

# Commentary... Our beloved country

Jim Anderson  
Correspondent

The other day, my dear old pal, retired veterinarian, patriot, and fellow church-member, Phillip Brittain, sent me an electronic message entitled, "Laus Deo." I read it through, because most of what Philip sends me is worth the time. This one, for some reason, hit me right where America dwells in my heart.

"Laus Deo" translates to "Praise be to God," which is on a steel plaque hidden away in the very top of the Washington Monument. My way of thinking, should be emblazoned in all our hearts and minds as well.

I wish I could have been a part of the planning and building of our beautiful Capital. I could have shook the hand of the man my grandfather, Benjamin Franklin Rockefeller, was named for, and perhaps even held the string of his kite. I would also have shed the tears and felt the heart-breaking remorse and anguish for the thousands of men, women and children who gave their all in the battle for the America many of us take for granted — as I do today.

This subject is always in my mind and heart in these times of awful political peril, or in the rare and beautiful shining moments of freedom. When both my sons were in combat in Bosnia and in so many battles in Afghanistan and other parts of Asia, I worried and prayed. Especially one morning at 3 a.m. when I received a call from my son stationed in Italy who said, "Pop, I just bombed two bad guys with my F-16," and we had a long discussion about causing the death of the enemy.

When the news channels

carried those heart-breaking stories of the men and woman who would never come back alive — or at all — or were so smashed by the horrors of war when they did, I wept.

While pursuing my curiosity regarding the Washington Monument, I discovered that the same man who designed it — Major Pierre L'Enfant (1755-1825), a French artist and engineer who had formed a friendship with George Washington while serving in the Revolutionary War — requested the honor of designing a plan for the National Capital. "After surveying the site, L'Enfant developed a Baroque plan that featured ceremonial spaces and grand radial avenues, while respecting natural contours of the land." (Did you get that part about "respecting the contours of the land?") I had the same experience working with the man who designed Sun River, Bob Royston).

Snopes states: "The result was a system of intersecting diagonal avenues superimposed over a grid system. The avenues radiated from the two most significant building sites that were to be occupied by houses for Congress and the President.

"L'Enfant specified in notes accompanying the plan that these avenues were to be wide, grand, lined with trees, and situated in a manner that would visually connect ideal topographical sites throughout the city, where important structures, monuments, and fountains were to be erected.

"On paper, L'Enfant shaded and numbered 15 large open spaces at the intersections of these avenues and specified that each reservation would feature statues and memorials to honor worthy citizens. The open spaces were as integral to the capital as the buildings to be erected

around them."

And here dear readers and fellow patriots is where L'Enfant got himself into hot water. He opposed land-grabbers selling land inside his mapped area prematurely and refused to furnish the map to the city commissioners in time for the sale. He was then — unbelievably and, hopefully, reluctantly — relieved of his duties by George Washington, and another more cooperative person was then engaged to produce a map and reproduced L'Enfant's plan from memory.

As I sat, digesting this bit of information, I wondered: could that have been the first example of land-use planning running afoul of those who worship profit in America today?

L'Enfant's plan was put on hold until 1898.

That's when President William McKinley formed a Congressional joint committee in February 1900, with Senator James McMillan of Michigan as chairman. At the same time, plans were put forward for the development of a mall which would include the newly reclaimed Potomac Flats.

Thanks to L'Enfant, the model for American city planning and a symbol of governmental power to be seen by other nations worked. The plan conceived by L'Enfant is little changed today.

To me, Laus Deo: "Praise



PHOTO BY USAF COL. DEAN ANDERSON - RETIRED

One of the grand symbols of our beloved country; the Washington Monument, erected in Washington D.C.

be to God!," those two seemingly insignificant, unnoticed Latin words — out of sight and, one might think, out of mind today by the behavior of so many politicians — state

what we should be thinking, saying and hearing when we make land-use choices, close our eyes at night, and awaken in the morning living in the freedom that is America.

**Dr. Thomas R. Rheuben**

**General, Cosmetic, Implant  
and Family Dentistry**

*~ Your Dentist in Sisters Since 1993 ~*

We are here to help you smile with confidence!

**541-549-0109 | 304 W. Adams Ave. | Sisters**

*Your Thanksgiving Tradition...*

**SISTERS MEAT AND SMOKEHOUSE**

MEATS • CHEESES  
EATERY • DRINKERY

**SMOKED HAM**

**SISTERS MEAT AND SMOKEHOUSE**

MEATS • CHEESES  
EATERY • DRINKERY

**SMOKED TURKEY**

Limited number available.  
**Order yours today!**

541-719-1186 or sistersmeat@gmail.com.

110 S. Spruce St.  
Open 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Every Day

**Always a meat expert on duty!**

**Get ready for winter before it gets here...**

**ARIENS  
SNOW BLOWERS**

**Ergonomically designed, versatile and,  
of course, tough enough to earn the Ariens name**

<p>Model 921048 <b>Deluxe 28 SHO</b> <b>\$1,419</b></p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Pure machine. Straight-forward power and performance.</p>	<p>Model 920025 <b>Classic 24</b> <b>\$799</b></p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Value and dependability in a compact, all-steel package.</p>	<p>Model 921052 <b>Platinum SHO Track 28</b> <b>\$2,309</b></p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">Fully loaded, both with power and convenient features.</p>
--	--	---

**SISTERS RENTAL**

**541-549-9631**

**Stop by and check out the new Ariens Snow Blowers today at**

**SISTERS RENTAL, 506 N. Pine St., Sisters**

www.sistersrental.com  
facebook.com/sistersrental