

JAMAICA SAY YOU WILL

• A SON TEACHES HIS FATHER WHAT IT MEANS TO LIVE LIKE A LOCAL •

Montego Bay, Pg. 74

NOVEMBER 2014

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AMERICAN AIRLINES + AMERICAN EAGLE

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Totally Requested

It wasn't easy, but **CARSON DALY** is once again at the forefront of pop culture



Returning to

PLYMOUTH ROCK

BOS

PVD

MONTHLY

VOTE

for the 2014 Road Warriors
(turn to Pg. 11)



I'll Be On Your Side

IDID SOMETHING while crafting this column that was unusual enough to warrant mention in the column itself. Two things, actually. First, I turned it in uncharacteristically late, which I haven't done one single time — neither through snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night — in all of the 127 columns I've written for this magazine. I have but one standing order for everyone around here: Make your deadline. I hold myself to that same standard. But this one was ridiculously late. That's because of the second thing I did with this column. I wrote the entire thing, reread it, did some rewriting, and then purged it, first from sight and then from my hard drive. It wasn't right for this issue; it wasn't right for this season. When a column isn't right for your readership and for the mindset of said readership, then what you have is bad writing, plain and simple. And bad writing needs to be cast out of the garden, forced forever to walk the land of Nod.

Longtime readers of this column know how passionate I am about November and Thanksgiving. I always try to convey my heart and soul in my November column. I'd handwrite it in my own blood if I had enough liters for a 400,000-plus pressrun. That's the sort of fervor Thanksgiving inspires in a second-generation, grandson-of-Holocaust-survivors, I'm-just-happy-to-be-here American.

The idea for a column rewrite started at the end of the summer when I was having a conversation with one of our two interns. We got on the topic of our November issue, and Kristen O'Neal, our

intern from Washington University in St. Louis, asked what sort of Thanksgiving coverage we'd be doing. I made a comment that we always do great coverage for the holidays, but, that said, I've never seen — in this magazine or any other — a travel story about Plymouth Rock. She said she hadn't either. A few phone calls and mouse clicks later, and our intern was booked for travel to the site where the Mayflower made landfall in 1620. Look at what she unearthed in the far eastern corridor of Massachusetts (page 40).

A few days later, I was speaking with our other intern, Jazmin Frederick from Baylor University. She told me a fantastic tale about her great-grandfather, whom she never met, yet she has a compelling desire to advance his legacy. After reading her timely and timeless tribute to Sgt. Paul Shimer Jr. (page 52), you'll undoubtedly swell with American pride.

These interactions with our interns instantly put me in a good mood, and it revived my faith in journalism as a college major. I certainly see the value in such an education, but when I taught journalism at the University of Texas at Arlington, and later at the University of North Texas, I always warned my students on the first day of class that this profession is not for everybody. It's hard to get jobs, especially these days as various dinosaur forms of paper media are limping off to their dying places. I also leveled with them: "You probably won't get rich." But this is as rewarding and fulfilling an endeavor as you make it.

I had a cool Neil Young quote that I used on the first day of class while trying to scare them into a deadline-oriented, sink-or-swim, I'm-gonna-work-you-till-you-cry mindset, and then I reminded them of it on the last day as they prepared to compete against every other journalism major in the world for scant openings: "Be on my side, I'll be on your side."

And then it hit me as I was looking over our story lineup for the November issue of *American Way*, the penultimate issue of the year and the penultimate issue with American Airlines Publishing as the magazine's publisher: We are on their side, and they're on ours. Here's how:

In addition to the two main stories in this issue by Kristen and Jazmin, there's a story by David Halloran about the new machines over at Chevy. David actually heard the Neil Young speech firsthand when he was a student of mine at UNT. He was later an *American Way* intern, and he is now

an *American Way* editor. The editor who edited David's story has a similar career trajectory. Before graduating magna cum laude from the University of Missouri School of Journalism, Christiana Nielson was our summer intern. After graduation, she started as a part-time editor of our premium publication, *Celebrated Living*, and is now our full-time features editor, editing seasoned pros like Robert Wilonsky, who wrote the cover story on Carson Daly (page 66). Robert was my mentor during my summer fellowship at the *Dallas Observer* 15 years ago.

You take my hand, I'll take your hand.

Which brings me back to why I ripped up the first attempt at November's "Editor's Note" and why I started from scratch.

I'm particularly thankful for the opportunities American Airlines affords young talent looking to contribute to what is already the world's largest airline — and what I believe is one of the best workplaces in the world. I'm thankful that you've trusted American with your time, and that we've been able to help you forge memories. We are, at this very minute, making the world smaller for you and your loved ones. With any luck, we're entertaining you with the content in these pages, which feature significant work by current and former interns.

As for me, I'm still just thankful to be here; that you've allowed my family, my words and me into your lives for the last six years. I'm thankful for the education you've given me over that time period. And I'm thankful for being an American Airlines employee. That's what I wanted to say with this column, and that's why it took two separate attempts to get it right.

Happy Thanksgiving, America.



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