

White elephants or important treasures?

BY BRUCE FLORENCE
COLUMNIST

Let's talk about stuff. It seems that after as many years as I have had the privilege to live that there is in my house an awful lot of stuff. Downsizing is spoken of many times these days, but for some reason that particular fad has just not struck me as a pursuit I had any interest in.

I ran into a fellow 'saver' the other day, and he confessed that one probably would have a hard time finding an easy path

through his basement. He, for instance, has a sentimental attachment to the bicycle he gave his girls when they were learning to ride.

As he told me this story it was easy to see he was remembering those short little legs struggling to stay attached to the pedals as an errant breeze tossed their hair behind them. That bicycle still sits in his house in the basement because he just cannot imagine losing that sweet memory.

Also, not too long ago, a dear, dear friend of my

husband, Sheryl, stopped me to share a story of his SUV. His daughter asked him if she might have it since he no longer drove it. He paused a long time and finally said, "Well, yes, you can certainly have it when I am gone, but right now, I'm not ready to give it up."

She probably chalked it up to the eccentricities of the aging parent, but another truth is what he shared with me. You see, the day he went looking for this particular car his friend, Virgil, went along with him and helped him

pick that beautiful shiny vehicle. They had the best time that day, and it is still a memory so precious that giving up the car, the last physical memento of that time, is impossible for him.

I never see a beautiful '55, '56 or '57 Chevy that I don't wish I had had the talent and expertise to restore one. Those were the cars that all of us in my class coveted with all our hearts. None of us really had one, but one young man did borrow one from his granddaddy and took me for a ride. I

always look for them at car shows.

The truth about "stuff" is that many times it is not just clutter but instead are precious possessions that bring back strong memories of people and events that added so positively to the quality of our life as we were living it. Since my daughter is now living with me, I many times find myself telling her the stories of possessions that have been in our home since she was just a toddler. Someday, whether or not to downsize these items will be her decision,

and perhaps it will be easier to decide or not if there are stories connected.

By the way some folks have shared with me that their Crape Myrtles are not heavy with bloom as in the past. Don't give up on them now that we have had that much needed rain; perhaps the bloom will bounce back some. But I am sure they are not dying, as some feared. This lovely bush is very hardy and will reward you for years. Right now, just like the rest of the earth, they need more rain.

Escaping to better

BY NANCY KENNEDY
GRACE NOTES

Ken Allen, a Bornean orangutan at the San Diego Zoo in the 1980s, became famous for his feats of escapism.

As a youngster, he would unscrew the bolts of his cage at night, roam the nursery, then carefully reassemble everything before morning.

When he got older, he escaped and strolled among zoo visitors, enjoying the freedom.

Ken Allen loved everybody—except Otis, his roommate. He threw rocks at Otis, so the zoo put him in solitary confinement. But still he escaped.

The zoo spent \$40,000 on security—high walls, a moat, even an electric fence. None of it worked.

Dubbed the "Hairy Houdini," Ken Allen even made Time magazine's list of "Top Zoo Escapes."

But there was one thing he couldn't escape: an untreatable cancer that took his life at 29.

R.I.P. Ken Allen.

Reading about this clever orangutan made me think about the ways we humans try to escape. Some escapes are good—like fleeing a burning house. But others end badly. Escaping from

prison rarely ends well.

Neither does trying to escape from God.

By God's hand, the Israelites escaped slavery in Egypt—yet quickly turned to a golden calf and later begged for a human king. They longed for freedom but ran straight into new chains of their own making.

Jonah tried to escape God's call and ended up inside a fish, proof that no one can out-swim or out-run the Lord.

My pastor says we escape through both virtue and vice—our prideful piety and self-righteousness, or our rebellion and addictions. For me, it's shoes. Or purses. Or the endless pursuit of the perfect pair of jeans.

We all have our "comfort exits," ways we try to slip out when life feels too heavy. Or when we just want what we want.

At church, we're studying Hebrews. Its boiled-down message is simple: "Jesus is better." Better than anything we run to for escape.

Better than all the things we think will numb or distract or rescue us but never really do.

The psalmist asked, "Where can I flee from your presence?" (Psalm 139). To some, that's a cry

of frustration: God, you're everywhere—leave me alone!

Adam and Eve hid in the garden. Even Peter once told Jesus, "Go away from me, Lord. I am a sinful man" (Luke 5:8).

But later, when others were leaving Jesus, he asked the disciples, "Do you want to leave too?" Peter replied, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You alone have the words of eternal life" (John 6:68).

That's the kind of escape I love—not running from, but running to something infinitely better.

The old hymn "Fairest Lord Jesus" says, "Jesus is fairer, Jesus is purer, who makes the woeful heart to sing."

Isn't that what we want when we run—to make our woeful hearts sing?

We want something better. Whether we admit it or not, we want Jesus.

And every time I run, deep down I hope there's no place I can go where he is not.

And there never is. waiting, not with judgment, but with welcoming grace.

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The noise in my head

BY SHAWN SORRELL
COLUMNIST

"I need to quiet the noise in my head." I found myself saying these words (out loud actually) this past week. I stopped for a moment and realized what I had actually voiced to myself or anyone around who had been listening. Thankfully no one had heard me.

The realization of how sound actually forms a thought seems like a miracle. Sound waves arrive at our eardrum by the vibrations and pressure changes. The vibrations are converted to mechanical vibrations and then to electrical signals.

Our auditory nerve analyzes the pitch, loudness and source and allows us to understand its meaning in a given context. However, the difference between

sound and noise is everything.

Sound enters our being and settles. It has shape, tone, intention—the wind in the trees, the steady pulse of needed rain on an afternoon. Sound invites resonance, not just a nervous reaction.

Noise on the other hand, arrives without asking—crowding the air, my mind. My daughter recently used the term "rage bait." I am usually not one to appreciate teen lingo, but this one made me pause. The slender, all too convenient and all too present attachment known as a cell phone has been just this.

I find there is so much "noise" I can receive in such a short period of time from such a small object. Whether it is social media or the constant stream of news—fact and fiction, local or

global my nervous system continues whatever thoughts, feelings or reactions I have from just a few minutes of checking the news cycle.

Noise doesn't speak to us as it overwhelms us. Unwanted thoughts can fill every quiet corner where reflection might have grown. This October is the perfect time to seek the quiet. Fall invites us to slow down, to walk softer. Silence feels like grace bathed in hues of gold, greens, reds and browns.

John Muir famously quoted, "In this silent serene wilderness the weary can gain a heart-bath in perfect peace."

I have found making my own world quiet requires more action than it used to—attainable, but I have to work for it. I have also learned to "power off" my rage bait.

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Public Service Commission of Kentucky issued orders on July 7, 2025, scheduling a hearing to be held on November 3, 2025, at 9 a.m. Eastern Daylight Time, in the Richard Raff Hearing Room at the offices of the Public Service Commission located at 211 Sower Boulevard in Frankfort, Kentucky for Case Nos. 2025-00113 and 2025-00114. This is an examination of the Electronic Applications of Kentucky Utilities Company and Louisville Gas and Electric Company for adjustment of its electric and gas rates and approval of certain regulatory and accounting treatments.

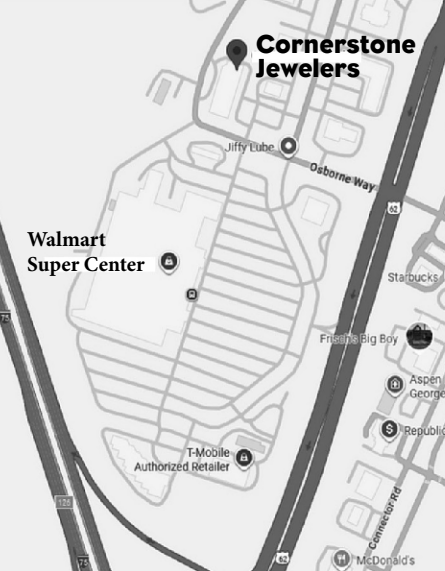
This hearing will be streamed live and may be viewed on the PSC website, psc.ky.gov.

Public comments may be made at the beginning of the hearing. Those wishing to make oral public comments may do so by following the instructions listed on the PSC website, psc.ky.gov.

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