

For All Who Persevere

By Maurice Carter in The Covington News – April 14, 2013

This isn't as easy as it looks -- this putting together of ~750 words with a coherent thought every week.

It's 6:00 pm on a Friday, my noon deadline blew past long ago, and the screen upon which I type is blank but for these words. For me, ideas aren't lacking; time and energy are.

I'm ready to collapse after an especially difficult day to close out another draining work week. Today was extra special, starting early this morning with the realization my personal email account had been hacked and possibly my Facebook account too. I think I caught and fixed it before too much damage was done, but you never know for sure.

Not that I had much time to dwell on that, with fires to fight at work, but it was a nagging concern throughout the day. Even now, at the end of the day, I must get this column written before I can finally ensure all is well with my personal cyber presence.

I need badly to decompress now, but there's this commitment to meet of getting this column written and submitted. The excessive demands of one job are no license to shirk the duties of another.

For not the first time lately, a voice inside says "Give it up. You're too busy and have too much going on to write a weekly column." True, I have a stressful job, I travel a lot, and I have other volunteer commitments in the community. I'm tired.

But, still I write.

Those who don't read my column wouldn't miss it anyway. Among those who do read it are surely some who wish I'd heed that voice. But, my next comments are for those who both read and appreciate, whether you always agree or not.

No one else's life is ever so easy as it looks from the outside in, and my circumstances are nothing special. So, this isn't about me. But, it is about persevering, and we all make daily choices on many fronts to either carry forward or cease moving.

I'm not as well-versed in the Star Wars films as many, but I love the Jedi wisdom shared between Yoda and Luke Skywalker: "Do... or do not. There is no try." So tonight, this time, I do.

I do, because I've heard from enough people who tell me what I write matters to them. Just as every other person who writes or has written has heard the same thing. Anytime we make the effort to connect and communicate – when we care about being heard and

understood by another – it matters to someone. If I shut this computer down right now and walked outside, I'd feel so relieved tonight. But, tomorrow, and the next day, and the next, I would never feel as good as I've felt since becoming a columnist.

For me, it's writing a column – it's also showing up tomorrow morning to pick up trash with other volunteers on County 213 for the Great American Clean Up or spending three long days last weekend giving up my personal time in a workshop to become a more effective community advocate. But, we're surrounded by people making the same choice. It's the decision to give time, energy, brainpower, willpower, soul power, and our humanity to something greater than our own personal interests. Or not to do so.

People tell me what I write matters to them. So I persevere. My life's not bad – it's actually quite spectacular. But, even good lives have moments when they become too much. Knowing someone else cares and notices makes all the difference.

It must be human nature that we focus with laser precision on all that we don't like in our lives. We complain about a particular elected official, a community leader, a church member, a teacher, a boss, a coworker, a neighbor, or maybe even a columnist we just can't stand. But, somehow, we overlook the bountiful blessing of that which is right in the world around us. We take for granted genuine public servants, quiet volunteers with a heart, friends who stand close by, and everyone who puts caring into whatever it is they do.

But, these are those who could give up at any moment and cease doing the myriad of things we take for granted that are the goodness pervading our world. When you tell them it matters to you, it matters to them.

I'm done. File, save, attach, and send. Now, I'm heading outside to unwind. Just be careful for a while with any email from me.