



The Wonder Springs Chronicle

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Reflections: *The winds of change*

Can you believe the wind this spring? It seems to be blowing hard every single day. I heard that it blew down two big trees across the highway yesterday. It sort of makes you wonder if these winds are doing more than just moving air. Perhaps they are changing our environment much more than just the movement of leaves and branches of the natural world.

Come to think about it, there seems to be some windy times happening in the more human world also. We call them winds of change, the unseen but still powerful forces that mold and reshape human history. Yes, the winds of change are blowing for all of human society on planet earth.

Four weeks from today, nine years ago, I published the first of these almost weekly episodes. Before that, for about six months I had done one about every month. For the next few weeks I will reflect on what I have noticed in the expanse of those

nine years, and what they might mean for the future. Some of that focus may be personal, some with a broader reference.

Monday as I was on my evening walk to the highway, something moved a few feet in front of me. Startled, I thought to myself, "What was that, a snake, or some other horrible creature?" It turned out to be a ruffed grouse. As I watched, this medium sized bird seemed aware of my presence, but also completely unconcerned about my predatory human nature. As I stood there watching, it slowly ambled into the brush and I continued upon my meditative journey.

So how many human beings have had that hair raising experience and lived to give a report? Not many, especially in the last part of that thought, being able to give the report.

I began and continue these writings, because I feel that we of the human species are so



removed from the reality of creation that we firmly believe that it has no effect upon us, and furthermore, nature responds to our bidding. All we humans need to do is a little more of this and a little less of that and we will achieve a harmonious world, where all evolving creatures will ultimately embrace utopia.

Presently both statements now have evolved to the point where most of the developed world looks at these as absolute laws. As evidence all you have to do is to put together a Keynote presentation on your Apple Powerbook and give a talk in front of thousands of people saying that we are completely changing the world's temperatures by our burning of fossil fuels, and by doing less of that, we will save the world for future generations.

This message sounds so good that not only will you become rich and famous, they will give you a portion of a Nobel Prize. Why would anyone want to be President of the United States, when you can be messiah to the world?

The problem with this whole scenario is not that people will embrace this messiah obsession, the problem is that this quick fix really is based upon, at best limited science, if not a certain amount of science fiction.

The complexity of God's creation is much more sophisticated than any of our simplistic climate models can begin to analyze, because simply we know so little about the natural world. We take a small amount of data, most of which no one bothers to verify as to its accuracy, call it truth and then plug those numbers into computer programs to announce that indeed the sky is falling, or more precisely the sky is heating up like never in history. Therefore, not that we should change our gluttonous energy fixation, we need to develop other sources of energy, no matter what they may cost, or if their utilization may turn out to be perilous to other people or the environment.

Truly, what the world really needs is for each and every human being to spend more time in, and in touch with real creation.

What that means for most people is to develop a plan by which we can enjoy nature

on our terms. That can vary along a couple of continuums. For the traditional outdoorsman or woman that means hunting and fishing trips. This can mean angling at an artificially created and managed pond, to a high class fly in adventure a thousand miles from where "anybody" really lives.

For others it is more incline with ecotourism. That doesn't mean sitting for a few days with primitive gear taking in the beauty and complexity of creation. Ecotourism means to fly to some exotic world location, bringing or renting the best of 21st century technology, and going as far as you can go, as fast as you can, so that you can get back to your job, so that you can earn enough money to do it all again next year. Better yet if you are really good, there is nothing wrong with another trip in a few months.

The best way to understand nature in the modern world however is far less strenuous and more cost effective. With a 60 inch plasma television you can experience the best of nature without ever leaving your recliner. This is especially true if you swap out all your old regular light bulbs with new compact fluorescent tubes. That way you are only down a kilowatt hour a day or so from where you were with your old fashioned regular television.

So how much is almost stepping on a ruffed grouse worth? Or how much is finding a merganser egg on the beach? Or having an osprey sitting in the tree across the river making such a racket that you have to go investigate? Only to find out he only wanted to say hi, and then go on about his business.

The only way we can really begin to understand the incredible diversity and complexity of nature is to meet it on its own terms. As we have mentioned in previous articles, that is what Thoreau's walking statement, "In Wildness is the preservation of the world," means. That essay is found in the Resource section of the website.

Slow down you are moving to fast, is the only way to really change feelin' groovy, into actually being groovy. That concept from Simon and Garfunkel's, "The 59th Street Bridge Song," may still be popular, more than likely because the last thing we are willing to do is to slow down. Back in that hippie era, less was considered by many to mean more. Today less, means we not only want more, we need more, and if more never is reached, we have no time to analyze that we are traveling the wrong road. Furthermore,

speaking metaphorically, we tore down the 59th Street Bridge because we failed to maintain it, and it would not handle the traffic load anyway.

So reflecting on nine years past and nine years into the future, I suppose the place to begin is with the plasma TV. That artificial form of reality is the only natural world most western people experience. As long as they are content with that and can feel groovy by listening to songs on their iPod they are never going to understand the beauty, the diversity, and complexity of the world in which we have been blessed to spend on average 80 years or so in this culture.

The true question stems from the basis of true reality. No matter how you spin it, creation or nature was here first, therefore it has first claim on reality. We can accept that truth, or assume human intellect can eventually change that through the process of evolution, but we cannot ignore that prime ontology.

That leaves two paradigms for the road ahead. The first is that we make it up completely on the fly as we advance on a time continuum. But to say we are moving forward is really undefined because by definition there is no definite standard, so everything is relative and therefore everything is essentially meaningless.

The other paradigm states we can learn from creation on how to design the road ahead. In this case there actually is a road or path because they are based upon essentially real roads and paths in a real world. We can hope to fly in the sky in the sweet bye and bye, but for now roads are built with rocks and dirt, and asphalt and concrete.

At the end of that real road, we come to a path, not less traveled, but no longer traveled. So what do we do? That is what makes all the difference. We can turn the path into a thoroughfare and hopefully it will be used, and all the world will be the same, or we can clean out the less traveled path and maintain it so that a few can walk to unique places, without having to pay a high entry fee.

If the only reality that people see is a Hi Definition video of a ruffed grouse, we must put it together in such a way that shows this really

isn't reality, but a representation of reality. To really understand created reality, you have to take a walk on the wild side. That is literally the wild side, like the wild either side on that less traveled path. The path you have to walk on, not drive your motor home, or SUV, ATV quad , or mountain bike.

This path less traveled also means you don't have to carry a 50 pound pack with a thousand dollars of gear. Therefore the journey becomes the destination, not a place where the journey becomes the goal.

To begin that personal journey, I have decided to begin to add more of that visual aspect of nature to the website. That will be both in still pictures and video. I have enough equipment to get started along that line, but there will be some infrastructure that will be needed.

The particular niche that I find so interesting and that needs to be developed is the natural fact that human enterprise follows the laws of nature. You can sit in an urban office and talk about how you are going to save the world from human caused global warming. You can do a similar thing by figuring out how to make the global economy more robust by stimulating economic growth by providing more leveraged debt.

Just as with global warming, the economic models are simplistic and show conclusively that the results are what you set out to prove. As stated at the beginning of this article, creation or nature, or the nature of creating human enterprise, follows the same laws of reality and science. Smoke, mirrors, Keynote or PowerPoint presentations have merit, but only to illustrate true reality. That reality is incredibly diverse and complex, it manifests a true unity in diversity of creation, and the personality of a real God. That God part is what people run away from, much more than a ruffed grouse on the road.

To Keep It Simple Stupid, our climate and economic models cannot change reality, but our actions might serve to increase diversity where our natural inclination is to simplify. Both of these examples now can focus on energy utilization. Our desire is to create bigger, as better. We presume it is good to grow biofuels, but find out in our arrogance some people can starve. As the only growth paradigm we have been indoctrinated to think we need to do everything on a grand scale, but creation

reality shows that the little things are what truly make a difference.

Lest we forget, that ruffed grouse has a unique niche in which it lives and it was that path which I crossed Monday evening. I could not have crossed that path in any other mode except on a slow contemplative walk. To have the opportunity to watch and converse with a ruffed grouse may not have worldly value. But a much more kitschy reality is for you to only know life by letting others create reality for you while you become a bigger boob, in front of your boob screen, while you let the reality of life pass you by and waste all your God given opportunities seeking to buy stuff that really can not buy happiness and fulfillment.