



Tam's Front Porch Ponderings
Tammy Terry
TamsFrontPorch@IrvineOnline.Net

Some days I'm very fortunate and get to spend time with my niece or nephews on the ride home from work. With football and soccer schedules the way they are, I get to be the 'taxi' driver and I love every minute of it. Monday afternoon was Scarlett's day to ride home with me and after we made our usual stops; gas station, Wendy's, we

Good Bye, Old Friend . . .

headed up Sand Hill to get ready for her soccer game. After we topped the second hill, we saw signs alerting us of "Flagman Ahead" so I slowed down and rounded Patty Hall's curve at a snail's pace. What we saw left us both . . . speechless!

The road was full of men dressed in glow-in-the-dark vests and they advised me to proceed slowly. Immediately I noticed a tree was missing, not just any tree, but one of the massive Oak trees that guards the entrance to a small cemetery that I've always called "Two Oaks." I'm not sure what the correct name of the graveyard is, but for as long as I've lived on Sand Hill, (ummm, about 49 years) the "Two Oaks" have been there. They sit really close to the highway and more than once, when crowded by an oncoming car, I've squeezed by without nicking an Oak. Others have not

been as fortunate, there are scuffs and scratches and at least one rather large scar where an unlucky driver was whammed into the side of it, but otherwise, they've stood the test of time and solemnly guarded the gate. Now, one was gone, the other 'trimmed' to look like some horribly deformed tree from a scary movie. I thought I would cry. I glanced over at Scarlett and her face reflected mine, we both couldn't believe it.

I crept by the scene of the crime, staring as a ginormous chain saw dug at what was left of the tree stump. One man was patching a hole in the highway, I'm sure put there as the Oak fell to its death, while the other men swept branches from the road and some sort of heavy machinery loaded sections of the tree into the back of a dump truck. My heart ached!

We drove on to my

house in silence, no words could describe the sadness I felt over the tree being cut. When I say it was a massive tree, I mean it was HUGE! I dare say it would take four or five people with outstretched arms, to reach around it, maybe more! "I wonder how old it was," Scarlett whispered as we pulled into the driveway. "I don't know, I wonder if they thought to count the rings?," I quietly answered. "Maybe we could do that one day, you know, stop by and count the rings on the stump," she said. "Yeah, we could do that," I replied, "I just can't believe they cut it!"

Scarlett put on her soccer uniform and after feeding the dog, we headed off the hill to her game. Again, I drove ever so slowly as we passed "Two Oaks" Cemetery and as luck would have it, we fell in behind the dump truck hauling away the tree trunk. It appeared to be in four pieces and one sat precariously on the very back of the truck. There wasn't a tail gate on the truck and we could see the span of the trunk went from one side of the truck all the way over to the other side. "Oh I wish we could follow them and count the rings!", Scarlett said. "Maybe they're taking it someplace for display, like the one they have at Natural Bridge." It was then that Scarlett discovered we'd left home with only one of her soccer shoes and I quickly pulled in at "Yancy's Barn" to turn around and go back. Oddly enough, the dump truck in front of us did the same thing. "Look Scarlett, they're gonna turn around and take the trunk to my house so we can count the rings," I teased her and we headed back up Sand Hill still behind the tree in the back of the truck.

Suddenly the truck pulled over and backed into an area that drops over into a holler and the tree was dumped. I was sick! Knowing it was there, in the holler, every time I drive by, just too much to think about. I wondered about a friend of mine that carves wooden bowls from trees such as this and thought it a shame that the tree could have had new life in his hands.

Again, as I rounded Patty Hall's curve, I met one of the trucks full of men who had cut down the tree. I stopped traffic and hung out my window and asked, "Did you count the rings?"

He grinned and said, "There were a BUNCH!"

"But did you COUNT the rings?" I asked him again.

"Nope, but I bet that tree was at least 200 years old" he replied.

Scarlett and I drove away slowly, feeling honored to have known a 200 year old tree and when we passed the cemetery, Scarlett softly said, "Now you'll have to call it Lone Oak Cemetery."

All I could do was nod, the words stuck in my throat, but I managed to whisper a final farewell. "Goodbye old friend, I won't forget."

ESTILL COUNTY SCHOOLS MENUS

Milk is included with every meal; plus assorted juices included with breakfast

MONDAY Sept. 30	TUESDAY Oct. 1	WEDNESDAY Oct. 2	THURSDAY Oct. 3	FRIDAY Oct. 4
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SOUTH IRVINE BREAKFASTS

Pizza Flat Bread Assorted Juice	Biscuit & Sausage Applesauce	Mini Pancakes Assorted Juice	Toast Cereal	Hot Fudge Pop Tart, Cereal, OJ
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SOUTH IRVINE LUNCHES

Chili Crisпитos Salsa Green Beans Corn Oranges	Corn Dog Corn Cucumber Slices Dip Peaches	Ham on Bun Steamed Broccoli Mashed Potatoes Ketchup or Mayo Raisins	Chili w/Crackers Grilled Cheese Carrot Sticks Broccoli & Cauli- flower Bits, Fruit	Chicken Fajita w/Soft Shell, Salsa Refried Beans Carrots/Dip Fruit Cocktail
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ESTILL SPRINGS & WEST IRVINE BREAKFASTS

Pizza Flat Bread Pineapple Chunks	Biscuit & Sausage Applesauce	Mini Pancakes Assorted Juice	Toast, Reece's Puff Cereal	Hot Fudge Pop Tart, Trix Cereal
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ESTILL SPRINGS & WEST IRVINE LUNCHES

Pepperoni Pizza or Chicken Que- sadilla, Oranges Green Beans CA Vegetables	Corn Dog or BBQ on Bun Corn Cucumber Slices Dip, Peaches	Chili w/crackers Peanut Butter Sand., Oranges Broccoli & Cauli- flower Bits	Hamburger on Bun, LTP Potato Smiles Pork & Beans Strawberry Cup	Chicken Pattie or Ham on Bun Broccoli Mashed Potatoes Raisins
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ESTILL COUNTY MIDDLE SCHOOL BREAKFAST

Sunrise Flat Bread Cinnamon toast Pop Tart	Sausage Biscuit Pop Tart Applesauce	Mini Pancakes Pop Tart Raisins	Toast, Reece's Puff Cereal Pop Tarts	Pop Tarts Cereal Juice
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ESTILL COUNTY MIDDLE SCHOOL LUNCH

Big Daddy Pizza or Chicken Que- sadilla Romaine Salad Carrot Sticks Oranges	Corndog or Stromboli on Bun Baby Bakers Cauliflower Grapes	Chicken Rings w/Roll or Bologna Sandwich Vegetable Medley Sweet Potatoes Peaches	Cheeseburger or Deli Turkey on Bun, LTP Baked Beans Potato Wedges Apples	Ravioli or Spagetti Breadstick Romaine Salad Corn Strawberry Cup
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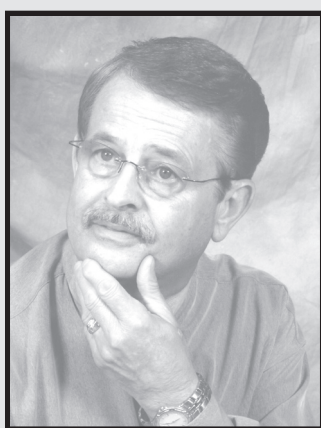
ESTILL COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL BREAKFAST

Cereal Pop Tarts Yogurt	Sausage Biscuit, Cereal, Yogurt Banana or Apple	Chicken Biscuit Cereal, Pop Tart, Yogurt, Fruit	Egg & Cheese Biscuit, Cereal Pop Tart, Yogurt	Breakfast Pizza Cereal Pop Tarts
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ESTILL COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL LUNCH

Bosco w/Marinara Sauce or Chicken Quesadilla w/ salsa, corn Romaine Salad Fruit	Hamburger or Hot dog on Bun, LTPO Baked Beans Potato wedges Tropical Fruit Apple	Chicken Pattie or Chuck Wagon on Bun, Green Beans Sweet Potatoes Bananas Peaches	Deli Turkey or Ham & Cheese on Bun, Pepper sticks Potato Wedges Pears Peaches	Ravioli w/Bread- stick or Pork Chop on Bun Green Beans Corn, Applesauce Fruit Cocktail
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