

4/29/08

“Sea Shell Sycology”

by

Tom Holbrook

Well, back in town... briefly... after a great week in Bonita Springs/Naples, FL with our good friends Steve and Soo, from South Charleston, WV. Had a super time on the golf course, at the pool and of course the beautiful shell-laden beaches along the Gulf Coast. I try to get a couple bags of shells every time we go so we can clutter up our home... not really the reason. I look on them as interesting mementoes of our trip and I always take one of them and write the location from where it came and the date collected just to remind myself from time to time of the beautiful places we have visited.

Maybe I'm still a hick at heart but I'll never cease to be amazed at the ocean and the beaches that come with it. I'm especially excited about the variety of seashells that the waves bring in each day. I enjoy walking up and down the beach with a bag picking up those shells that catch my eye, again marveling at the different shapes, sizes and colors that the good Lord saw fit to give them. I told Jude by the time you walk a substantial distance and turn around to go back to your starting point you've got a whole new shell collection to choose from.

I know this is going to sound somewhat eccentric to some of you, but you know how I think. As I was looking for the perfect shell to put in my bag I would choose one half hidden under the sand only to find there was a hole in it or one side broken off and I would toss it back to the sand. Then I would start feeling guilty that I had somehow snubbed the shell. I was being judgmental and discriminating against it because it wasn't correct in every way.

My mind cried out to me... “Tom, these shells need a home, too. Why don't you start collecting those shells with imperfections instead of continuing your search for the best and the brightest?” At one point I actually put a damaged shell in the bag, giving into the pangs of guilt I was experiencing. I even started to look for a spiritual implication to this whole dialogue I was having with my psyche and wondered if God had put these imperfect shells in my path to see how I would

respond to their needs. Would I just leave them to toss to and fro in the sand, washed from beach to beach, never having a sand dune to call their own? Or would I tenderly pick them up, wash them off and take them home to occupy a place of honor on my counter top or library shelf?

All of a sudden I shook off these thoughts racing through my mind...heard my sane self yell out, "You idiot, wake up!", and I reached into the bag for the little broken shell I had placed there and threw it as far out into the ocean as I could. I then walked back to my beach umbrella sat down, grabbed my James Patterson novel and applied my brilliant mind to more challenging pursuits such as finding the killer before Alex did. So much for politically correct seashell hunting.

If any of you guys have an occasion to visit the Bonita Springs or Naples, FL area be sure to take in a brand new restaurant in a brand new shopping complex at Coconut Pointe. Good friends of ours who lives in that area, Mike and Carolyn, introduced us to the "Blue Water Bistro" a absolutely fantastic seafood eatery that is top of the line in every way, including the prices they charge. But folks, whatever they charge its worth the price and the trip. Write it down and try it out... you'll not be sorry.

All in all we had a great time at the beach, the pool and visiting with old friends, but nothing is more enjoyable than coming back to Florida's friendliest hometown and resort, The Villages. We're glad to be home... at least for a little while.

See you next week.

#