

Mar 7

Never too old.....

Contrary to popular opinion, you can teach an old dog new tricks.

Actually, it is much easier to teach an old dog than it is to change habits in a human being. But the old adage about old dogs still has a nice ring to it, doesn't it? Most dog trainers will tell you the challenge of training your pet has less to do with the animal at the end of the collar and more to do with the one holding the leash. (I think the saying was created by someone as an excuse for not trying something new and fresh!) How many times have you heard someone say, "I'm too old to change!" People probably thought that about Harlan David Sanders.

When he was young, Harlan worked many different jobs. He did farming, worked on a steamboat, and was even an insurance salesman. At 40 he opened a service station and sold chicken dinners to his patrons. As the years went by, his way of preparing chicken became more and more popular, so he finally opened a restaurant. When a new freeway pulled future customers away from his business, he opened a franchise and Kentucky Fried Chicken was born. The Colonel was 65 years old.

I could expound on Ray Kroc, who started McDonald's at 52; Laura Ingalls Wilder, who published her first Little House book at age 65; or Grandma Moses, who began painting at age 75. Benjamin Franklin signed the U.S. Constitution at age 81. Golda Meir became Israel's prime minister when she was 70. Ronald Reagan became President of the United States just 16 days before his 70th birthday.

Still, I think Moses rises to the top of all leaders in Scripture for his service to God in his latter years. His call at the burning bush happened when he was 80 years old. In his first 40 years, he learned the ways of the Egyptians. In his second 40 years, he had to unlearn many things. Then, from the ages of 80 to 120, this intelligent and humble man led Israel to the border of the Promised Land.

We're never too old to try something new.....who knows what lies ahead?????

Ps 31:1 In thee, O LORD, do I put my trust; let me **never** be ashamed: deliver me in thy righteousness.

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Mar 14

BLOOD

James Harrison is an Australian man who holds the world record for blood donations, having donated blood over 1,000 times. When Harrison was 13 years old, he went through a major surgery and required 13 liters of blood. Afterward, realizing that donated blood had saved his life, he pledged to begin donating his own blood when he turned 18. Soon after he started donating, it was discovered that his blood contains a rare antibody that can save babies from dying of Rhesus disease—a disorder where the Rh-positive blood of the mother is incompatible with the Rh-negative blood of her unborn child.

Rhesus disease often results in a miscarriage or stillbirth and sometimes causes brain damage in newborns. Harrison was asked to undergo a series of tests to help create a vaccine for the disease. Since then, the Anti-D vaccine created with his blood plasma has been given to hundreds of thousands of women. It's estimated that Harrison's blood has saved around 2.2 million babies—a gift that has affected the lives of several women close to Harrison. Joy Barnes, a worker at a Red Cross blood bank where Harrison has donated, received the vaccine after having two miscarriages. She said, "Without him I would never have been able to have a healthy baby." Best of all, one of the babies saved was Harrison's own grandson!

Harrison says, "I've never thought about stopping. Never." Even after his wife of 56 years passed away, he was back in the hospital a week later to donate. Harrison has been nicknamed the "man with a golden arm" and has received the Order of Australia medal for his contributions.

Just as 2.2 million babies would have died without Harrison's gift, all humanity would have died without Jesus' saving blood. It is only Christ's death on the cross that redeems us—we can't redeem ourselves with any amount of gold or silver. Just as Harrison planned from boyhood to donate his blood, Jesus was "foreordained before the foundation of the world" as our sacrificial lamb (1 Peter 1:20). And just as Harrison never plans to stop donating blood, Jesus' gift of salvation isn't limited to a select few. There is no sinner that His blood can't save!

Collisions 1:14* In whom we have redemption through **his blood**, even the forgiveness of sins:

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Mar 21

We were flown out to a inaccessible compressor site doing our routine maintenance. As we arrived we see the two female summer students that were flown in earlier to do some painting on the compressor building an walk way railings. It was a was a normal field support biweekly routine for summer months when it was feasible for the company. The job was done an so were the summer students job. We radio contact the main plant an let them know that we all were good for pick up. Helicopter gets there an the pilot asks "you guys want to come back with the water pump first or?" My was coworker kinda hesitant like he wanted to go an looks at me, says "naww ladies first an well just throw in the pump hoses too tho" summer student says quietly to her friend "awesome" so we wait for the second trip an my coworker an i dig around the ole site an we find a working cell phone with booster set up in the com building. We checked it out an see that it worked, by then we can hear the helicopter coming, getting closer to site. Chopper lands an we load up our heavy tool bag with pipe wrenches etc...behind the pilot beside my partner, while i take the front passenger with the pilot. We all put on our headsets to communicate, while in the loud cab. Dwayne was always uneasy about the chopper rides an would rather like quading or going by vehicle to compressor stations. So we take off from the site, an are at full flying height about a kilometre away, when the Chopper does crazy big "S" an we are like flying backwards. The pilot looks at me with this unforgettable look, then i feel the pilot grab ahold of my chest an says "it's going to be OK", as the chopper started spinning sideways with my window facing the ground. I remember hearing a death scream in the headset(co-worker)no names ahah, also looking an seeing the pilot pull the throttle just as were hitting the ground, which softened the crash landing, but made us spin even faster. The bubble window smashes in from the ground with a horrendous smash an the top prop keeps chopping an cutting up the muskeg ground an small trees while getting rag dollod ahah. God chose the lil'area/crash site just before we got into the big popular an spruce tree area, Glory to the Lord. My partner yells at the pilot while the top prop is kinda still kicking us around "can i get out! How do i get out! We're going to blow

up!" The pilot yells back "noo wait don't stay put!" while shutting down all the buzzing instruments and asks if we are ok, we say yes we are. Then my coworker cautiously gets out from hanging in his seat belt harness, not noticing the bag of heavy tools didn't even come near him since it was on the crashing side, while in front the pilot is hanging above me looking down and rubbing his chest, i ask "are you alright?" He replies "yeah just never got a control stick bashed in my chest before" i look down and wondered where my headset was and seen the cord was across my lap and out the broken window and under the side of the helicopter. So we are all out looking at the crash site and the pilot is grabbing the black box. My partner starts trekking through the bush, back to the compressor station in shock. I wait for the pilot while he is grabbing the black box, he says "yeah the company medivac A-star helicopter is on its way" i say jokingly "ok right on another helicopter ahah" he says kinda with a laugh "i assure you this one won't go down" me:"thanks for the assurance when we were flying in reverse ahah" pilot with a puzzled face:"what assurance" then I remember The death scream in the headset and the pilots hand yanking the throttle up...Blessed be our King who assigned a power house Angel who stepped into the natural to hold my chest assuring me with a peace that voiced "it's going to be ok" and we ended up using the emergency com phone we found to recall for the medivac. GLORY. FOR GOD

Psalms 91:15 He shall **call upon me**, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him.

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Mar 28

The Folded Napkin - A Truck Stop Story

If this doesn't light your fire, your wood is wet!

I try not to be biased, but I had my doubts about hiring Stevie. His placement counsellor assured me that he would be a good, reliable busboy. But I had never had a mentally handicapped employee and wasn't sure I

wanted one. I wasn't sure how my customers would react to Stevie.

He was short, a little dumpy with the smooth facial features and thick-tongued speech of Down's Syndrome. I wasn't worried about most of my trucker customers because truckers don't generally care who buses tables as long as the meatloaf platter is good and the pies are homemade.

The ones who concerned me were the mouthy college kids travelling to school; the yuppie snobs who secretly polish their silverware with their napkins for fear of catching some dreaded 'truck stop germ'; the pairs of white-shirted business men on expense accounts who think every truck stop waitress wants to be flirted with. I knew those people would be uncomfortable around Stevie so I closely watched him for the first few weeks..

I shouldn't have worried. After the first week, Stevie had my staff wrapped around his stubby little finger, and within a month my truck regulars had adopted him as their official truck stop mascot.

After that, I really didn't care what the rest of the customers thought of him. He was like a 21-year-old in blue jeans and Nikes, eager to laugh and eager to please, but fierce in his attention to his duties. Every salt and peppershaker was exactly in its place, not a breadcrumb Or coffee spill was visible when Stevie got done with the table.

Our only problem was persuading him to wait to clean

a table until after the customers were finished. He would hover in the background, shifting his weight from one foot to the other, scanning the dining room until a table was empty. Then he would scurry to the empty table and carefully bus dishes and glasses onto his cart and meticulously wipe the table up with a practiced flourish of his rag.

If he thought a customer was watching, his brow would pucker with added concentration. He took pride in doing his job exactly right, and you had to love how hard he tried to please each and every person he met.

Over time, we learned that he lived with his mother, a widow who was disabled after repeated surgeries for cancer. They lived on their Social Security benefits in public housing two miles from the truck stop. Their social worker, who stopped to check on him every so often, admitted they had fallen between the cracks. Money was tight, and what I paid him was probably the difference between them being able to live together and Stevie being sent to a group home. That's why the restaurant was a gloomy place that morning last August, the first morning in three years that Stevie missed work.

He was at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester getting a new valve or something put in his heart. His social worker said that people with Downs Syndrome often have heart problems at an early age so this wasn't unexpected, and there was a good chance he would

come through the surgery in good shape and be back at work in a few months.

A ripple of excitement ran through the staff later that morning when word came that he was out of surgery, in recovery, and doing fine.

Frannie, the head waitress, let out a war hoop and did a little dance in the aisle when she heard the good news.

Bell Ringer, one of our regular trucker customers, stared at the sight of this 50-year-old grandmother of four doing a victory shimmy beside his table.

Frannie blushed, smoothed her apron and shot Bell Ringer a withering look.

He grinned. 'OK, Frannie , what was that all about?' he asked..

'We just got word that Stevie is out of surgery and going to be okay.'

'I was wondering where he was. I had a new joke to tell him. What was the surgery about?'

Frannie quickly told Bell Ringer and the other two drivers sitting at his booth about Stevie's surgery then sighed: 'Yeah, I'm glad he is going to be OK,' she said. 'But I don't know how he and his Mom are going to handle all the bills. From what I hear, they're barely getting by as it is.' Bell Ringer nodded thoughtfully, and Frannie hurried off to wait on the rest of her tables. Since I hadn't had time to round up a busboy

to replace Stevie and really didn't want to replace him, the girls were busing their own tables that day until we decided what to do.

After the morning rush, Frannie walked into my office. She had a couple of paper napkins in her hand and a funny look on her face.

'What's up?' I asked.

'I didn't get that table where Bell Ringer and his friends were sitting cleared off after they left, and Pony Pete and Tony Tipper were sitting there when I got back to clean it off,' she said. 'This was folded and tucked under a coffee cup.'

She handed the napkin to me, and three \$20 bills fell onto my desk when I opened it. On the outside, in big, bold letters, was printed 'Something For Stevie'.

'Pony Pete asked me what that was all about,' she said, 'so I told him about Stevie and his Mom and everything, and Pete looked at Tony and Tony looked at Pete, and they ended up giving me this.'

She handed me another paper napkin that had 'Something For Stevie' scrawled on its outside. Two \$50 bills were tucked within its folds. Frannie looked at me with wet, shiny eyes, shook her head and said simply: 'Truckers!!'

That was three months ago. Today is Thanksgiving, the first day Stevie is supposed to be back to work.

His placement worker said he's been counting the days until the doctor said he could work, and it didn't

matter at all that it was a holiday. He called ten times in the past week, making sure we knew he was coming, fearful that we had forgotten him or that his job was in jeopardy

I arranged to have his mother bring him to work. I then met them in the parking lot and invited them both to celebrate his day back

Stevie was thinner and paler, but couldn't stop grinning as he pushed through the doors and headed for the back room where his apron and busing cart were waiting

'Hold up there, Stevie, not so fast,' I said. I took him and his mother by their arms. 'Work can wait for a minute. To celebrate you coming back, breakfast for you and your mother is on me!'

I led them toward a large corner booth at the rear of the room.

I could feel and hear the rest of the staff following behind as we marched through the dining room.

Glancing over my shoulder, I saw booth after booth of grinning truckers empty and join the procession. We stopped in front of the big table. Its surface was covered with coffee cups, saucers and dinner plates, all sitting slightly crooked on dozens of folded paper napkins 'First thing you have to do, Stevie, is clean up this mess,' I said. I tried to sound stern.

Stevie looked at me, and then at his mother, then pulled out one of the napkins. It had 'Something for Stevie' printed on the outside. As he picked it up, two \$10 bills fell onto the table.

Stevie stared at the money, then at all the napkins peeking from beneath the tableware, each with his name printed or scrawled on it. I turned to his mother. 'There's more than \$10,000 in cash and checks on that table, all from truckers and trucking companies that heard about your problems.. 'Happy Thanksgiving.'

Well, it got real noisy about that time, with everybody hollering and shouting, and there were a few tears, as well.

But you know what's funny? While everybody else was busy shaking hands and hugging each other, Stevie, with a big, big smile on his face, was busy clearing all the cups and dishes from the table....

Best worker I ever hired.

Plant a seed and watch it grow..

At this point, you can bury this inspirational message or forward it, fulfilling the need!

If you shed a tear, hug yourself, because you are a compassionate person.

Blessed are those who can give without remembering and take without forgetting.

Luke 6:38* Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

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