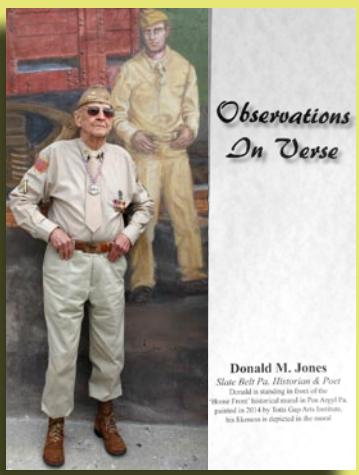


A Poem from the Archives of Donald Jones

Exclusively in the Blue Valley Times



Donald M. Jones
Slate Belt Pa. Historian & Poet
Donald is standing in front of the 'Stone Forest' historical mural in Pen Argyl Pa.
Painted in 2013 by Tracy Gandy Arts Institute.
Photo courtesy of the mural.

WINTER COMES

The earth dresses down,
Crisp and cold brightens the light.
It lengthens the night.

Confining traveler to room and hall,
Because of the season's first snow fall.
To sit and dream of warmer days
While staring at winter's white haze.

BMCL's BOOK NOOK

By Val Viglione

PEN ARGYL - The BMCL's BOOK NOOK is your place for one stop shopping for the reader on your Holiday List. It is a room filled with giftable books including Adult Fiction and Non-Fiction, Children and Young Adult Fiction and Non-Fiction, Large Print and Classics, as well as Puzzles and DVD's and each month the Library offers a "Book Nook Special." Book Nook Gift Certificates are also available to purchase for your favorite readers.

The Blue Mountain Community Library is located at 216 S. Robinson Ave. in Pen Argyl. Hours are 10-12, Monday thru Saturday mornings and 6-8, Monday thru Thursday evenings. Stop in and check off all the readers on your Holiday List! Call 610-863-3029 for information or visit www.bmcl.org. Find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/bmclpenargyl.



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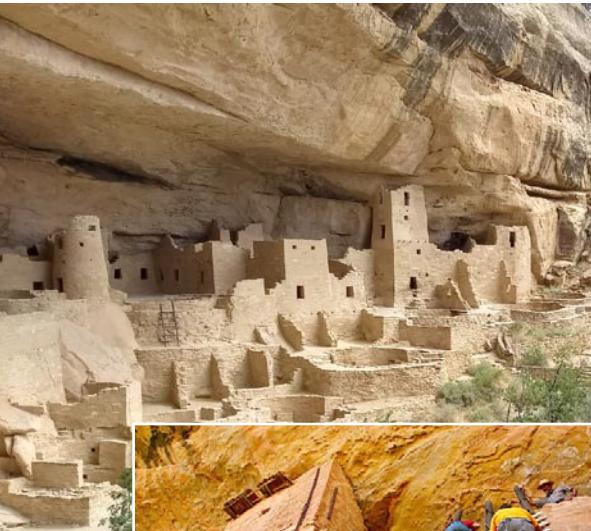
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ECHO IN THE CANYON

Continued from page 1

the birth of Christ. These hunter/gatherers moved down through North America and around the year 600AD these ancient Puebloans became farmers and made their home in the "four corners" region of the US. 1000's built and lived in the alcoves and cliffs for a few hundred years until they mysteriously disappeared between 1200 and 1300 AD. I found myself closing my eyes and thought I heard the whispers of these ancient people. Our complaints are shameful. We turn on a spigot and get water but somehow they survived a harsh environment of 18" of rain a year and ladling water from seep springs in the sandstone under cliff alcoves with a gourd ladle. Using dendrochronology, the study of tree rings, there were 30 year stretches of drought. They farmed atop of the mesa and climbed down using foot holes and hand holes in the stone, stairs made of stone rubble, ropes and ladders to reach their homes high above the canyons. I also wondered how many children were lost over their precarious perches. Never again will I view a cliff or an alcove anywhere and not think of the courage and determination that would necessitate such a dangerous existence. The switchbacks needed to reach the mesas were symbolic of a life's lesson- sometimes there's another way than straight up when faced with the impossible.

In all we visited and hiked The North Rim Grand Canyon, Antelope (slot) Canyon, Monument Valley, Hovenweep National Monument, Glen Canyon Dam, Valley of the Gods, Goosenecks State Park, Dead Horse Point State Park, Arches National Park, Canyonlands National Park and Mesa Verde National Park. The dry heat of the desert southwest, the monoliths of colored rock formations rising like behemoths, standing like sentinels over the desolate vastness and openness as far as the eye can see, are what I love about this place. There is something so humbling about gazing out over such an expanse, devoid of civilization for 100's of miles. There is magnetism in the rocks, rise and fall in the terrain and thinness in the air. The quiet can be deafening except for the canyon wren or the tapping of our trekking poles. And nothing can prepare you for the celestial star show in a huge dark sky with no light pollution. While at Canyonlands, a body of an experienced hiker was found reminding us even the most prepared adventurer can fall victim and this beauteous place must be respected.

Pennsylvania and the desert southwest could not be more different. Having lived in PA my whole life, I truly appreciate the fields and foothills, the dense forests of our mountains and our four seasons. But I have visited the southwest enough times to know I could happily live there. This kind of awesome makes the stomach clench and flop and causes me to wonder, "How could a human sustain this feeling everyday without overloading the brain?" But this I also know-whether it's my daily 4 mile run or a grand experience such as this, sometimes I need to leave so I can experience the feeling of coming back to the places and faces of those I love.

I cannot end this narrative without expressing my thankfulness to be able to enjoy good health, travel and move my body in such physical ways. I remain grateful for the prayers and never lose sight of the fact it was because of prayers and continued prayers that I've been meeting milestones these past 15 years and living this wonderful life!