

MM Summer Blue Sheet

from Puget Sound on the 4th of July, 2012

A GRANDFATHER'S THOUGHTS AT A GRANDSON'S WEDDING

"Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and be joined to his wife..." (Genesis 2:24)

The wedding was in St Vincent's Catholic Church in San Rafael, California, a century old mission church and boys school with a fine collection of stained glass windows. I had a front row seat. There was time for my mind to wander.

Three scenes came to mind.

Scene one: Grandson Kyle, age five, at our summer property. He is sailing alone in our little dinghy. I have been teaching him to sail as I have each of our grandchildren by the time they were five. It is the day when I disconnect the tethering rope. He heads west into the open water. His mother stands by. "Is that my little boy? Can he get back?" I answer, "He'll be O.K."

In due time that far off tiny sailboat tacked into the wind and came back to shore.

Scene two: Grandson Kyle, age twenty one, back at our summer property with a girl named Sabrina. My mind flashes to her first attempt at splitting wood. To everyone's surprise she took that heavy splitting maul and split a heavy block of hard madrona right down the middle. I remember saying to Kyle, "She's a keeper."

By then Kyle had learned to sail our larger sailboat. Sabrina had never been on a sailboat. She seemed unafraid. She was ready to trust Kyle to take care of her as well as the boat. They sailed across the inlet and out of sight around the far island. Will they be OK? Yes, I thought, they'll be OK.

Scene three: Grandson Kyle, age 28, and Sabrina standing before the altar. Now I was daydreaming up a metaphor of sorts as the wedding went on. I was translating the vows in my head:

"Do you, Kyle, know what you are doing? Can you navigate the stormy winds as well as the calm?"

"Do you, Sabrina, feel safe starting this voyage with Kyle? Do you trust him with your future? Do you want to risk sailing life with him?"

I glanced at both sets of parents whose front row pew I shared. I wondered what they were thinking. I suspect they were thinking the ages-old thoughts of hopes and fears for younger people embarking on unknown waters. Do they know what they are doing? Can they make it?

A wedding is a launching party. A bon voyage party. A time for letting go of the moorage lines. A time for hoping and praying that lessons learned in days before their remembering will work. The wisdom of Genesis is recited to remind us of how it is and what a wedding symbolizes:

"Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and be joined to his wife..." (Genesis 2:24) (I always add: ***"And the woman shall leave her father and mother and be joined to her husband."***)

The last we heard they were in Hawaii. The mothers and fathers — and grandfathers — waved goodbye. Goodbye, by the way, means "God be with ye." I'm thinking again, "They'll be OK." So may it be.

THOUGHTS ON THE 4TH

The Google logo for the day used words from Woodie Guthrie's song, ***"This land is your land, this land is my land."*** The story is that Guthrie wrote this as a protest song from the point of view of those who rode the rails on freight cars instead of sleeping cars, who lived in tent camps instead of first class motels.

Whose land was it before it was your land and my land? Will we ever say this is "our land?" Who is paying for the land we have? When fires rage in a city that fails to fund itself, who bears the cost? We saw numerous fire trucks on the freeway heading south. No doubt these trucks were going out of state to fight someone else's fires.

What is wrong with paying taxes to have the kind of a country where people help other people, where we provide things for all of us that individuals cannot pay for themselves, for asking everyone to pay a fair share of whatever it takes to have a nation to be proud of?

What is wrong with asking those who have benefitted the most to contribute to the country that has made their gain possible? If you need a Bible verse before you think straight this from Luke 12:48 is as good as any: *"Those to whom much has been given much shall be required."*

Whose land can it be for millions who live here but can only dream of citizenship? Whose land will it be if more and more of its treasure end up in the hands of the few?

I'm wearing my stars and stripes sweater today, as I always do on the Fourth of July, and Memorial Day and Veteran's day. I'm singing *"This land is your land,"* I'm praying *'God bless America,'* I'm pledging *"with liberty and justice for all."* My flag flies. My faith flutters.

— Art Morgan, July 4, 2012
