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“Hello Mickey And Donald”

by
Tom Holbrook

I would like to begin today's article with a correction of last week's article wherein I mistakenly listed the name of my golf partner while in Myrtle Beach, SC as Jean... I would like to correct that mistake and acknowledge that the lady who actually carried me through the 18 holes of golf was Sally. To the masses out there I'm sure this information is of no consequence to you at all... however, to Sally, like any other serious golfer, her accomplishments on the golf course are a measurement of success in an important area of her life. To deny her fait accompli would be denying her existence, which naturally, we cannot and should not do. Sally congratulations on a great round of golf. You saved my life and helped me win \$2.50.

Now, to more important things. (Just kidding Sally) Judy and I spent the greater part of this past week at Disney World and though we've been there before we saw many sites this time we had never seen before and left with still more sites to see in the future. Two of my sons, Lane and Brian, and their families had rooms at The Grand Floridian and had rented an extra room to accommodate us. (If you think I'm dropping the Grand Floridian's name to impress you... you're right.) We spent three nights and four days of their week walking the theme parks with them and their six children... ages 6 to 15.

It really was a beautiful place with great pools and amenities and a water slide that Judy and I went down a couple of times at our grandchildren's insistence. It was a 100 yards of twisting, turning, rising and falling, with rushing water and gravity pushing us down faster and faster. Well, okay, it was maybe, only 50 feet total length but the curves and rushing water were real. It was great and we got to know so many of the other guests as they responded to Judy's screams during the entire length of the slide.

Besides the normal theme park rides we also rented some speed boats at the hotel and spent nearly two hours zooming around the lake and getting an entirely different perspective of the whole shebang. Our dinners took place at the different theme park specialty restaurants where they serve all their meals family style and serve way too much food, but it was very tasty and we had all of Disney's characters coming around during dinner so I could get their autographs and get a picture with them hugging my neck and sitting on my lap. A very special occasion, to be sure.

One extra-special production we saw for the first time, and it was memorable, was the fireworks show at Epcot. They call it 'Illuminations' and it takes place in the middle of the lake around which all the different countries' venues are circled. In typical Disney fashion the pyrotechnics were accompanied by fantastic music, probably especially written for each show. Great bursts of flame from one of the barges began the show followed by, exciting laser lights around the full circumference of the lake into the

cloud covered sky, which made the effect all that much more ethereal; every building of every country was used intermittently during the performance with superb lighting and other effects; and of course the multi-colored, multi-shaped fireworks accentuating the musical themes with glorious colors and sounds that filled our eyes, ears and hearts. It was absolutely inspiring and uplifting as well as captivating to those of us watching. Thunderous applause from everyone around the lake rose to the heavens at the conclusion of this great production. You have to see it.

For those of you who have never been to Disney... it is not just a theme park. For you newcomers to the Villages... this is just another one of the perks of living here... close proximity to some of the best entertainment and places to entertain your families when they visit. Judy and I, as well as many other Villagers, have purchased Disney Annual Passes that allow us to travel the 50 minutes to the front gate and hop a monorail or other conveyance to any and all of their parks, at any time of year. You really need to check out all that is available to you as a citizen of Florida's Friendliest Hometown.

Have a great week.

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