



Neil Armstrong
8/5/1930 ~ 8/25/2012

Recalling A Life Well Lived

BY KATHLEEN PARKER
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TAMPA, Fla. — I had hoped he would wait until I got here, but he was in a rush to go.
“I’m dead,” he said a couple of days before he was. “I died yesterday,” he said a few minutes later. Several times, exasperated upon realizing he wasn’t in fact dead, he would chuckle and say, “This is a helluva mess.”

Mauricio Rubio, my stepfather of several decades, was humorous to the end — an end he very much wanted sooner than it finally arrived. At 91, his body was tucked out; his mind had already been made.

When it’s time, it’s time. No heroic measures, no medicine, just minimal maintenance. He was a doctor after all — a psychiatrist — and he recognized the exit signs before others noticed them. Despite his self-diagnosis — “old” — he wasn’t quite able to coax his vessel out the door. He wanted to depart with the same precision he had lived his life: Disciplined and without bother to others.

Even though Mauricio was my stepfather once removed — meaning he married my stepmother after she and my father divorced (you’ll need a thick sketch pad if you’re serious about tracing my family tree) — he had been part of my life since high school.

He wasn’t so much a father figure as a friend who offered as much as I was willing to receive. He was also a model of how to live — and how to die. Small in stature, huge in spirit, he was in medical school by age 16 and came to the U.S. from Mexico at 21. I wrote about him once before 11 years ago when he decided to return to work at 80. Retirement bored him.

He was a well-known figure in the Tampa Bay area, not only for having treated many in the angst-filled population but also for having married the belle of any ball — Sarah Jane.

She came into my life when I was 4-ish, following my mother’s death, and became “Mama” soon thereafter. For her wedding trousseau (women still did that then), she bought matching dresses for me. She was and remains the light that brightens rooms, the party that materializes with her presence. An interior designer with a knack for transforming the mundane into the sublime, she has made her own mark in



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Tampa as a member of “The Chislers Inc.,” a group of women dedicated to the historical restoration of the 1891 Tampa Bay Hotel, more recently part of the University of Tampa. She also was featured brilliantly in a book, “A Place Called Canterbury,” by former *New York Times* writer Dudley Clendinen.

His mother, now deceased, and mine both called Canterbury Tower home, and Clendinen lovingly recorded the retirement center’s characters and culture. It was not possible to exclude so colorful a denizen as “Fiesta Jane,” my preferred nickname of many that also include “Mama Jane” and “Toots,” the latter her suggestion when a son-in-law once asked what he should call her.

Together, she and Mauricio made a point of celebrating life. I never heard either complain. When they moved to Canterbury, I asked if they were going there to grow old. “No, we’re going there to young up!” said Fiesta.

For years they hosted a huge February birthday party for their fellow Aquariuses and assorted Pisces. They served guests Mauricio’s famous margaritas for full moon parties on their balcony overlooking Tampa Bay. The same balcony brought them a new family member, a cockatiel named “Pepe” who landed there one day. He and Mauricio kept each other close company for 27 years. “They’re staying alive for each other,” Sarah Jane told me several weeks ago. Pepe visited Mauricio in the health center. They said their goodbyes.

Upon his departure, Mauricio wanted no fuss, no service, no anything — just a brief visit with the Neptune Society, a cremation company that also will spread one’s ashes in the surrounding salt waters. He urged Sarah Jane to heed his wishes but said he knew she wouldn’t. “Well, just have one of your parties, then.”

And so we shall gather for one more margarita and a boat ride to celebrate a life well lived and a passing we all hope for — without drama, with family, friends, a bowl of ice cream (his last meal) and, if you’re lucky, a loyal bird — at peace with one’s time on Earth.

Gracias, salud y hasta luego, amigo.

Kathleen Parker’s email address is kathleen-parker@washpost.com.

Shrinking From The Debate

BY BILL O'REILLY
Creators Syndicate

A recent episode of the HBO program “The Newsroom” featured an expose of the lame presidential debate procedure we have accepted in America. The producer of the series, Aaron Sorkin, set up a confrontation between some Republican flunkies and the noble newsroom folks who wanted to change the debate format. Sorkin, a committed leftist, used the scenario to mock the GOP primary contenders, but the point is valid: The debates are largely a sham.

First of all, the candidates don’t have to answer the questions posed and often fly off into rehearsed bloviations that are as boring as they are offensive. The debate moderators rarely interrupt the bilge, leaving the politicians free to say whatever they want basically unchallenged. Any interruption would be considered “rude.” Yes, there is a follow-up question, but it is rarely: “Is it me, or did you just completely ignore the question I asked you?”

Instead of saying “you have 60 seconds to answer the question,” the moderator should be honest and state: “You have a minute to dodge what was asked and talk about anything you want.”

This year, the three presidential debates will be moderated by Jim Lehrer, Bob Schieffer and Candy Crowley. They are all veteran hard-news people who know their stuff. They are also polite establishment journalists who understand that they can ask whatever they want but will rarely get a direct answer. And they all seem fine with that.

The third debate will be the most excruciating because it will be “town hall” style. That means some regular citizens will get to ask some questions and stand there while President Obama and Mitt Romney dodge them.

The candidates prep for the debates by having a series of likely questions thrown at them by surrogates and memorizing scripted retorts. They pay consultants big money to advise them on the debates, but, really, fifth graders could do it.



Bill O'REILLY

The president knows he’ll be hit with statistics that indicate he has badly mismanaged the economy. Romney knows he’ll be asked questions about being a rich guy who wants to decimate entitlements for working Americans so that Donald Trump can buy another golf course. These guys know what’s coming. Should one of the moderators actually surprise them with a query that is not expected, they’ll fall back on how they love America and reality TV or something.

The face-to-face confrontations are also largely bogus, although here there is at least some drama. Historically, only two presidential contenders have benefited from debating: John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan. Kennedy looked vibrant standing across from Richard Nixon, who appeared to be auditioning for a role in “Night of the Living Dead.” Reagan looked powerful next to Jimmy Carter and openly mocked him for being weak and incompetent, which he was. Once voters got a look at Reagan and his confident pro-American demeanor, it was back to the peanut farm for Jimmy.

By the way, Carter won the presidency largely because of a debate, but it was nothing he did. Incredibly, President Gerald Ford told the world that Poland was a free country, which sent the Soviet leadership into spasms of laughter. Ford did that because he was so over-rehearsed that he completely lost his thought process.

So don’t expect much substance from the debates this October; it will not be there. It is conceivable that Obama and Romney could go after each other personally, which would at least be entertaining. I’m not expecting that, but, hey, if one guy is down in the polls big-time, he’ll have to go for the jugular. If that were to happen, expect the moderators to break tradition and interrupt. Enough is enough; honest emotion simply will not be tolerated.

Veteran TV news anchor Bill O'Reilly is host of the Fox News show “The O'Reilly Factor” and author of the book “Pinheads and Patriots: Where You Stand in the Age of Obama.”

the 29th annual parade a great event. The committee would like to thank the City of Yankton especially the Yankton Police, Yankton Street Department and Parks Department, Kmart, Unclaimed Freight, Abate, Yankton VFW Post 791 Honor Guard, Yankton School District, Yankton High School Band, Dance Team and Cheerleaders, parade judges and announcers to name a few.

It is rewarding to see how Yankton and surrounding communities come together to sponsor such a great family fun-filled weekend. We would like to thank all that watched and that entered the parade.

A big thanks goes out to all. We all look forward to the 2013 parade and hope to see you there.

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OPINION | OTHER THOUGHTS

Corps Should Not Charge For Water

ARGUS LEADER, Sioux Falls (Aug. 23): Where is the logic in asking for a storage fee for Missouri River water?

The Army Corps of Engineers is proposing starting a storage fee system by designating some water in the Missouri River reservoirs as “surplus.” That means city and industrial users would have to have a contract to purchase water from the river’s six reservoirs, including four here in South Dakota.

Others argue that creating those dams flooded prime land and changed the state’s landscape forever. In exchange for being allowed to do that, the state was promised use of the water. The request goes against legal and historical precedence and is concerning and illogical given that a year ago, residents experienced historic flooding because of how the corps managed the upstream flow, the state’s congressional members say.

The change the corps is trying to initiate would mean four cities — Springfield, Chamberlain, Oacoma and Mobridge — would have to pay for water stored in the lakes created by dams, as would three community water systems — Randall Community Water District, Aurora Brule Rural Water and B-Y Water District. Prices would range from \$17.19 per acre-foot of water to \$174.66 for that same amount, depending on the lake. Lewis and Clark Lake water would be the most expensive.

The issue certainly has gained the attention of South Dakota Attorney General Marty Jackley, who has said the state will sue if the corps goes through with its plan.

After last year’s flooding and this latest issue, the corps has reinforced its long-standing reputation of being an arrogant agency. There is evidence upon evidence of the agency’s disconnect with people and the role that it should serve.

That can’t continue. It’s past time for the corps to change its ways and work with river states and communities along the Missouri instead of constantly being heavy-handed.

It’s also time for congressional delegations, particularly here in South Dakota but also up and down the river, to call for a review of how the agency operates. While the river is nicknamed the Mighty Mo, the corps has no reason to threaten states and communities with its powerful fist.

Instead, it’s time the corps — a government agency — works in conjunction with water users to benefit the public good.

OUR LETTER POLICY

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■ Please limit letters to 300 words or less. (During political campaigns, letters related to the campaign may be limited to 150 words.) Letters should deal with a single subject, be of general interest and state a specific point of view. Letters are edited with brevity, clarity and newspaper style in mind.

■ In the sense of fairness and professionalism, the **PRESS & DAKOTAN** will accept no letters attacking private individuals or businesses.

■ Specific individuals or entities addressed in letters may be given the opportunity to read the letter prior to publication and be allowed to answer the letter in the same issue.

■ Only signed letters with writer’s full name, address and daytime phone number for verification will be accepted. Please mail to: Letters, 319 Walnut, Yankton, SD 57078, drop off at 319 Walnut in Yankton, fax to 665-1721 or email to views@yankton.net.

TODAY IN HISTORY

By The Associated Press
Today is Monday, Aug. 27, the 240th day of 2012. There are 126 days left in the year.

Today’s Highlight in History: On Aug. 27, 1962, the United States launched the Mariner 2 space probe, which flew past Venus in December 1962.

On this date: In 1770, German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel was born in Stuttgart.

In 1776, the Battle of Long Island began during the Revolutionary War as British troops attacked American forces, who ended up being forced to retreat two days later.

In 1859, Edwin L. Drake drilled the first successful oil well in the United States, at Titusville, Pa.

In 1883, the island volcano Krakatoa blew up; the resulting tidal waves in Indonesia’s Sunda Strait claimed some 36,000 lives in Java and Sumatra.

In 1908, Lyndon Baines Johnson, the 36th president of the United States, was born near Stonewall, Texas.

In 1928, the Kellogg-Briand Pact was signed in Paris, outlawing war and providing for the peaceful settlement of disputes.

In 1939, the first turbojet-powered aircraft, the Heinkel He 178, went on its first full-fledged test flight over Germany.

In 1942, the *Times* of London published an editorial calling on the British government to promote the production of penicillin, the first mention of the antibiotic by a newspaper.

In 1957, the USS *Swordfish*, the second Skate Class nuclear submarine, was launched from the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Maine.

In 1967, Brian Epstein, manager of the Beatles, was found dead in his London flat from an overdose of sleeping pills; he was 32.

In 1979, British war hero Lord Louis Mountbatten and three other people, including his 14-year-old grandson Nicholas, were killed off the coast of Ireland in a boat explosion claimed by the Irish Republican Army.

In 1989, the first U.S. commercial satellite rocket was launched from Cape Canaveral, Fla. — a Delta booster carrying a British communications satellite, the Marcopolo 1.

Ten years ago: President George W. Bush met at his Texas ranch with Saudi Arabia’s ambassador Prince Bandar bin Sultan; a White House spokesman said Bush told the Saudi diplomat he had not yet decided whether to attack Iraq. A Tokyo court acknowledged for the first time

Japan’s use of biological weapons before and during World War II, but rejected demands for compensation by 180 Chinese who claimed they were victims of the germ warfare program.

Five years ago: Attorney General Alberto Gonzales announced his resignation after a controversy over the firings of nine U.S. attorneys. Atlanta Falcons quarterback Michael Vick apologized for “using bad judgment and making bad decisions” and vowed to redeem himself after pleading guilty in Richmond, Va., to a federal dogfighting charge.

One year ago: Hurricane Irene, after striking Puerto Rico and the Bahamas, pushed up the U.S. East Coast, prompting evacuations in New York City and leaving major flood damage in Vermont. Hundreds of soldiers and federal agents raided a casino in Monterrey in northern Mexico, two days after an arson attack on a gambling house killed 52 people.

Today’s Birthdays: Cajun-country singer Jimmy C. Newman is 85. Author Dame Antonia Fraser is 80. Actor Tommy Sands is 75. Bluegrass singer-musician J.D. Crowe is 75. Musician Daryl Dragon is 70. Actress Tuesday Weld is 69. Actor G.W. Bailey is 68. Rock singer-musician Tim Bogert is 68. Actress Marianne Sagebrecht is 67. Ex-porn star Harry Reems is 65. Country musician Jeff Cook is 63. Actor Paul Reubens is 60. Rock musician Alex Lifeson (Rush) is 59. Actor Peter Stormare is 59. Actress Diana Scarwid is 57. Rock musician Glen Matlock (The Sex Pistols) is 56. Pro golfer Bernhard Langer is 55. Country singer Jeffrey Steele is 51. Gospel singer Yolanda Adams is 51. Country musician Matthew Basford (Yankee Grey) is 50. Writer-producer Dean Devlin is 50. Rock musician Mike Johnson is 47. Rap musician Bobo (Cypress Hill) is 44. Country singer Colt Ford is 43. Actress Chandra Wilson is 43. Rock musician Tony Kanal (No Doubt) is 42. Actress Sarah Chalke is 36. Actor RonReaco (correct) Lee is 36. Rapper Mase is 35. Actress-singer Demetria McKinney is 34. Actor Aaron Paul is 33. Rock musician Jon Siebels (Eve 6) is 33. Actor Shaun Weiss is 33. Contemporary Christian musician Megan Garrett (Casting Crowns) is 32. Actor Kyle Lowder is 32. Actor Patrick J. Adams (TV: “Suits”) is 31. Singer Mario is 26. Actress Alexa Vega (“Spy Kids”) is 24.

Thought for Today: “Doing what’s right isn’t the problem. It is knowing what’s right.” — Lyndon Baines Johnson, 36th President of the United States (1908-1973).

FROM THE BIBLE

Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews.” John 18:36. Portals of Prayer, Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis

CONTACT US

PHONE:
(605) 665-7811
(800) 743-2968
FAX:
(605) 665-1721
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EMAIL ADDRESS:
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