

FROM THE TOP

Remember Memorial Day? You should, it was just Monday! It's a grand holiday which allows us a three-day weekend to take in a day-trip, go fishing or take the kids to Six Flags.

Memorial Day, however, is intended to be a day we honor our fallen veterans who died in service to this country.

Over the past week, I watched "We Were Soldiers" with Mel Gibson. The movie is based on the book, "We Were Soldiers Once, and Young," by Lt. Col. Hal Moore and Joseph L. Galloway. Col. Moore was the U.S. Commander at the Battle of Ia Drang (The Valley of Death), the first major U.S. battle of the Vietnam War.

Galloway was a Universal Press reporter who wanted to tell the story to the American people. In the movie, Col. Moore was curious as to why a reporter would drop into combat. When asked where he was from, Galloway told Col. Moore, "Refugio, Texas," to



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which Col. Moore quipped, "That's the first thing that's made sense all day."

Col. Moore, as portrayed in the book and movie, was a born leader. He cared for his soldiers. He made personal commitments to some.

He trained them and prepared them for battle so that they would likely survive.

He promised them he would bring them all home, dead or alive.

The movie goes to great detail to illustrate that Col. Moore was the first to step foot on the battlefield, and the last to step off.

"We Were Soldiers" is an

extremely violent movie with horrendous language. It is, after all, a war movie. I must advise that if you watch it, don't do so around children.

Col. Moore, as depicted in the movie, showed that true love is. Love, Biblical Love, involves commitment, sacrifice and a great concern for others' well-being. The soldiers who died for this country truly loved this country. Never-the-less, soldiers are not the only ones that are called to love their neighbors.

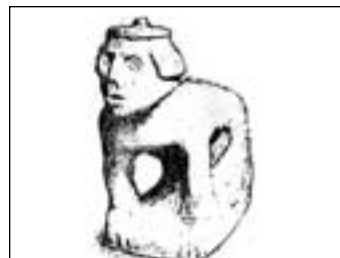
Jesus said in John 13, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also shall love one another."

Jesus loved us so much that He died for us. He expects His disciples, His followers today, to have that same level of love, commitment, sacrifice and concern for each other's well being.

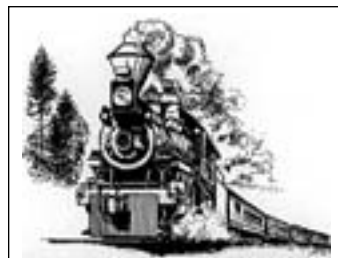
Love, by the way, is also a test of true Christianity, as Jesus also said, "By this shall all men know ye are my disciples."



**Jim Hogg
 Historical Park,
 Rusk**



**Caddoan Mounds
 State Historical Site,
 Alto**



**Texas State Railroad
 State Historical Park,
 Rusk**



SCENE IN PASSING

Woe, woe is me. A few bumps on life's road have caused me to remember the plight and perils of Olive. Do you remember the female counterpart in the comic strip long ago? It featured Popeye, canned spinach and his very muscular biceps. Poor Olive was snatched from the pit of doom by her hero, Popeye, many times. She would be tied to the railroad track. A train would be screaming toward her. And she cried, "Help, help. Save me." Popeye to the rescue, of course, after he scarfed down a can of spinach and flexed his biceps. This week I laughed at Olive and remembered pain in the present.

On Friday, the day after Thanksgiving, November '06, our building was devastated by water. Something broke and that's a long story. After more than four months, order was almost returned. Almost. And then, Olive screams for help again. Lightning struck in the pre-dawn hours, punc-



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turing holes in another water line. More flooding – woe, woe I am. Popeye failed to heed the call to duty, but our wonderful office family rallied for the rescue. Now, all this time, the Olive in me continues to hope that funds will be found for the continued operation of the Texas State Railroad. And while screaming in my silence, another wave of terrorists attacked from within. My office. A full blown migration of termites, looking for a new home, no doubt. That has been overcome, too. Many are the trials and tribula-

tions of Olive, Pauline and Marie.

These words are not intended to voice complaint. They are informational, to let you know that I really do not live in an ivory tower, sitting on a satin pillow, reading good books and eating chocolate candy. In my dreams. It's just a laugh at myself moment. Sometimes it helps to see what we have survived and to remember with gratitude all those who were a part of the rescue effort. What a blessing to have a daughter and son-in-law who more than adequately fill the shoes of Popeye.

Remember that work went off schedule in order to produce your Cherokeean Herald on its regular schedule. This is not a problem. Just an adjustment. Now, look at the date of this issue. It is May 30. No ordinary day, no sir. Have you ever heard old-timers refer to "once in a blue moon"? What does it mean? Does the moon really turn blue? I never heard an explanation

for the term until last week. A blue moon occurs when it is the second full moon in the same month. Some say it happens about every 2.7 years. I don't know that. We saw this month's first full moon on May 2. Tomorrow, May 3, we will dance with delight at the rare appearance of another "blue moon." Now, all of this and a dollar will still get you a cup of coffee at your favorite watering hole. Hope it brought the start of a smile to your face.

And at the reading of this, yesterday's new year will be five months old. Seven more to go. We will have had, hopefully, another festive celebration of Memorial Day weekend with proper and appropriate tribute paid to all who deserve to be celebrated by this national holiday. It is amazing that our nation is still intact. We have managed to survive some awesome events since its founding. Not to worry about that though. There's a new theory upon the earth that all of this will come to a close Dec. 21, 2012. This is based on prophecies/predictions gleaned from the Mayan calendar,

also another time schedule drafted by the Chinese.

These two documents, created before the construction of the pyramids in Egypt, just simply stop with the date given above. Should we worry? Should we quit sending money to the IRS? Quit trying to lose weight? What difference does it make? None. Just a few thoughts for speculation, contemplation on this rare, blue moon day in Texas. Let's leave it to the scientists to ponder the possibilities of an Earth flip, changing its polar positions, and moving oceans and land masses like a game of dominoes. Well, it's only five years and seven months to wait. And this is exciting. But will there be a dam on the Neches River by then? Will the TSR still be running? I am not a gambler. My faith is in our Creator and all that He created, including people. What a fun time to be alive.

Let's see. Five months down, seven to go in this year. Five years and seven months to wait for 12/21/2012. "Help.. Help.. Save me." Keep smiling and God bless.

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HIGH POINTS FROM EL CAMINO REAL

School's out and the Memorial Day holiday is behind us so folks along El Camino Real are coming to the realization that summertime is here. The kids are at home to stay until the end of August when peace returns to our households. Men like me who married school teachers get the wife and kids home at the same time. Everybody is bored and expect you to entertain them when you get home from work. This is probably the last four bit's worth of news you will get from a sane mind until sometime in September.

Sonia Howell has been patching up scrapes and bruises and looking after sick kids at the Alto school district for a long time. She is giving up her job as school nurse this year and going back to school to further her education as a registered nurse. She has been a wonderful part of our school system and will be missed by the faculty and staff who have worked with her over the years. Sonia will be missed by all children whose spirits she lifted with her healing hands and warm smile. Good luck in nursing school, Sonia!

Old Palestine Church will be celebrating 163 years of continuous ministry with the "Annual Second Sunday in June" reunion and singing, kicking off at 10:30 a.m. on June 10. The Reverend



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Bob Kinsey, a former pastor, will deliver the morning message at 11:30 a.m. Katy Kinsey and family will be the featured singers. A special invitation is extended to those who have been members of Old Palestine Church, or descendants of parents or grandparents who were members.

A covered dish lunch will be served after the service. If you plan on going you need to cook up your best recipe and carry it out there to show off. Old Palestine Church is a beautiful piece of our early East Texas history and these reunions keep that great history alive. If you have ties to this great little church, I hope you'll support them with your presence.

Carlton Jones had some hard luck last week in his tomato patch. Some bulls broke out of their pasture and got in a fight in Carlton's tomato patch. A hundred acres of pasture

and they had to fight on top of Carlton's prettiest tomato plants. Carlton didn't seem very upset to me, so I'm figuring he was either lying about the quality of the tomatoes or after farming in East Texas for so long, he is numb to anything that can happen. I started out working for Carlton in high school pulling watermelons. We could eat the ones we dropped and busted, so I was able to have all the watermelon I wanted. Carlton couldn't stop the tomato patch bullfight anymore than he will be able to stop those pea-eating deer in a few weeks. Don't forget the wild hogs. I never saw a boll weevil, but I bet they didn't do as much damage to a crop as deer, hogs and bulls can.

With Memorial Day being over and July 4 just around the corner, I've had some folks asking me if the Boys Scouts still disposed of old flags in a ceremony. I've always heard that there was a ceremony for discarding old tattered flags, but I've never seen it done.

If any of the area Boy Scout Troops will send me some information and let me know who to contact about this, I'll be proud to spread it around and get you a whole bunch of old flags to retire. We all like to get bright shiny new flags for the Fourth of July and we need to know what to do



Chris Davis' fluffy white cat stands back from her bowl of catfood in order to share with another nursing female, a gray fox.

with our old ones.

The grey fox that I told you about a few weeks ago is still making herself at home at our cat food bowl. She normally comes at night, but on Sunday she decided to make a visit for Sunday lunch. She looks like she is nursing some little ones, so I may have to buy more cat food. Some folks say that I ought to be worried about rabies, but the fox doesn't seem mad to me, it actually seems pretty happy.

The mother-in-law was up here on Sunday. She acted like she was mad about something, but I made sure she didn't bite the fox. The mother-in-law snapped at me a few times, but after all these years, I don't worry too much about it.

I want to say a big congratulations to all our young people who graduated this past weekend. After all those years of school, you must be feeling a little apprehensive about what

comes next.

Whatever comes next just enjoy the new experience and do your best. The one thing I have worried about this graduation season is Judy Johnson. With Ben out of school, I just can't imagine what Judy will do with her time. Is she going to make scrapbooks of his college years or maybe she could follow him around on his job and scrapbook that? I think Ben will be just fine now that he is graduated, but I'm worried about his momma.

I'm sure there is someone or something that I have forgotten this week – these early deadline holiday issues always through me off kilter. If you have any news buzzing around your place, be sure and fill me in on it.

I'll see ya next week! And remember, **A man who can smile when things go wrong has thought of someone he can blame.**

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