blessed to have many dedicated teachers in our classrooms. I personally am thankful for so many wonderful teachers in my own life, both here and at Virginia Tech. I am fortunate to know many of them as dear friends to this day.

Employment. We are fortunate to live in a nation of financial opportunity. Over a quarter of a century ago, Andrea and I closed one chapter in our personal careers and embarked on new endeavors. That doesn’t happen in too many countries around the world. The people we’ve met and the places we seen as a result of that decision have blessed us beyond measure.

Health. While I have gone through some issues that affect my overall mobility, I am able to continue to function pretty much business as usual. In my prime, I could dunk a basketball with farm boots on. Now, if I could do that, landing would be torture! I have learned to be more patient and focus on what I can do and not worry at all about what I cannot.

Pets. Animals are such an important part of our lives. If you know me at all, you know that holds true for me. Someof you may already know this but Bear’s arrival into my life is a story of God’s Grace in action. My oldest male Bo had just died and I was devastated. I received so many expressions of sorrow from friends; looking at social media was heart-wrenching.

I buried Bo on a Monday and was looking at Instagram Tuesday morning, when this cute little liver and white male springer pup popped up on my feed. His name was Beau. This wasn’t fate; it was an answered prayer. I tried really hard to call him Beau but the hurt was too great, and I changed the “u” to and “r” and Ted E. Bear was “born.”

Home. My home covers thousands of acres; no, our farm isn’t that big. My home is huge because I have friends that I love all over this area and all over the country to be honest. I mentioned earlier that Andrea and I have been fortunate to be able to travel since closing the dairy in 1998. We have met people from every corner of America through the National Association of County Ag Agents and they have not only blessed me with their expertise, but they have freely given us their friendship as well.

Andrea. Finally, I am thankful for my wife and best friend. We have been married for nearly 40 years now and I am thankful for every day. I am thankful that we see eye to eye on almost everything and enjoy many of the same interests. She is the embodiment of Proverbs 31: 10-31.

Upcoming Events

Nov 28 Thanksgiving Holiday

Dec 2 VQA Sale

Dec 5 AFCA Annual Meeting, 6:30 PM at 4-H Center in Abingdon

Dec 6 Marion Christmas Parade, 7 pm

Dec 7 Chilhowie Christmas Parade, 11 am

Dec 7 Saltville Christmas Parade, 6 pm

Dec 9 VQA Steer Take Up

Dec 11 VQA Heifer Take Up

Dec 14 Smyth Washington Cattleman Meeting, 6:30 PM at 4-H Center

Jan 7, 2025 VQA Sale

If you are a person with a disability and desire any assistive devices, services or other accommodation to participate in this activity, please contact Andy Overbay or Pam Testerman at 276-706-8339 /TDD (800) 828-1120) during business hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. to discuss accommodations 5 days prior to the event.

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