

MM Summer Blue Sheet — July 28, 2011

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Our 33rd Year

Morgan's Moment...

"Beside still waters...."

Words emerge
as I glance out our cabin window.

The sailboat reflects itself
sandy bottom is revealed
even sand dollars show up.

Not a good day for sailing of course
but good for water skiers
and swimmers.

Foolish to think it's always this way
waters always still
sun-sent shadows reflecting.

I've seen the angry waves
throwing our boat about
more fearful than peaceful.

What is is not what was
and what may not be again
but this moment is to be treasured.

Even now a ripple blurs the reflection
reminding that still waters change
and troubled waters will calm.

*"The Spirit of God was moving
over the face of the waters...."*

according to Genesis.
Art Morgan

BRAINS, COMPUTERS AND PASSWORDS

We changed bank accounts, credit cards, automatic payment charges, cell phones and added a computer in recent months. It's a bit crazy and tests the neuron capabilities of our brains.

You can't talk to your bank or financial management company or Social Security or telephone provider unless you have a number or code word for identification.

For every device or service you add, a security number is required. We like to use one we've used and remember. Of course they would rather have you use one you have never used before which is one you are less likely to remember. It's hard to keep dreaming up passwords.

I don't mind keeping the wrong people from getting into our business, but find it a bother when I can't remember how to get in either.

As one prepares for the dimming of the brain's capacity for recovering such things in a timely fashion I remember what I once learned when some ardent Sunday school teacher tried to get us to memorize the books of the Bible. I learned that you didn't need to memorize if you knew to look in the front of the Bible. They're all there. Just one less thing to carry around in your memory.

I'm gradually learning that I don't have to know everything. That's what Google is for. In fact, according to a terrific brain article I've been reading, *"The Power of Noise,"* by Douglas Fox, (*Discover Magazine, Spring 2011, p. 22ff*),

"The human brain is sloppy, error-prone and unreliable. But that might be the perfect model for a radically more powerful kind of computer."

The brain is far more advanced than any computer, but any computer is more accurate in handling information than any brain. Which means, to me I think, that it's OK to let my computer remember as many things as possible in order to let my brain do what no computer can do.

The only things I have to master myself are some key passwords. Maybe a password to a document that contains all the other passwords I need.

Someone suggested God must be a computer to be allegedly able to know and remember everything. Sorry to hear that.

Just don't let me forget the combination to the lock on my sailboat.

BOOK CORNER

A summer dream is to have a good book and lazy afternoons for reading. I have lots of books with most going unread. I'll list a few things I've read:

"Hot - Living through the next 50 years," by Mark Hertsgaard. It's worth a sobering look.

"Justice - What's the right thing to do?" by Michael Sandel, a good discussion of morality and ethics.

WHAT WOULD REAGAN DO?

Early dawn. Jean is up and out by her morning campfire attending to her lifetime spiritual and emotional routine. I'm beginning to dawn. I plug the radio into my ear and flick it on. It's set on NPR via a local outlet station. My job is to gather some news. Jean doesn't do much news out here. I have to do something.

Public radio seems to have time for interviews. They come from all sources. The left thinks their soft on the right. The right thinks they only do left. This morning one of the interviewees was David Stockman, national budget director under Ronald Reagan. Scott Simon asked, *"Mr. Stockman, if he were in this present budget crisis, what would Ronald Reagan do?"* I woke up a bit. I've heard Stockman before, but not recently.

In some circles that would be like asking, *"What would God do?"*

Stockman reminded all us sleepyhead listeners again that in 1982 the country was in a deep recession like this if not worse. Then he said, *"What President Reagan did was raise taxes. Not just once, but in the two following years as well."*

I haven't taken time to look up the actual transcript of that NPR interview, but I'm sure it's there. It's not something he hasn't been saying for a long time.

Stockman sounded a bit appalled at his Republican Party's performance in the present crisis, wondering what many Americans have wondered, how we can finance this nation with the lowest tax rate for corporate and private wealth in history. It is a gap too great to be closed by spending cuts and certainly not by further tax cuts.

By then I was hopelessly wide awake. Some Democrats and Independents (but not Tea Party Republicans) have hoped the President might make such a statement.

Stockman added that the current Social Security income was not such that it can sustain the present Social Security system without some changes. He also said that the Pentagon cannot be allowed a continued blank check to provide services even beyond what it wants. He no doubt said more, but in fact was couldn't because even his extended interview was cut off by the host because it had run too long.

It was time for me to get up and into my morning stretch and exercise program that precedes our morning walk to the ferry dock.

The thought was so much on my mind that I put down my shaver which I carry around the cabin while getting my body moving, checking the outside temperature and looking to see whether my boat is still moored to its anchor. I opened my lap top to write these words. I'll think about them again and maybe send them out after breakfast.

It seems that sometime in the morning report there was a poll about God's rating in this budget crisis. Something about Congress doing only a bit poorer than God and Oprah coming out ahead. It's crazy of course. It makes me wonder whether the public would support Reagan's solution if he were President today.

Today's e-mail from Enid Jones has this quote from Warren Buffett:

I could end the deficit in 5 minutes; you just pass a law that says that anytime there is a deficit of more than 3% of GDP, all sitting members of Congress are ineligible for re-election."

Some might suddenly see a need for adding some revenue to the deficit equation. Praise the Lord (Reagan) and pass the hat. And pronounce the benediction. Amen.

Art Morgan July 30, 2011