

OUR VIEW

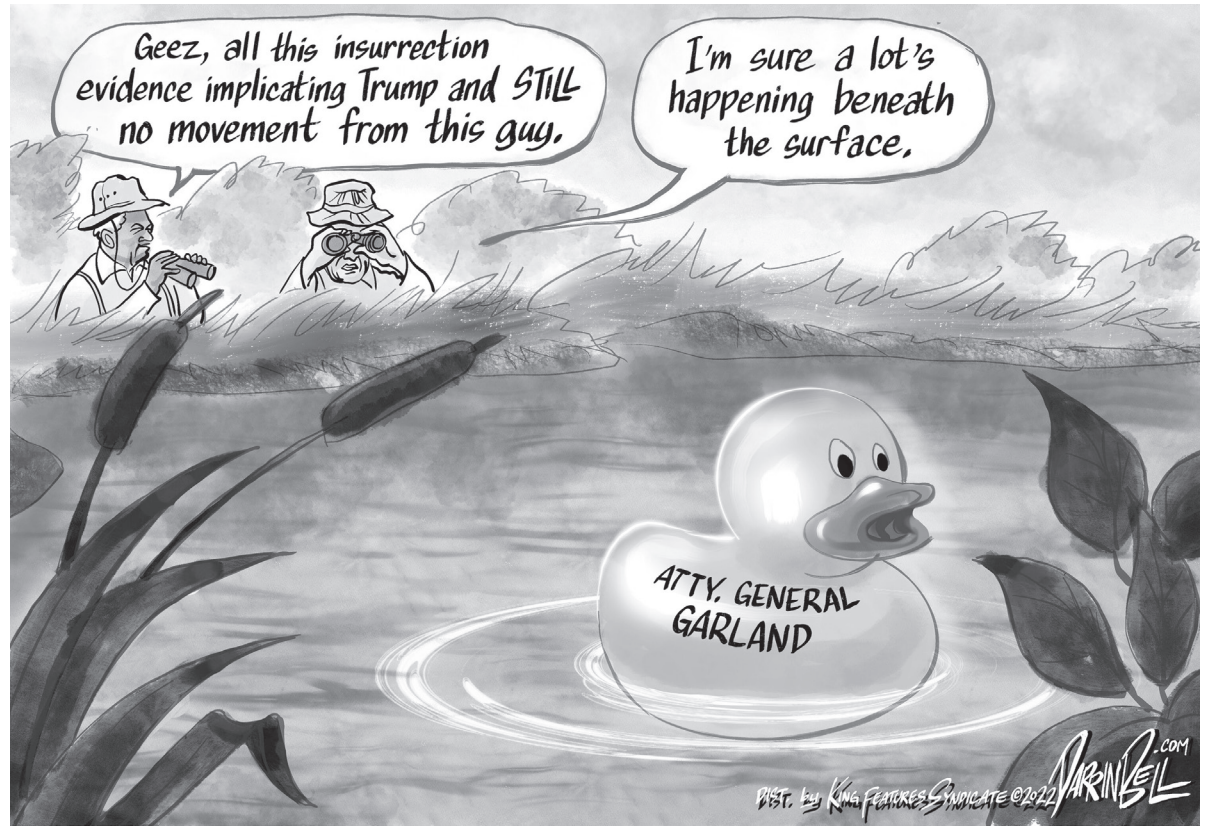
The Declaration of Independence

In Congress, July 4, 1776, the unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America:

When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security.--Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. . . .

We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.



FARMER'S FATE

Tip your hat to Father Time

While rain dripped down our faces and spotted our clothes, I listened to the speaker wax eloquent about something I had tuned out half an hour before.

We watched people get out umbrellas then put them away. We watched people put on rain ponchos and minutes later take them off. It was too hot to leave them on, and too wet to go without. There was just enough sun to make the air feel like a freshly watered greenhouse — hot and humid. It was a weekend filled with graduations, parties, barbecues and rain. It was a solemn weekend — and not just because of all the hay we had down getting wet — but because time had once again sped past.

When you're little, it seems to take years to get from one season to the next; and when you're in junior high, you think you'll never make it to high school graduation; and when you're pregnant, you don't think those nine months are ever going to end.

But then suddenly time just gets faster. Days turn into months and years pass in the blink of an eye. I never felt I was getting older, but suddenly I'm looking around and the people our age seem old!

The students we were here to watch graduate at times have made us feel old also — but not in the way I thought old age would creep up on us.

I thought getting old would mean your bones would creak and you'd slowly stop doing the activities you once loved. I imagined that getting old would mean riding dirt bikes less, giving up bouncing with the kids on the trampoline, wearing high-waisted jeans, and becoming wise.

But apparently getting old was sneakier than that.



Brianna Walker

The first time I got sucker-punched with being old occurred while we were sitting around the table one evening with the freshman college students we were mentoring. There were photos on the wall of my husband and I when we were just dating. One of the students asked how long we had been together.

"We met in '99 and started dating in 2000," I answered.

The students sat back in stunned silence. I raised an eyebrow questioningly. "What's wrong?" I asked.

We were met with a chorus of "You guys met before we were born!"

College students. Born after my husband and I had met. I hadn't felt that far removed from my college years — until that moment.

The next year, those same students delivered another blow to our idea of youth. We were all playing at the river, surfing, kayaking and soaking up some sun, when one of the guys asked if they could play some music.

They started connecting their device to the bluetooth speakers, all the time chattering about the music they have really been "digging" lately.

"We've been listening to a lot of classic rock," another guy chimed in.

"Oh, cool!" I exclaimed. "I love classic rock! Who are some of your favorites?" I began imagining the Eagles, ZZ Top, Lynyrd Skynyrd, CCR or the Beatles.

"It's some reeealllly old stuff," one guy remarked, "going back almost to the 2000s!"

That's when Britney Spears started to play from the speak-

ers, and "old" sucker-punched us again. College kids who were born after I met my husband, and listening to "classic" Britney Spears.

Just think what they would say if they knew I was born before the internet. Or graduated without Wikipedia or Google.

Now those same students are graduating college. It seems like yesterday we were sitting around that table learning that we were "old," and now suddenly we're four years older. I'm looking at my own kids, all dressed up for the graduation ceremony and napping discreetly under their fedoras, and I feel that at the speed the world's spinning, it won't be long before it'll be their college graduations — and we'll be even more surprised by how young their "classic rock" artists will be.

My grandmother used to tell me she was often startled by the old woman who looked back at her from the mirror as she hardly felt older than 18. Every once in a while, I too am surprised by my reflection — but what most astonishes me is how much the world keeps changing while I remain 29.

Finally, the last student received their diploma, and the boys tipped their fedoras to shake the rainwater out. They looked so dapper in their suits and hats, my youngest in black and white saddle shoes (of his choosing), and I realized what it was that scares me most about being middle-aged: knowing that we'll eventually grow out of it! But until then, I'll keep pretending that I am young, and that Britney Spears is classic rock — because b-b-baby, you ain't seen nothin' yet!

Brianna Walker is a Grant County resident who occasionally writes about the Farmer's Fate for the Blue Mountain Eagle.

