

# LIFE PREVAILS

**Spring is sputtering to life,** The wet days of winter easily forgotten while squinting through the first sunny warm days. When the rain returns, of course it returns, but the tone has changed- April showers...Bringing the flowers that bloom in May etc...

As always, change is in the wind. From our personal perch of daily domesticity, anticipated goals, achievements, and aspirational planning- Milestones of personality, and portent quietly fly-by at the breakneck speed of mere mortality- as the annual seeds start the future. The maturing generations, are replaced by a new crop of humanity.

*Among others, we mark the passing of a stalwart founding Waking Dog. A celebrated Peaceful Warrior, loyal friend, powerful intellect, and GREENFUSE enabler- Tom O'Neil, as he takes the high road one more time.*

In haste, I unintentionally, inadvertently (a kinder way to describe an accident) spilled a fresh, full bucket of milk, drenching the kitchen floor in a widely dispersed puddle- the old refrain "**Don't cry over spilt milk.**" naturally came to mind. This sentiment doesn't preclude a cathartic blue streak of cursing, but the underlying philosophy is sound; The deed is done, nothing will change it, it is not the end of anything, there will be more, time will tell...A loss of time is the real consequence, resulting in a much needed, deeper cleaning than anticipated. Then a discovery- amongst the various receptacles needing to be swabbed of the expertly dispersed milkiness I discover a stash of long forgotten pea seed, part of a bulk buy, dated for a planting season 10 years past.

Most seed suppliers will tell you fresh seed is required annually, that pea seed is viable for maybe 3 years. I soaked the seed to pre-sprout as a germination test and was pleased to find nearly all sprouted promptly, even better than the 80% rating listed on the bag.

This isn't the first time I have been pleasantly surprised by the longevity of properly stored seeds. Life prevails, indeed to be worthy of the name it must, in all of its variations at root is a determination to grow, sustain, and change.

**Aye there's the rub.** Growth and change can be a dicey thing when they don't serve life. But our prevailing economic model requires unchecked growth, it is the driver of the capitalist system. With out demand for product and service, there is no commerce, with out commerce, markets dwindle, capital stagnates, growth is stunted, and people suffer.

Unless... what if there was a different model? One in which the equation turns around? Start with suffering, and prioritize the actions that eliminate that. This happens all the time when we are faced with disasters.

Pictures of flooded Nebraska ranch land are balanced by super sized hay bales being loaded on to a \$38.55M 16 ton twin-rotor helicopter that costs over \$2K per flight hour to operate. An extreme measure to feed at risk cattle that put the future of ranchers at risk. The equation may not pencil out sensibly - unless of course the cost of those measures are included in the meat marketed- rest assured those costs will increase, but nowhere near the total cost of the operation to prop up the industry.

When fires destroy a community, emergency food and shelter is provided, an up-welling of goodwill and generosity becomes a gift...a new economy is glimpsed. Sharing, caring, making do, and getting by- circulating resources.

These are core values, the boot strap that adds value to lives, after all money is only a tool, the value it creates is what matters. As more is controlled by a ruthless

hoarder class that values money as an end, not the means, less and less is in circulation in a meaningful way. Investments that don't serve actual needs have no good reason to exist.

The Green New Deal is easily aborted by an entrenched ruling class because it absolutely requires change, no matter the details, the only direction towards any measure of sustainability, ecologically, politically, or humanely is a massive shift in what have become the conventional priorities, and yes, changing the way things are done, what is expected, and who gets to set that agenda.

Unlikely as that seems, Life does prevail. The effort expended to sink roots deep, reach for the light and flourish, is directly proportional to the integrity of purpose that we make a priority.

The will to choose and nourishing those choices with the necessary resources is achievable at some level. It is not an abstract notion that "**GRASS ROOTS**" is a the name for organic participation in activism. every small step towards change adds to the effort, and as all the individual blades of grass in the dense turf of the prairie, we are all in it together.

Small farmers once led Populist political reform, pioneered cooperative enterprise, **and** fed the country. The success of farmers was always facilitated by government- From the homestead act that enabled aspiring tilth workers to land grants that inspired rail companies to provide the infrastructure to reach far flung markets, the roads, electrification, and subsidies that enabled farmers created the farm industry, **and a dependency that is rotten to the core.**

The dependency on huge capital outlays for planting, crop insurance, seed, fertilizer, and the ubiquitous chemical soup that industry requires- drenching the 'Heartland' with toxins- now washed down stream for yet undiscovered future horrors. This is the '**conventional wisdom**' that defines the commodification of '**conventional crops.**'

Only about 1% of Americans are farmers today. Yet most of the rest of the world's farmers work the land to feed themselves and their families. Conventional industrialized agriculture mostly feeds the developed world, with up to 90% of U.S. agricultural exports going to developed countries with few hungry people.

The only sustainable way to feed people will once again become small diversified farms, with skilled small scale farmers...Wow there's a stumbling block in the way of the future...future farmers? and something that needs more consideration for an economy beyond money- **Farming: work, food, and service all in one bite.**

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## Meanwhile in the Heartland of Europe:

**Zuzana Čaputová**, a lawyer and environmental activist whose campaign against a toxic waste dump earned her the nickname the "**Erin Brockovich of Slovakia,**" was elected the country's first female president.

Čaputová won the Goldman Environmental prize for her 14-year-fight against the dump, which was ruled illegal in 2013. She said the battle taught her how institutions functioned and could be manipulated, how to withstand personal attacks and that society could be improved.

Across central Europe, liberals have struggled to counter rightwing messaging from governments on migration and social issues. Čaputová's message resonated, tapping into a frustration with career politicians.

**"It shows that liberals should stay liberal, and not fight propaganda with propaganda."**

*Plant that bell & let it ring - Joshua Golden*

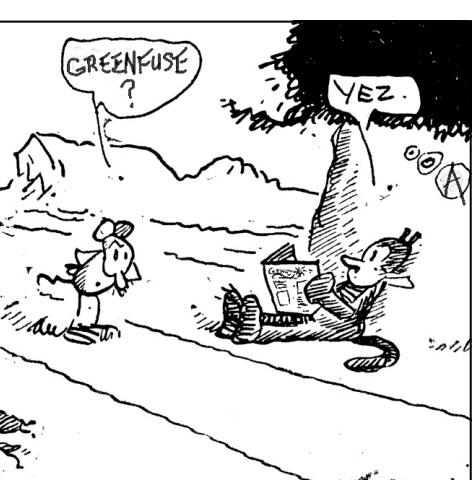
## "Every model of the universe has a hard swallow."

"What I mean by a hard swallow is a place where the argument cannot hide the fact that there's something slightly fishy about it. The hard swallow built into science is this business about the **Big Bang**. Now, let's give this a little

attention here. This is the notion that the universe, for no reason, sprang from nothing in a single instant. Well, now before we dissect this, notice that this is the limit test for credulity. Whether you believe this or not, notice that it is not possible to conceive of something more unlikely or less likely to be believed! I mean, I defy anyone - it's just the limit case for unlikelihood, that the universe would spring from nothing in a single instant, for no reason?!... It makes no sense. It is in fact no different than saying, "And God said, let there be light". And what these philosophers of science are saying is, give us one free miracle, and we will roll from that point forward - from the birth of time to the crack of doom! - just one free miracle, and then it will all unravel according to natural law, and these bizarre equations which nobody can understand but which are so holy in this enterprise.

**Well, I say then, if science gets one free miracle, then everybody gets one free miracle."**

*-Terence McKenna*



"God does not play dice with the universe; He plays an ineffable game of His own devising, which might be compared, from the perspective of any of the other players, to being involved in an obscure and complex version of poker in a pitch-dark room, with blank cards, for infinite stakes, with a Dealer who won't tell you the rules, and who smiles all the time."

**GOOD OMENS- Neil Gaiman & Terry Pratchett**



"We don't stop playing because we grow old; we grow old because we stop playing."

- George Bernard Shaw

"...The rain surrounded the whole cabin with its enormous virginal myth, a whole world of meaning, of secrecy, of silence, of rumor.

Think of it: all that speech pouring down, selling nothing, judging nobody, drenching the thick mulch of dead leaves, soaking the trees, filling the gullies and crannies of the wood with water, washing out the places where men have stripped the hillside! What a thing it is to sit absolutely alone, in the forest, at night, cherished by this wonderful, unintelligible, perfectly innocent speech, the most comforting speech in the world, the talk that rain makes by itself all over the ridges, and the talk of the watercourses everywhere in the hollows!

Nobody started it, nobody is going to stop it. It will talk as long as it wants, this rain.

**As long as it talks I am going to listen..."**

**-Thomas Merton**



This issue is dedicated to the Memory of **Tom O'Neil**

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