

Viuda Noise

In Guatemala, a major earthquake destroyed their historic Mayan capital city. Instead of rebuilding on a major fault line, they moved the whole city up onto one of the higher planes at 5000 feet. The old city, now called Antigua Guatemala, became a tourist shopping centre for all kinds of native arts and crafts. At the same time, it remained the economic trading center of the area. It had no substantial buildings to fall down in the next earthquake. It became a vast Warren of wooden shops and sheds under tin roofs it was about 10 times larger than the largest flea market in Kentucky.

In one of these booths, 15 feet by 15 feet, donya Maria view the de sakis sold cloth for sewing dresses and shirts. If a customer did not like any of the patterns Maria had, they could try any of the four other booths around this little open space. Most customers did not know that they belong to members of Maria's extended family. The men of the family so3511d corn and other vegetables and fruit from clause on the ground in the open space.

It is a quiet picture of industrious people trying to make a living, but outside in the rest of the country, a new dictatorship grew. Earlier, the revolution had thrown out

the military dictator who kept his power by control of the army. A more democratic form of government enabled elections and other reforms. However, old patterns and loyalties die hard and as the newly elected officials consolidated their power, the President finally said, "Elections don't really work and I am President for Life". However the world had changed, and he met more resistance than he expected. As dictators do, he increased the arrests, the intimidations, the control of news outlets, and killings. He used the propaganda line that it was all in the name of National Security.

Many of the pastors of Presbyterian churches could not keep quiet under this persecution. They preached and advocated for peace and justice. Threats by the dictator did not deter them and neither did the violence and murder. One night, when Maria's husband, Pastor Saquic, was driving home from a rally, three jeeps ran him off the road and the soldiers shot him.

In Spanish, "Viuda," means widow. The Widow Saquic did not keep quiet and kept up her husband's mission even in the face of threats and intimidation. She was not alone. The Presbyterian Church in the States gave her

Kindling
BY
Jim Woodring
Sun-Courier
COLUMNIST



protection through having U.S. citizens live with her family. I was one of those "acompanantes". In the three weeks I lived with them, I was her shadow any time she went out the door of her house I went with her. We only had one written threat that said in Spanish, "Watch out, the Wild Tigers are coming for you". I learned to sell cloth in the market, how to travel by crowded bus, and how to avoid military checkpoints.

I never did learn to make very good tortillas. The power of my presence rested in the fact that if they killed her, they would have to shoot me too and then they would have an international incident of harming a USA citizen. They would lose considerable money from the USA that supported their dictatorship.

In March of 1996 it was International Women's Day and a woman from Sweden, from Amnesty International, came to see Dona Maria. In a ceremony in the Hyatt ballroom she honored Dona Maria as a force and a voice for woman's rights everywhere.

Sunday is Coming



By Gary Miller

As I look back on this last deer season, it seems that bad news could be the theme. I hunted hard but my effort only produced minimal results. If I had to compare the hours in the stand to my harvest ledger, I would definitely be in the red. What makes it even worse is I knew I was in a place where some big bucks lived. In fact, I missed my opportunity at one of those bucks because I couldn't get my crossbow up before said buck left. Another bummer was when I arrowed a ten-pointer but was never able to find him. I think he's still alive. At least I hope he is. When I think about it however, I can't remember a year that was marked by more successes than failures. The truth is bad news is a lot more normal than good news, and it's easier to find. It's certainly that way in most areas of life.

One of my favorite evangelists of times past was a black man by the name of E.V. Hill. The way

he preached could make me confess sins I'd never committed. He tells a story about a woman in his church who always sat on the front row. Her nickname was Eighteen Hundred.

It was given to her because she was so old that everyone thought she must have been born in the 1800's. Everyone loved Eighteen Hundred. Author, Shane Claiborne, tells how E.V. Hill shared the story with him. Every Sunday old Eighteen Hundred would sit in her usual spot in the front row. As Pastor Hill started preaching, she would start muttering, "Get to the good news, Pastor: get to the good news". And her commentary would get louder and louder as the sermon progressed. The longer he talked, the louder she got. He would be talking about how Jesus died on Friday, and she'd yell back, "Don't leave him there. Get to the empty tomb on Sunday." He'd be talking about how hatred, sin, and racism are

still alive today. And she'd shout back, "Move on Pastor. Get to the good news!" Eventually he would get to the good news, and she would shout "Amen!" at the top of her lungs.

I think about all that Eighteen Hundred went through in her life. Racism, slavery, poverty, and the likes. If anyone ought to wallow in the bad news it ought to be her. But Eighteen Hundred had not only found a story of bad news that ended in good news, but she also wanted to make sure it always ended the right way. It was this good news that overcame all the bad news she had endured in her life.

Friend, I know the world is full of bad news. But it always has been. The gospel, however, is good news, and it is good news for everyone who hears it. So, don't forget, it's alright to recognize all the bad things that may be going on, but don't end the story on Friday. Sunday is coming.

SENATE PASSES MADON RESOLUTION ON STREAM AND WATERWAY CLEANUP

The Kentucky Senate on Thursday approved Senate Joint Resolution (SJR) 62, legislation sponsored by Sen. Scott Madon, R-Pineville, aimed at helping communities more easily clean debris from streams and waterways following flood events.

The resolution directs the Energy and Environment Cabinet's Division of Water to provide clear guidance to state and local governments on how to access waterways and remove debris after flooding. It also calls for recommendations to streamline permitting requirements and improve coordination during cleanup efforts.

Madon said the measure reflects ongoing concerns he hears from local leaders and residents across his district who continue to deal with clogged creeks, sediment buildup, and flooding issues long after major storms.

"It's not often I go anywhere in my district without someone bringing up the condition of our creeks and streams," Madon said. "People are seeing water rise in places that have never flooded before, and local officials want to address the problem. This resolution is about making sure they have clear guidance on how to move forward and do the work safely and properly."

Kentucky has experienced repeated flooding disasters in recent years, particularly across Eastern Kentucky, where debris such as fallen trees, sediment, and other materials often remain in waterways long after floodwaters recede. Blocked or restricted waterways can increase the risk of future flooding and threaten nearby roads, bridges, and other infrastructure.

Madon said SJR 62 is intended to provide clarity so communities can better navigate the permitting process and work more efficiently with state and federal agencies responsible for regulating waterways.

"Local governments want to protect their communities and keep waterways flowing properly," Madon said. "This resolution asks the Division of Water to clearly lay out the process so communities understand what's required and how to move forward with cleanup efforts."

Under the resolution, the Division of Water will prepare a report for the General Assembly detailing the permits required for debris removal, activities that are prohibited in waterways, debris disposal requirements, and special considerations for hazardous materials. The report will also include recommendations for potential legislative or administrative changes that could make the cleanup process more efficient for state and local governments.

SJR 62 now heads to the Kentucky House of Representatives for consideration.



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Magic City Memories

1954 photograph of Harvey Lee Yeary Jr. later known as Lee Majors or the Six Million Dollar Man. This photograph is from Brazelton Catamount, Brazelton Junior High School in Paducah Kentucky. We all remember him from Middlesboro Kentucky. Photo courtesy of Marvin Meyers.

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