

## Grim fairy tale

Once upon a time there was a grand country called Wonderfulland. In Wonderfulland there were plenty of good jobs to go around for everyone; the citizens of Wonderfulland had all the conveniences that the world could offer, and all the leisure time they could ever want. Everything was truly wonderful in Wonderfulland - people all over the world envied the citizens of Wonderfulland and wanted to join them. But the citizens of Wonderfulland would not allow that.

"If we let just anyone in who wanted in," they said, "there wouldn't be enough good things to go around. The first thing you know they'd be marrying our daughters."

But then a problem developed in Wonderfulland, and people began to worry. This was very strange indeed because, never having worried before, many people were obliged to seek out the "old ones" and ask them how one went about worrying. The problem was this:

Because there were so many good jobs to go around, nobody wanted the job of "soldier". Soldier was a muddy job; people were always yelling at you; you had to march and drill; and worse, people shot at you. Naturally nobody wanted to be a soldier.

The citizens of Wonderfulland were appalled.

"What are we to do," they cried. "If we don't have soldiers, who will protect Wonderfulland from the outsiders who want to come and join us?" They became very frightened.

The wise old men in the senate of Wonderfulland came up with a plan. "From now on, every male child will have a choice. On his eighteenth birthday he may become either a soldier," they said, "or a convict. And while convicts shall receive nothing, soldiers shall receive a 'G.I. Bill'."

This solution presented somewhat of a problem for eighteen-year-old males. While soldiering was no fun, "convict" was worse. While you didn't get shot at, you got yelled at a lot more; opportunity for advancement was poor; the pension plan was lousy; you couldn't get a good job later, even though there were plenty to go around; and you certainly wouldn't get any 'G.I. Bill'."

All in all, the job of "convict" was really very unpleasant. Most eighteen-year-olds grumbled, but because they were a minority and could do nothing about the law, they chose to become soldiers.

Everything returned to normal in Wonderfulland. Newer, better ways of recreation were being thought-up every day and, except for soldiers and convicts, everyone was happy again.

But very soon three strange and awful things happened -- and they were called "the war" and "the police action" and "the conflict;" and many soldiers wouldn't get to have their 'G.I. Bill. And many people like mothers and fathers, were dismayed. "I didn't raise my son to be a soldier," they said. "Let us speak of co-existence."

And the people rose up in such a furor that the wise old men proclaimed a "peace with honor" and abandoned the old policy of "soldier or convict."

But when the old soldiers (who didn't fade away) came to get their "G.I. Bill" the wise men had another proclamation: "A small percentage of survivors have abused the bill," they said, "and so you must all suffer for a month while we reorganize the program."

Though the ex-soldiers grumbled, they accepted the new decree. After all, the "convicts" lot had been harder, and the soldiers who had died had got-the-worst-of-it.

Seeing the ex-soldiers' acceptance, the wise old men had one more proclamation: "Because of past dishonesties," they said, "and our inability to organize, anyone who uses 'the bill' for education must also fast for two months every fall."

With that the old soldiers huddled together in alarm. "Why should we be made to suffer for the sins of others?" they asked. "We grumbled when you gave us the choice of 'convict' or 'soldier' but we went along. Isn't this some new betrayal?"

The wise old men did not answer. They have wet their fingers. They are waiting and watching. They need to know how many citizens of Wonderfulland believe that this is a fine solution. Then they can answer the grumbling old soldiers.

## opinion



## letters

### Poor planning

To the editor:

Your "Earth Week" article has me hanging somewhere between amazement and anger. Your article reads:

"Art exhibits were to be part of the festival but only one participated 'although we had the space and lots of wooden easels' said Bellavita."

If Jerry Bellavita actually said this, his name should be on a list for some kind of award; possibly "Best Supporting Actor in Contemporary Farce."

On April 8, Bellavita asked me to exhibit paintings and I was reluctant -- The time involved in preparation and the cost of buy frames were considerations -- but I agreed.

I went to the Environmental Learning Center (ELC) on April 22, at 9 a.m. Bellavita advised me to come back on April 23, as I could stay with my exhibit in case of rain.

I returned at 11 a.m. the same day. Bellavita wasn't at the maintenance department and asked three different people for wooden easels. Nobody knew a thing about easels -- or an art display. So I went to the Art Department and asked if she knew anything about the art exhibit. She didn't know the next class -- late and disgusted.

I returned to the ELC Saturday, between 1 and 2 p.m. and there were no easels anywhere in sight. I did two sketches and spoke to Leland John, who didn't know any more about the exhibit; decided not to display any work on that day and went home -- disgusted.

It took me over 30 hours to prepare for the exhibit and cost me \$15. For my trouble, I have two broken picture frames and them around in the back seat of a car).

If Bellavita can salve his conscience by stating "we had the space and lots of wooden easels," more power to him.

What happened has upset me; but not as much as the fact that Cougar Print that everything was swell. If this is a deliberate effort to mislead, it is a deliberate effort to mislead. If the exhibit is organized by Jerry Bellavita -- I'll pass.

