

**August, 2004**

### **Concert in the Woods**

I spent an enjoyable two hours yesterday evening listening to the Jeff Ball Band for the aptly named Concert in the Woods at the Stone Fence Gardens in Thurmont, MD. My friend Linda Norris, who lives right across the street from the Gardens, mentioned the event to me so I decided to join her for it.

Jeff Ball plays a variety of Native American flutes, very well I might add, and is accompanied by his brother on bass as well as a drummer and piano/guitarist. The music is very entertaining and a bit eerie with lots of Native American influence. I was at times reminded of Chuck Mangione.

The event was slightly spoiled when someone stepped on a yellowjackets' nest. A couple people got badly stung. Once it was apparent what was going on and where the nest was, people moved away and the area was roped off. Linda, myself, and her daughter all got stung once each which was annoying and moderately painful but...

This was an event truly in the woods with no amenities. There were log benches to sit on but many people brought their own chairs. It was relaxing to just listen to the music and look up into the trees and the sky beyond.

Follow the links for more info about the Jeff Ball Band and Stone Fence Gardens!

### **Religious Wars Ruin the World**

It is bad enough that the insurgents in Iraq target their own security forces and potential recruits for car and suicide bombings but now they are targeting Christian churches according to the Washington Post article "Blasts Target Christian Churches" published on 2 August.

I am not ranting that the insurgents are targeting Christian churches specifically. I am pissed that religious wars and the actions of religious fanatics around the world have probably caused the majority of wars and death due to wars in known history! One does not have to look back more than 10 years to cite 3 or 4 memorable clashes that resulted from religious issues: Serbia, Bosnia, Afghanistan, and Iraq. I would ask when these conflicts might stop but if history is any judge, they won't!

### **Quote of the Day**

Here is another winner quote from President Bush...he can really think on his feet and get right to the meat of the matter. Speaking of the increased threat levels in New York, Newark, and D.C, taken from the Washington Post on 3 August, Bush says "It's serious business. I mean, we wouldn't be, you know, contacting authorities at the local level unless something was real." Wow! What he said!

### **Pictures from Motorcycle Camping Trip Posted**

I have posted pictures from my motorcycle camping trip earlier this summer. Unfortunately, I am still working on the formatting for my photo album after a recent upgrade mandated by a security problem. Please excuse the oddities. The album works but still has some issues.

### **Schizophrenic Guards Beijing School**

According to the Washington Post on 5 August, "Man Attacks Children, Killing 1, in Beijing School." Apparently, according to police, he spent time in a mental hospital in 1999 after being diagnosed with schizophrenia. Unfortunately, in China, that could mean he just had a run in with the government! Nonetheless, can you say "Background check?"

### **Motorcycle Camping Trip 2004**

I finally finished a writeup on my motorcycle camping trip of 2004. Read on if you don't mind my long windedness. Motorcycle Camping 2004 in PDF format. Read online or download and print. Since I am not using

Adobe Acrobat but freeware PDF converters, the links do not work. I will migrate the dialogue with working links to my travelogue shortly. More pictures are online at Motorcycle Camping Pics.

I was on the road the two weeks ago to New York and Vermont. I had a reunion in Vermont and stayed with friends there the whole time. The weather was crappy due to the hurricanes and what apparently has been a crappy summer weatherwise in Vermont. I got a couple of good rides in but really got soaked on one of them! When I pulled in to the Devino's, it was not raining there yet of course, but water was pouring out of my gloves and had reached a depth of about two inches in my boots.

### **Lives of Servitude**

The Washington Post article on human trafficking and child prostitution published August 23, 2004, entitled "Lives Sold Into Servitude" was very informative. However, I question the use of the graphic which shows the approximate number of underage children lured into prostitution in Asian countries. The Post notes, perhaps erroneously, that South Korea had about 500,000 child prostitutes...more than any other country in the graphic...and did not mention this in the article.

This smacks of poor, misguided, or political journalism. Perpetually notorious for its prostitution situation, Thailand has about 250,000 child prostitutes in a population of approximately 60 million (as of 2000) making 0.4% of its population child prostitutes. South Korea's population in 2000 was approximately 46 million. If they have 500,000 child prostitutes, that would mean that 1.1 percent of the population were child prostitutes, more than twice that of Thailand. If that is truly the case, it was certainly worth noting in the article.

### **Iron Lady's Son Accused of Participating in Plot to Overthrow Tin Pot Dictatorship**

According to various sources, including the Washington Post on 26 August, 2004, (Thatcher's Son Charged in Coup Plot), Margaret Thatcher's son, Mark, has been detain on accusations that he provided funding for a helicopter said to be used in the attempted coup in Equatorial Guinea this past March. Oh how the mighty have fallen. Read the article. Apparently Mark Thatcher has not been so mighty...more likely naughty!

### **145 Days and I Am Out of the Maize Holio**

I got laid off after eight years at a local company. I haven't worked for 144 days. People ask me what I did everyday besides look for work. I couldn't diagram a full day's activities. I read the paper and did some other stuff I guess. I did visit an old friend in Montana. We got reacquainted. We drove down to and around Yellowstone taking wildlife pictures. I took a 13 day, 3300 mile motorcycle camping trip through the northeastern U.S. I thoroughly enjoyed my grandmother's 90th birthday party. Tomorrow, day 145, I go back to work. I cannot wait...new job, new people, new responsibilities, and new challenges. Life has the potential to be good again.

### **Commitment**

The other night a friend suggested to me that I should not blindly take the job that I had been offered (after a long period of unemployment). He said I could probably make much more money. I felt that the job I had been offered and accepted was more to my liking and style than the money jobs might offer. To me, the challenge, the personalities, the corporate culture, and the reward of meeting those challenges, satisfying those personalities, and adapting to the corporate culture is my Xanadu. Money is nice but not an end to all means.

The next morning I was rereading "Cosell, By Cosell" for the 2nd or 3d time and felt vindicated when I came across a quote from Jackie Robinson that said it all for me and epitomizes my goal in life. For many of those of you that know me, you will understand. And for many of those of you who know me, you will never understand. I do not care.

Jackie Robinson from "Cosell by Cosell" said, "Individual commitment to a group effort, gentlemen, that's what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work."

### **Another Police Action on Center Street**

Not sure what happened but the flashing lights from five or more undercover (very) cars alerted me to a shit bag Toyota pulled over across the street. They were serious...numerous cops all in civies, including women,

searched the car, very carefully and searched the occupants...except the girl with the baby and told the viewers, including myself to get inside our homes while they cleared the loaded weapons they had found. Thirty minutes later, the perps car and most of the undercover cops were still out there. Wonder what happenend...wonder if the Frederick News-Post will cover it in the morning. Hah!

I am cooking up some dirty rice so what do I care?