

When did orange slices become a hardware store gourmet candy?

From what I can tell, the older a person gets the less they like change, specifically changes they didn't make themselves and do not have any control over. I fit squarely into that category. Changes that come my way are almost never something I decide to do on my own. I confess I am a stick in the mud on all things related to change.

The changes can be big or little; it doesn't really seem to make much difference to me. I work to try and make the design of advertisements in our print products and online unique and different. So, it is hard to fess up about not liking changes in the design of products I am looking for on grocery shelves. But that is where I am in life.

A few days ago, I was looking for soy sauce, a



Northwest Passage
By Loyd Ford

product I do not believe I have ever purchased before in my life. I have seen the bottle before in the fridge but I never used the stuff. I was first confounded because soy sauce isn't located near other condiments, or tomato ketchup. It is found near the rice and other such products. When I did find it, the package wasn't anything close to the packaging I was familiar with.

Not long after this I

went on a search for a particular type of candy that I have enjoyed during the Christmas holidays since I was a kid. I always bought orange slices at Marshall's IGA at Christmas that were always fresh.

It was for certain that shopping at Marshall's wasn't ever going to happen again. I looked ever where for them. I did find a couple of bags. I didn't buy them since they were nearly hard as rocks and certainly not fresh. I am 73-years-old and I have been a customer of Marshall's IGA since I was a little kid and I am not going to get used to that change

probably ever. When I was a little kid, my great-grandmother used to send me and my brothers to Marshall's IGA to buy her butter-scotch flavored snuff. But that is a whole other story.

This past Sunday my wife bought a package of orange slices for me at Lowes, of all places. Guess what? They were exceedingly fresh. I ate three of them. They almost sent me into sugar shock.

Later I learned that package of orange slices cost nearly five bucks. Just a few years ago that size package of orange slices would have cost

about a dollar. I am not going to get used to that. My goodness when I was a kid candy bars were much larger than they are today and just cost a nickel. You could buy an ice-cold soft drink for a dime and get a package of peanuts to go in your drink for a nickel.

Okay so that was a long time ago. But the real truth is things have changed a lot. There are products and businesses we don't have anymore. There are things we don't do any more. In my life time we have traded in porch sitting for social media; and family meals for store bought frozen pizzas.

Just recently I sat in the living room of a family member on a Sunday afternoon and talked with other family members that happened to drop by. When everyone got up to leave, we asked ourselves why didn't we meet like that more often. Something has changed with us and I don't think what ever caused it asked us for permission.

We live in a climate of change, most of them are unplanned and even less appreciated. Who ever thought orange slices would become a gourmet candy you purchase at a hardware store?

Backseat theology through the eyes of a child



By Emily Morrison

The world is full of mystery and magic and wonder. Few of us have eyes that can see all of this as well as children. Young children are still able to experience awe.

Eight is a special age, when childhood begins to shorten into adolescence. Still young enough that most are still mystified, but beginning to see the harder edges of the human experience. They start teasing out the contradictions and unfairnesses they see in the world.

Monday nights I get the privilege to being

able to eavesdrop on the musings of my son and one of his best buddies on the way to basketball practice. Society has always pointed to girls as being chatting. I'm

starting to believe this is an ill-advised stereotype. You would not believe how much ground these boys can cover in the seven minutes it takes us to drive to the elementary school gym. They managed to give one another a complete holiday run down, discuss their latest inventive projects, make plans for a Snow Day, and more.

Somewhere between debating the theoretical powers of Santa Claus and reviewing the process of building a wooden gun that shoots rubber bands, the boys

stumbled onto one of life's challenges. From the backseat, "I'm not saying it's God's fault." "Right, it's nobody's fault. It's just the way it is." You rarely find this level of acceptance in adults.

What must it feel like to not need to assign blame? To naturally accept that all things are working for our good?

I think we could all benefit from the boy's approach. To love life and each other knowing that we are in the palm of His hand.

Blessed are the humble and poor in spirit



Tales of Grace
By Leigh Ann Northcutt

In "The Ragamuffin Gospel," Brennan Manning wrote, "The poor in spirit have made peace with their flawed existence. They are aware of their lack of wholeness, their brokenness, the simple fact that they don't have it all together. While they do not excuse their sin, they are humbly aware that sin is precisely what has caused them to throw themselves at the mercy of the Father."

Jesus also talked about the poor in spirit. He began His first major sermon with "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 5:3, NIV) The International Standard Version translates this verse to say, "How blessed are those who are destitute in spirit

it, because the kingdom from heaven belongs to them!" In other translations, the words "poor in spirit" are translated as those who recognize they are spiritually helpless and those who depend only on God.

I think those are the people who know without a doubt that they have nothing to bring to the table when they sit

in the presence of God. They have come through sin and failure to seek God on the other side. They are tired and broken, but they know a lot about the One on whom they depend.

They know God's mercy because they have such need of it. They have seen His righteousness because He clothed their shame and nakedness with it. They appreciate God's grace because they have nothing to give Him in return. They are overwhelmed by His love because they can look back and see Jesus carrying their sin to the cross.

Sometimes I wonder why we, as Christians, talk more about our successes than our failures. Why do we teach new believers to stand firm in

obedience more than we teach them to seek God in weakness? Why do we pray for wisdom and strength but not brokenness and humility?

The author of James said that God gives grace to the humble (James 4:6). Paul said God's power works best in our weakness (2 Cor. 12:9). And Jesus said the kingdom of heaven, God's spiritual kingdom on earth, belongs to the poor in spirit.

The humble, the weak, and the poor in spirit receive much from God. Maybe it is because, as Brennan Manning said, they have made peace with their flawed existence and have thrown themselves at the mercy of the Father.

Well, at least it is not snow. I'd like to say that is enough about the weather, but I saw a display from 1984 of the Polar Vortex. It looks very similar to the one we are having now. It wasn't a nice January and February then. At least not for me anyway.

I heard a quote the other day and it made me think of Albie Harrell, my grandmother. She would be 149 this March. My oldest brother in fact would turn 98 years old in September. This year my parents would celebrate their 99th anniversary. I told you I was the baby on both sides of the family.

My grandmother passed when I was 10. She however lived with us those 10 years. She told me lots of stories from Land Between the Rivers. Yep, that was what it was when she lived there. It was

several years before it became the LBL. She grew up in the Ferguson Spring area; you know the suburb of Energy.

One of the things she told me was that whatever you do on the first day of the year is what you will do the rest of the year. So that is why I waited to average grades over the holidays to New Years Day. I wanted to keep my job. Guess when I am writing this column?

She told me some

really scary stories at bedtime. I loved her. If there were ghosts in the story, she didn't call them that, rather haunts. I think this was probably what her grandfather called them. She said he stole away on a ship from Ireland to America. In a pickle barrel no less. I have heard other similar stories so that kind of put great-great-grandfathers story in some doubt.

As I was approaching that 10-year-old time, she must have figured out I needed the talk since I wasn't getting it anywhere else. This little saying has been put to counter cross stitch by a fellow teacher of mine. She absolutely loved it when I shared it with her. She told me, "Love is like a butterfly, it would just as soon land on a pile of cow manure as a rose" (maybe not necessarily in those

words) This was one of many quotes from her. She also made the absolute best egg custard pie. I loved her dearly. Sorry Cherryl, I was her favorite.

Taking time to wish these people a fabulous Happy Birthday this week. Kathy Watson, Kelsey Littrell, Trey Shelton, Michael Arant, Bob Mobley, Gay Deaton, Andrew Woods, Rick Cocke and Suzie MacGowan. Take time to celebrate and eat the cake.

If you don't see your name or loved ones, let me know. I bet I can get them included.

Happy Anniversary to Mr. & Mrs. Merlin Ray. Celebrate and have a great one.

Again, if you want one included, let me know.

Stay safe, stay well and as always, stay in touch.

Our View

Hegseth is wrong and corrupted

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth has begun a process to demote Senator Mark Kelly and cut his retirement after Sen. Kelly and other retired veterans released a video of them calling on service members to "refuse illegal orders."

Senator Kelly said Monday he had risked his life to defend the constitution of the United States which includes the First Amendment right of every American citizen to speak out.

Sen Kelly said Hegseth and President Donald Trump are sending a message to every retired service member that if they say something he or President Trump don't like they will come after them.

Senator Kelly does know what is right while on the other hand the President Trump has only concern for what he wants and Hegseth, if he wants to stay in the position, he is grievously unqualified for, must do what Trump wants.

Senator Kelly is standing up for the right of each of us to stand up to a power-hungry despot. Senator Kelly cautioned our service men and women not to obey illegal orders. He did not say disobey orders. Our service men and women are trained in the rules of engagement, they know what war crimes are.

President Trump continues to try and use our military against both our civilian population and in attacks on other countries without congressional approval, which is required by our constitution.

All of this is going on while most of Kentucky's congressional delegation is sitting on its hands.

This is wrong, Hegseth is wrong and corrupted.

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Loyd W. Ford-----Editor & Publisher

Teresa J. Ford-----Publisher

Emily Morrison-----Staff

Mary Larson-----Staff

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