

View from Menzies Mountain, fall 2014

By Bruce Menzies

What do you like about autumn?

I would respond by asking, what do you *not* like about autumn? This is my favorite season; want to know why? Well, let me count the ways: the weather, sweaters, hot chocolate, banana nutbread, rainy days, extra blankets, all things pumpkin, fall festivals, all things persimmon, yellow leaves, all things peaches, the fireplace, words like “crispy and “cozy”, windy days, comfort clothes, open windows, crunchy leaves, apple cobbler! That’s just for starters!

When you feel that first crisp breeze, you know summer is on the wane and fantastic fall will be here. Every season has its upside; however, autumn has a particular beauty to it. Nature will turn the Ozarks into one big canvas with nature’s paintbrush. There may be no more beautiful drive than Highway 465, *aka The High Road*, connecting Highway 65 to Highway 76. It’s a nine-mile drive of red, gold, and orange leaves. Often I took my dad on drives and that was our favorite.

In my summer reading I finished *Stress Test* by Timothy F. Geithner, Treasury Secretary for President Obama’s first term. He and a small group of policy makers shaped the American response to the global financial crisis of 2008. In this issue, I have included a review of his book and how that group saved America from falling into a catastrophic financial abyss.

At Menzies Mountain, the does and their fawns, and even the yearlings, are moving about together, while the bucks keep out of sight in quiet, shadowy places until the points on their antlers finally harden. The deer, which spent a lot of time around the river foraging on water plants during the summer, are now beginning to move back into the woods where they find plenty to eat. By November, when the firearm season opens, the deer should be basically invisible!

Speaking of Menzies Mountain, if you could see my cottage there you’d think things looked a little neglected. My back surgery in the spring has taken longer to recover from than originally thought. Sadly, I’ve even been forced to *outsource* my lawn care this summer! Elective chores have been rescheduled for spring as I’m planning on being fully recovered by then.

Fall is a time of frantic activity with the little creatures bustling and hustling to store up food for the winter. The birds emerge from their late summer eclipse with new feathers and a new purpose. Many are stocking up on food for a long migration.

Just as the tide of feathered creatures flowed north in the spring, now it has turned and as the leaves begin to color, the birds are flying toward the south. I see them on Menzies Mountain gathering in flocks, sometimes sitting in trees and chattering and then flying off to whirl and turn as if they were drilling in formation for their long flight. I've already heard many flocks of geese flying through the night honking to each other.

A fellow might feel a little lonely if he didn't stop to remember that they will be back in the spring. Has anyone figured out how they know when to start their migrations? Or, how do they find their way back hundreds of miles to the Ozarks? Who gives them the signal to go? Consider the following:

Matthew 6:26 Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

The correct answer to Christ's question is yes, we are more valuable than the birds. If God takes care of them, which has a lesser value, He will take care of us. Whatever season of your life you find yourself in, God knows and He will take care of you. We are asked to seek His kingdom and righteousness first, and all things will be added. Therefore, don't worry about tomorrow, tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Until we meet again on this page in December and talk about old winter's song, enjoy the fall!

--Bruce Menzies