

View from Menzies Mountain **By Bruce Menzies**

“Frost on Scarlet Leaves”

Thank a Vet

“Will all the Veterans please stand up so we can thank you?” How many times have you heard that invitation at a Branson show? Well, consider this: Do you enjoy your life of liberty? Thank a Vet. Do you enjoy speaking English? Thank a Vet.

From the Halls of Montezuma to the shores of Tripoli, it has consistently been the Veterans of the USA that has done the heavy lifting and paid the ultimate price for our freedoms we enjoy. It was Cynthia Ozick that said, “We often take for granted the very things that most deserve our gratitude.” This coming November 11th, the Ozarks will celebrate Veteran’s Day—big time! Let’s not forget the men and women who served and secured our freedoms! Remember to thank a Vet!

Saving people money so they can live better has been the mission of Walmart since Sam Walton founded the company years ago. Each week, more than 245 million customers and members visit their 10,800 stores in 27 countries with sales to exceed \$466 billion. Today, Walmart employs 2.2 million associates worldwide.

Sam Walton was an innovative thinker—you might even say “outside the box”—and established best practices that changed retailing forever and made Walmart the business it is today. It all started with a man from the Ozarks.

The College of the Ozarks began with a dream—and that dream came true in 1906 when the Presbyterian Church established a school that provided, “Christian education for youth of both sexes, especially those found worthy but who are without sufficient means to procure such training.” C of O, locally known as “Hard Work U” has a mission to develop citizens of Christ-like character who are well-educated, hard-working and patriotic.

Menzies Mountain

For twenty-five years or more my family has enjoyed our country cottage here in Christian County. It was one of our children who appropriately named it Menzies Mountain. (It’s not so much that we’re on a big mountain, it’s just those around us live in a valley.) The cottage is small by city standards but I think of it as cozy.

Menzies Mountain has no phone service, cable television, or Internet. Sure, we have our cell phone to make and receive phone calls and a mobile “hot spot” which allows us limited Internet usage. However, you don’t come to Menzies Mountain to get wired. Here, we are disconnected from the rat race and distant from the maddening crowds. Emphasis is on spiritual renewal, cooking, reading, and writing, enjoying a fire during cold weather, being outside and such.

Speaking of the fire place, I have been working preparing for the upcoming fall and winter season. The wood I cut last spring to season through the summer is stacked and ready come what may. The coming winter and bitter cold will have no mercy on those who fail to prepare. Having made ready for cold weather, I can stay inside during bad days with the fire going strong and leave the woods to the storms. I’m planning on a season of contentment.

Menzies Mountain is beautiful in the fall and winter. We enjoy frost on scarlet leaves. Days are clear and warm but as soon as the sun goes down, the air chills and in the mornings, likely as not, the Finley River in the valley below will be covered with a mist.

It is not all wind and rains in the November and December. On many nights the woods are so quiet I can hear a choir of coyotes back in the fields. They will begin to run and with cold weather their hunger will grow. There are also rabbits on my ridge, and in quiet moon lit nights they will be playing in the snow as I will see by their tracks, but they are always on the alert for coyotes, owls, and foxes, their mortal enemies. (It’s strange how a little appetite will convert the aforementioned choir of coyotes into a mob of murderous carnivores!)

After dark, reading in my big chair positioned near the fire place, I can watch headlights on a distant highway, as nighthawks snake their way down the big hill leaving Nixa for destinations south and listen to the murmuring of the fire, at peace with God, myself, and the world.

Until winter arrives and we meet again on this page, enjoy the flaming fall review—I know I will!

--Bruce Menzies