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STAFF VOICE

Together, we will thrive and bloom

My lips quivered, my head was spinning with information collected from three different health care providers, tears started welling.

He noticed right away, stood up and wrapped his arms around my arms now pebbled with black and blue marks from all the blood draws I've given in the past few weeks. I felt sorry for myself - but more sorry for him. Here he was, at home watching the Wheel or World News instead of out and about enjoying the best dinner special in town.

As I cried for the situation and cried for him, he reminded me of the vows we took 23 years ago today. The first day of spring, we were so young - like the new grass sprouting up after the snowmelt. We were merely old enough to start a comfortable lifestyle as a Mrs. & Mr. on our own. It would be the two of us now to take on household chores, be responsible for

putting food on the table, keeping bills paid and important paperwork organized.

Fast-forward more than two decades and we now have two more in our brood who are dependent on us for teaching money-management, cooking skills, and respectful values.

Lately, however, as I experience health unknowns, it seems we've put more focus on the two of us as a couple. He's followed my every appointment, adjusted his meal planning for my needs and been that rock I married on March 20, 1999.

When he held me that day of tears and great uncertainty, he put his head on my shoulder and not until

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we let go did I realize his eyes were wet and red just like mine. I apologized for my emotional mess. He declined my apology and said, "it's the two of us. You're my No. 1. If you are sick, we are sick."

Just this week we made a trek to Duluth for more doctor consults. As my chauffeur, my second pair of ears and my scheduling secretary, his company and care was amazing. Again, I felt selfish for relying on

him when he could be at work that day. Again, he set me straight. "It's what it's all about," he said regarding our partnership in each other's well-being.

While this gave me great comfort,

I also felt a bit controlling. I realize I need to shift my thinking and keep in mind that day I wore my grandmother's wedding dress to join him at the altar of his family's home church. He was 23 and sported a babyface with a humongous smile. I've thought about how his confidence has not waned all those years - or so he's showed me.

We were the first of our close friends to bite the bullet and he ignored those playful jabs from buddies about tying the knot. I noticed a change in perspective among his friends. I witnessed how he was an inspiration for those guys still stuck in the lonely slump of singlehood.

My husband had found the person he would love through thick and thin, ugly and beautiful, sad and happy. And - it is me and he is mine!

Happy anniversary and happy spring dear, together we will thrive and bloom.

SCIENCE VOICE

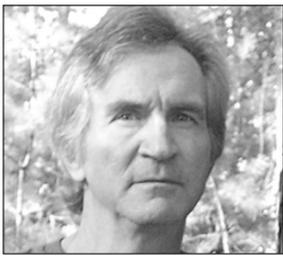
The power of illusion

A reader writes: I believe in God, you believe in Darwinism. From his remarks, he also asserts the Universe is about six to ten thousand years old. He also says I am 'upset' with his views.

To begin, I am concerned the same way a teacher or parent would be concerned about a student or child that was presented with indisputable evidence of a phenomenon yet rejects physical realities in favor of a self-created illusion. To be clear, facts have almost no influence over such a mindset. Satisfying illusions will almost always win over reality because we can create an illusion just the way we want it to be and ignore all evidence to the contrary. We all do this to a certain extent. The harshness of the reality of broken relationships, financial problems, disease, loss of loved ones, and the inevitability of our own death all can place at times a heavy burden on our mental state. It is, therefore, understandable that we would use our imaginations to create mental shields to hold those at bay and to soften the blow of those realities. To the extent that it is personally helpful, it

is also necessary.

With a single exception, I have no issue with any method or belief one would devise to come to terms with the sometimes harsh realities of existence. From a cultural standpoint all groups of people throughout antiquity until the present have developed explanations, sometimes referred to as spiritual or religious, to help deal with adversity and explain the unknown. On an individual level, whatever helps a person to remain 'sane' should be of no concern to others unless it threatens the health and safety of others, or is used to assert superiority and control. If your beliefs and influence, such as those of a parent or leader, prevent those under your care from the pursuit of a healthy, open minded, and purposeful life, then they are not only ignorant, but also dangerous and immoral. I saw this play out many years ago when parents in a nearby town withheld medical treatment from one of their children because their particular illusion told them that God would save him. Yet tragically the child did die a tortured death despite the fact that modern medicine



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would have saved him. The parents still maintained they had done the right thing. Their illusion told them it was God's will that the child should die. Their illusion was stronger than even the love for their own child. The power of ignorance won. Facts didn't stand a chance.

On the matter of the age of the Universe, the preponderance of evidence derived from multiple scientific fields of study, i.e. astronomy, biology, chemistry, geology, physics and all subsets of those endeavors, have confirmed through tens of thousands of experiments, data points, and discoveries that the Universe, which includes Earth and the Solar System, is multiple billions of years old. I have

asked those who support the 'young earth' conjecture to provide just one hundred verifiable facts or discoveries, absent religious and cultural bias, that support the view of a cosmos less than ten thousand years old and provide a testable fact based hypothesis for an explanation that would call into question all of the data and conclusions drawn from the above listed scientific fields of study. But the only answers I get are deflections to their own narrow worldview.

Darwinism is not a scientific term. It was invented by those who would seek to cast aspersions upon the discoveries Darwin made. Darwin didn't 'invent' evolution. The fact that organisms have changed over time was well known, even to many religious people, well before Darwin. The discovery of fossils of organisms no longer in existence underscored the fact that changes had occurred. But what was missing was just how those changes came about. Some in the Christian world explained it as God had made multiple creative events instead of just one, each event being more complex than the one before, sort

of like practice runs. They reasoned that that is why the ancient fossils seemed to transition from simple life forms to more complex. With the limited physical evidence available to them at the time and their own religious bias, that conclusion seemed reasonable, even though it came up against accepted Christian dogma. There was no scientific interdisciplinary approach at the time to provide a better explanation. What Darwin did was to provide an evidence based explanation for how the obvious changes to Earth's organisms could come about, i.e. species change through natural selection, and one that didn't need divine guidance. Organisms have the capacity to change given enough time and the right conditions and impetus and it is a continuous process. The fossil record and modern biology provide ample evidence of this. Further proof comes with the most recent covid virus. Covid began as a unique organism, but has now evolved into several variants that are genetically distinct from one another, and that didn't exist anywhere five years ago.

Historical review

1902

March 22, 1902-There is no longer any doubt for those who have noted the explorations of iron ore on this end of the Mesaba Range, which have been in progress during the past year, that valuable mines in this vicinity will soon be among the shippers.

1912

March 20, 1912-The resort run by Jim Rhody was raided by Sheriff Riley with three men and 11 women taken into custody. Rhody was dispensing liquor behind the bar when arrested. The men will be charged with running a house of ill repute.

1922

March 22, 1922-J.E. Barr Pickling and Preserving Co. of St. Cloud signed contracts with local farmers to raise cucumbers.

March 22, 1922-By a majority vote of 188 votes, the people of School District 1 voted to construct a unit or part of a new high school in Grand Rapids at a cost not to exceed \$250,000.

1932

March 23, 1932-Blandin Paper Co. is making important changes. It is remodeling the paper machine and beaters to enable production of wallpapers, half-toned and color papers.

1942

March 18, 1942-Two men were killed in a one-vehicle accident between Coleraine and Grand Rapids. Dead are Robert O'Malley, 21, Coleraine, and Albert Estelle, Bovey. In another accident, E.R. McPheeters of Hay Point, a few miles from Hill City, died near Grand Rapids.

March 18, 1942-Clyde Anderson, living near Jacobson, is one of the few men from this part of Minnesota to kill a full-grown bear with one blow of an axe after it attacked him.

1952

March 20, 1952-Itasca County, in line with the rest of Minnesota, showed inclination toward Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower as the Republican Party candidate for president in the election next fall.

March 20, 1952-A need for 3,500 more workers than are presently available in the Arrowhead Iron Range area of the state is indicated in a report issued by the Minnesota Division of Employment and Security.

1962

March 19, 1962-Ben Aultman, Grand Rapids, first Minnesotan to test the state's new implied consent law, won his case in Nashwauk Municipal Court and kept his driver's license. The issue in the hearing involved the legality of the revocation of the driver's license only.

March 19, 1962-A \$1.6 million contract for construction of a building to house a new paper machine at the Blandin Paper Co. was let.

March 22, 1962-No fatal accidents were reported for the iron ore mines operating in Itasca County during 1961.

1972

March 16, 1972-District 318 School Board members agreed to offer the Central School property for sale to the village of Grand Rapids for \$188,000 for public use.

March 16, 1972-Tax levies totaling \$52,132 for 1973 were approved at the annual meeting of Grand Rapids Township.

March 16, 1972-Sheriff's deputies are investigating the beating of Daniel Brown, of Detroit Lakes, who was found in a ditch along the Pear Lake Road in the Midway district after being beaten and robbed.

March 20, 1972-Darra Hughes, 14, Grand Rapids Junior High eighth grader, won the Itasca County Spelling Contest.

March 20, 1972-Two Deer River-area sisters were struck by a car while walking along Highway 2 at Bena. The victims are Darlene Jackson, and Donna Jackson, 19.

1982

March 18, 1982-Approximately 1,400 students at the Grand Rapids Middle School brought letters to their parents warning of stickers and decals appearing in several areas of the country which contained small amounts of LSD.

March 18, 1982-Defense attorney Richard C. Hansen, Duluth, won a battle for his client, Audie L. Fox, 27, Pengilly. Ninth Judicial Court Judge John A. Spellacy granted Hansen's request for a change of venue, and the trial will be moved to Brainerd. Fox is accused of murdering Beefy Lawson, Itasca County sheriff's deputy.

March 22, 1982-The prognosis for Itasca Memorial Hospital in 1982 is bleak. The major reason for existing problems is the lack of patients.

March 22, 1982-James B. Pribyl, 27, Harris Township, died in an accident in his garage where 18 sheets of wafer-board fell on him.

March 22, 1982-Four rules established by the Minnesota Department of Corrections for jail operations "appear to have been violated" at the time of the Jan. 18, 1982, suicide death of prisoner Matthew Brett Rau.

1992

March 18, 1992-The Greenway School Board is talking with neighboring school districts to discover whether it may share a superintendent with one of them.

March 22, 1992-The developer of a new combined clinic for Grand Rapids Medical Associates will present the group's plans for considering a building site north of Itasca Medical Center along the Mississippi River.

2002

March 17, 2002-An amendment to keep the Mineral 21st Century Fund's interest out of a Minnesota House economic development reduction bill failed paving the way for the legislation's approval.

March 20, 2002-Two longtime Ranger DFLers might be pitted against each other this fall election. Reps. Irv Anderson of International Falls and Loren Solberg of Bovey are placed in the same district in a redistricting plan released by the courts.

March 20, 2002-UPM-Kymmene named Emery McGraw, 51, Vice President of Operations of Blandin Paper Co. effective Feb. 25.

March 20, 2002-Administrators in School District 318 were charged with the task of informing 24 teachers who will lose all or part of their jobs or be given a different teaching assignment.

March 20, 2002-The Minnesota House voted to designate Eric Enstrom's "Grace" as the official state photograph. The widely-renowned photograph, shot by the Bovey resident in 1918, would also be required to hang in the secretary of state's office.

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