

Lagniappe







High Pressure Performance

High pressure performance
We've got what you need.
Take it to the limit
Explosive fire power.

Put up or shut up.
This is the thrill ride.
Hit a Coor's Light.
Explosive firepower.

This is the power tour
For all champions.
Don't be a chicken.
Explosive firepower.

Instant power, Super Sport.
You got it--Street legal
Pit stop, D.U.I.,
Detonation, body parts,
Explosive firepower!

~ Jeff Bell

The Cellar

Going down to the cellar to do laundry is a frightening experience for me. It's almost like going into a haunted house all alone. I open the spine-shivering, squeaky door and take my hesitating first step. I firmly grip onto the rail as I make my way down the steep and creaky stairwell. I see strange shadows on the walls from the dangling dim light at the bottom. The dust is so thick you can taste it, and there is a strong smell of musty mildew from the rotted waterlogged brick walls. Cobwebs and spider webs dangle lightly from the ceiling and from all of the corners. You can hear pipes rattling above you as well as creaks from the house settling. As I creep across to the other side, to the washer, I can feel the debris on the bottom of my feet from the crumbled, corroded concrete all over the ground. I rapidly throw the clothes in and get them started. Then I dash for the stair, skipping every other one all the way to the top, slamming the door behind me. But even then I don't feel better because in about an hour I have to go back down to get them out.

~ Katherine White

Restoring a '55 Chevy

Cars are fun and relaxing. You take something that does not run or is not good for much of anything, and you turn it into a new car. You can take it apart and start all over again. Or you can fix what you have to fix to keep it running. Some people play golf to relax. I find it relaxing to take a car apart.

At one time I had two '55 Chevies. One was a four-door that I restored. I had taken the body off the frame and painted it. Then I put in all new brake lines, fuel lines, steering, and suspension.

I removed the engine and rebuilt it with new parts. The transmission was sent away to be rebuilt. I put the transmission and engine back in the frame, put the body back on the frame, and went to work on the interior of the car.

The hardest part of restoring a car, I think, is the body work. Compared to replacing a quarter panel, replacing the fenders is a simple bolt-on process. The hard part of panel work is having to cut out the rear panel with a torch and welding in a new panel. The old panel has to have enough metal cut off the car to be able to weld on the new panel. However, if you leave too much metal, the new panel won't fit like it should, and if you cut too much, you have holes left to fill in, or nothing to weld the panel to.

It took me about 2 1/2 to 3 years to finish the project, but when it was finished, it was like a new car. The best part of a project like this is, when you're finished, you get lots of compliments about the car from other car enthusiasts.

~ Ed Garcia

Peace

When the storms are raging around me
When the clouds seem black as the night,
Then I feel the peace surround me and
I know everything is all right.

Peace, peace, wonderful peace
Oh how sweet it is.
It gives me understanding and
Helps me happily live.

Peace is a love that calms my fears and
Puts my soul at rest.
It gets me through a troubled day.
It always keeps me at my best.

~ Vickie Hargraves

Silent Tears

Every tear
Is a drop
Of
Emotion.

Every tear
Carries
Memories
Never forgotten.

Tears
Of happiness,
Sadness,
Loneliness
In so many different ways
At times.

Tears of stories
Written feelings
Never told
From the heart.

Tears crawl like words
On your skin
Hidden words
Silent Tears.

~ Christian Velez

Sunglasses

Sitting here in the shade alone,
I look out into the sunshine and
I can see many wonderful things.
The children are playing nicely together.
I can see a flock of birds gliding in the air.
In a small pond a school of fish are jumping.
In the grass, ants march together two by two.
Even the butterflies flutter with friends.

All these things make me want to go out into the light.
I know the sunlight will hurt my eyes.
Perhaps my sunglasses will help.

~ Amanda JoAnna Edge

A New Beginning

I went to Naturalization Ceremony on March 31, 2000. That day the weather was very cold and windy. A co-worker of mine gave me a ride to downtown Cincinnati. I walked to the U.S. District Court building. It was very big, warm, and also very beautiful. A security guard came close to me and asked, "How can I help you?"

I told him, "Today, I am going to become a United States citizen!"

He said, "Congratulations!" He explained to me how to get to the room where the ceremony was going to be held. I followed his directions and kept going straight to the elevator door. I then got in and traveled up to the ninth floor. The elevator stopped. The door opened again, and I walked out the door and saw the room on the right hand side. Another security guard in front of the room gave everybody entering a Naturalization application.

I walked in and sat in a corner. I saw that everybody was wearing pretty dresses and sitting with their families. I felt sad because I had no family sitting with me. At 8:30, I met the presiding judge; her name was Judy. She wore a black coat and was escorted into the room by three people. One of them was an elementary math teacher, and the other two were the judge's assistants. Judy stood at her table, smiled, and said, "We welcome all of you in becoming American citizens." Everyone then stood up and recited the Oath of Allegiance to the United States of America. Then we pledged our allegiance to the flag.

I was so excited! At the end of the naturalization program, everyone stood up and told where they were from and what their name was. After that, we went up to get a Certificate of Citizenship. I saw one lady stand up, smile, and give her brother a big hug. Then she turned around and gave her mom a kiss. Another man stood up and yelled, "Oh my God!" He cried a lot and turned around and looked at his family. They took his picture with Judy. When Judy called

my name, I stood up, walked over, shook her hand, and got my certificate. I smiled at her, and she smiled back and said, “Congratulations! Welcome to America.”

Suddenly, I felt lonely because nobody I knew was standing. I wished someone I knew like my mom or dad would have been there with me and shared my joy. However, I am proud that I am the first person in my house that got a Citizenship Certificate. After the ceremony, I looked for a cab to take me home.

~ Tri Huynh

A Family of God's Servants

I had been wearing dentures for a number of years and had many difficulties with them. They were always too big for my mouth. I was able to chew only on one side. Because of these difficulties, I could not digest my food properly and had poor health in various ways.

I needed to replace my dentures. I began searching for a dentist who would accept my insurance. Not many would, but in September 1999, I found a semi-retired dentist on 4th Street in downtown Cincinnati who would take my insurance. I made an appointment with him.

My experience with this dentist was a disaster. He was old and in poor health. His attitude was lousy. He abused me physically, verbally, and emotionally. While I was his patient he had a stroke, but he continued his practice. The dentures he made me were very painful due to a sharp edge that lay on the roof of my mouth. They were also too large. They stuck out like a giant. They were the worst dentures I had ever experienced.

During a follow-up appointment, I told him the dentures were not made right. I showed him the awful sharp edge on the upper plate. He said there was nothing wrong with the dentures. He said the problem was me. Then he took the dentures into the back room, returned a short time later, and roughly pushed them into my mouth. He said he never wanted to see me again. At this point, I lost all hope.

Later I learned from a couple of people who had dentures made by this dentist that they, too, had experienced the same kind of behavior from him. Their dentures were not made properly either, and they have never been able to get them adjusted. They gave up and are in misery.

Fortunately, I discovered Pam at my church. She had studied to be a dental technician. I told her about my experience, and she agreed to look at the dentures. She was shocked at what she saw. She told me they were the worst she had ever seen. She doubted that he had paid even \$25 for

them. She was convinced that even if they did fit properly, they would not last.

With Pam's help, I decided to seek a second opinion with the Family Dentistry Center at a Sears store. The dentist we saw there wasn't very helpful. He said there wasn't anything wrong with my dentures and suggested that we return to my original dentist for more adjustments. He said he could make me a new set, but it would cost \$2000 because insurance only paid for new dentures every eight years. I left this dentist even more dejected than before.

But God was working for me through Pam. Within a short time, she called to tell me about a program called Dental Options, in which dentists donate their time and pay for all materials. She got an application for me and helped me fill it out. Soon I heard that I had been accepted. I was to call the program coordinator after each appointment to inform her about the quality of my treatment.

My new dentist was Dr. Rolfes, who happened to be Pam's dentist too. When I called for an appointment, his receptionist, Jan, was most pleasant. Her voice convinced me that she really cared for others in a genuine, loving way. Once while I was in the chair, she came back to offer support and encouragement. She really cared about my well-being. Somehow I sensed Dr. Rolfes was the same.

I was right. I took the bus from downtown Cincinnati to his office on Montgomery Road. I still had some anxiety about how Dr. Rolfes would react after seeing my dentures. My anxiety was short-lived. Jan greeted me warmly. She did not ask for my insurance card; she didn't even ask me to sign in. In addition, even though I had arrived early, during their lunch hour, she said I was welcome to wait in the office or go a short distance down the street to eat lunch myself. She was so sweet.

Dr. Rolfes was wonderful. He listened to my story with patience and respect. After examining the dentures, he concluded that they could not be corrected and agreed to make new ones. Throughout our first meeting, Dr. Rolfes showed

great compassion about the terrible experience I had gone through, and his assistant gave me encouragement. Now, at last, I felt blessed. I had unlimited confidence in him.

I returned to Dr. Rolfes's office 15 times because of the care he took to make sure the new dentures fit properly. As part of his routine, I smiled with my face pointed in different directions so he could determine if the gums of the dentures were too large. He asked me to say certain words, such as Mississippi, to make sure that my pronunciation was normal. He took every precaution to make sure that the job was done right.

Because I have a small mouth and a number of bony areas in my gums, Dr. Rolfes had to work extra hard to make sure my dentures fit properly. He eventually had to put a soft liner on the lower plate to avoid excessive pressure. This was not easy for me, but thanks to Dr. Rolfes's professionalism and caring, they turned out just great—the best dentures I have ever had.

At last I can eat without those stomach difficulties I experienced for years. It took a little time to adjust to the new dentures, and the soft lining made my bite different. But the results were good. I'm able to eat better and enjoy salads—something I haven't been able to do for years. This is wonderful. The friendship I gained with Dr. Rolfes and his staff is great.

I believe that Dr. Rolfes and his staff, as well as my new friend Pam, are a family of God's servants. They were kind and patient and gave me not only the medical care I needed but also the emotional support I needed. God used their hands and their generosity to heal me. I will never forget them.

There is always a purpose for the storms in life. In these storms God can work his miracles. This teeth situation was a miracle for me.

~ M. Foltz

