

Jim's Perspective...

Grandkids Museum

Janie and I recently met with our “card club” friends for an evening of fun. This is a card club that we started back in the early 1980’s. We get together roughly every other month. I was visiting with one of the ladies at card club and she mentioned how it has recently struck her that her grandkids are really growing up. They are no longer little kids. They generally manage their own day and don’t need as much help from adults. It is just “different,” she said. As she talked about it, I started thinking about my grandkids, and I must say, I agree with my friend’s observations that the grandkids are, indeed, growing up! The relationship between the grandparents and grandkids is just not as it once was. This is not to suggest that it has gotten worse. It hasn’t at all, but it has just changed as they have matured. To illustrate this change in the relationship, I want to focus on a shed that is located in the backyard where we live. Below are three pictures of the shed. The first photo gives you an idea of the size of the shed. About four or five years ago, I removed all of the garden tools, and other outside maintenance devices such as the lawn mower and snow blower. Once I had everything out of there, I built some things inside the shed that I thought would be fun for the grandkids to use. In the second picture, you will see a loft area I built for the kids to sit in, by themselves, and play with toys or maybe read a story. In the third photo, you will see a wooden table I built on the floor of the shed which they could use to have lunch, or draw pictures. Behind the table, on the wall, you can see some of their drawings. They always liked running out to their shed. It was theirs, for kids only, and indeed, they put up a little sign on the outside of the shed door announcing, “no adults allowed.” The adults thought this was so funny.





Today, the grandkids no longer use their private dwelling in our backyard. It sits unoccupied as the cob webs spread and the dust accumulates. In one sense, it is sad to me, to see it no longer has any use for the grandkids. It is also a bit troubling that the years have gone by so quickly. What used to be so fun – watching the grandkids run out to their secret hideaway – now seems kind of sad since what I made for them is no longer of any interest to them. Alas, the grandkids'

shed is now nothing but a grandkids museum. I go out, occasionally, and look at the material in the shed and reminisce about the good ole' days when the little kids loved what I made for them. It feels like a museum of times past. It is kind of difficult to accept. As the holiday season approaches, I suspect all of us will remember past family activities associated with the holidays, and we may miss some of what has happened, and we may wish some of it was still something we could experience today. However, as they say, "time marches on." There is, however, a point of view that helps all of us cope with our feelings about the end of experiences we always loved. That point of view is to "live for today." Maybe the grandkids are older and don't function as they did when they were little kids, but now, today, there are new fun experiences with them that I can enjoy. And so, this holiday season, I intend to live for today! There will be funny events – today; there will be new visual attractions – today, there will be different and pleasant interactions between all family members – today; and it will all be fun just as it has been in the past. And so, I leave you with a beautiful song, sang by The New Christy Minstrels, titled, *Today*. The message of this song is about living for today and appreciating the good times when we have them. Let's live for today. Today is my moment!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IbxebBKehD0>

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