

I Lost My Hero

By Tommy Druen

I've never been one to be starstruck. Over the years I've shaken hands with presidents, chatted Duke basketball with a former NBA coach, and conversed about the genius of Nirvana with a Grammy Award winner. Once, Shirley Temple herself even called me.

But, to borrow from Garth Brooks, I've also got friends in low places—and I've always taken pride in that too. And, straying far from Garth's territory, to paraphrase Depeche Mode, people are people. Whether CEO or janitor, each bears equal worth before God, and so they should in my eyes as well. Hero worship has never been my habit. With one exception.

On August 6th, I lost my hero.

In some ways, we had many similarities. We shared passions for history, learning, old westerns, and college basketball. Yet, in others, we were also opposites: he was happiest outdoors, gifted with mechanical and carpentry skills I could never hope to match, and his musical tastes diverged wildly from mine. Even beyond that mixture of similarity and contrast, he led a life that I could only hope to emulate.

When my wife and I married in 2003, my choice of a best man was effortless—because he was, quite literally, the best man I have ever known. How fortunate it was that my hero was my father.

Even now, as I attempt to put words to paper, the emotions are nearly too raw. This loss feels unlike any I've ever faced. I know the wound will never truly heal, but I've not yet grown the scar tissue to speak, or even write, about it fully. What I can do, however, is reflect on one of the loves we shared.

The first week of February 1989 was bitterly cold in Metcalfe County. Snow piled high, temperatures hovered in the teens, and I—an 11-year-old fifth grader—was blessed with school cancellations. That Sunday night, my dad and I settled on the couch. At 8:00 p.m., he turned the television to CBS. The debut of the miniseries *Lonesome Dove* was about to begin.

At the time, westerns weren't my preferred genre. I leaned more toward comedy and science fiction. But being that my options were to watch or go to bed, I stayed put. From the first scene—Augustus McRae's pigs de-

vouring a snake—I was hooked. And so was my dad. For four consecutive nights we watched together, as we also did nearly every time it aired again. Without realizing it, I received an education: the lore of the Texas Rangers, the mechanics of cattle drives, even the strange phenomenon of St. Elmo's Fire sparking across a herd's horns. I also picked up a vocabulary lesson or two that left my mother less than thrilled, and developed a slight phobia of snakes in rivers. Not every lesson was a positive one.

What endured most, though, was not the information but the revelation of storytelling's power, both through the writes and actors. Through that miniseries I encountered Robert Duvall, Tommy Lee Jones, Diane Lane and others previously

unknown to me. Over the years, Duvall became my favorite actor—his work in *The Godfather*, *M*A*S*H*, and *Apocalypse Now* nothing short of iconic. His performance in *The Apostle* remains, to my mind, his masterpiece.

Later, I came to know Larry McMurtry, the novel's author—a writer of rare gifts who built characters of such depth they never felt contrived. He, too, became a favorite of mine.

After my father suffered a farm accident, he lay unconscious in the hospital for a week before his death. In my rush to get there, I had grabbed my backpack, unaware that the book inside was *Lonesome Dove*. I took it as a sign. Sitting at his bedside, I re-read the book, sometimes reading passages aloud to him, revisiting the story that had bonded us all those years

ago. I doubt he ever heard me—but that was beside the point. I knew. And I needed to share it with him one last time.

Grief has strange rhythms. Amid the sorrow, I have found moments of joy, small reminders that give me hope. One of the greatest is that my father truly lived until he died. That is a blessing, and one I pray to claim myself someday. Until then, my resolve is to live as he did: to find joy in the small things and to live fully.

As Augustus McRae reminds Woodrow Call in a moment of frus-

tration: "It ain't dying I'm talking about, it's living. I doubt it matters where you die, but it matters where you live."

Mortality is real, a fact with which we all have to come to terms. My father, a man of strength, character and love, lived well. If I can manage to live half as well, I'll count myself a fortunate man.

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GRADD Senior Menu Listed For October

The Green River Area Development District has announced the senior nutrition menu for October. That menu follows:

Wednesday, October 1-pork chop, sweet potatoes, collard greens, hot spiced apples, dinner roll

Thursday, October 2-chunky veggie soup, salad with chicken, oatmeal cream cookie, French dressing, dinner roll

Friday, October 3-chicken alfredo, broccoli, pineapple chunks, breadstick, margarine

Monday, October 6-navy bean soup, collard greens, tropical fruit salad, chocolate chip cookie, cornbread, margarine

Tuesday, October 7-meatloaf, mashed potatoes, peas, vanilla pudding, dinner roll, ketchup

Wednesday, October 8-chicken salad on croissant, cauliflower broccoli salad, lettuce and tomato, applesauce, baked potato chips

Thursday, October 9-pork chop, green beans, sweet potatoes, chocolate pudding, apple slices, cornbread, margarine

Friday, October 10-pasta with meat sauce, broccoli, banana, breadstick

Monday, October 13-cheeseburger, lettuce and pickles, scalloped potatoes, peas, diced pears, hamburger bun

Tuesday, October 14-beef macaroni casserole, corn, fresh orange, dinner roll, margarine

Wednesday, October 15-marinated chicken, sweet potatoes, broccoli and cheese, vanilla pudding, dinner roll, margarine

Thursday, October 16-baked potato soup, turkey, wheat bread, mustard, banana, oyster cracker

Friday, October 17-salmon patty, au gratin potatoes, California blend, applesauce, oatmeal raisin cookie, margarine

Monday, October 20-grilled chicken, maple granola, sweet potatoes, zucchini and squash, peanut butter brownie, hamburger bun, mayo

Tuesday, October 21-pork chop, pepper sausage gravy, cooked cabbage, mashed potatoes, ambrosia salad, dinner roll, margarine

Wednesday, October 22-pinto beans, mixed greens, fresh clementine, cornbread, margarine

Thursday, October 23-fish sandwich, creamy cole slaw, glazed carrots, mixed fruit, hamburger bun, tartar sauce

Friday, October 24-hamburger steak, mashed potatoes, succotash, mandarin oranges, dinner roll

Monday, October 27-pasta with meat sauce, broccoli and cauliflower, red grapes, chocolate chip cookies, breadstick

Tuesday, October 28-oatmeal cookie, dinner roll, margarine

Wednesday, October 29-herbed pork loin, scalloped potatoes, lima beans, banana, dinner roll

Thursday, October 30-salibury steak, mashed potatoes, peas, ambrosia salad, dinner roll

Friday, October 31-roast turkey, baked potato, glazed carrots, berry applesauce, dinner roll, margarine.

WEBSTER COUNTY WATER DISTRICT CUSTOMER NOTICE

On January 24, 2025, the Kentucky Public Service Commission (PSC) accepted for filing Webster County Water District's (Webster District) application requesting to increase its revenue from water sales by \$431,001, an approximate increase of 24.57 percent. On July 24, 2025, Commission Staff determined Webster District would require an increase of \$623,603 or 35.62 percent in revenue from water sales. Webster District requests the PSC approve its recommended revenue requirements and that Webster District be allowed to implement the revised rates as follows:

Meter Size		Monthly Water Rates			
		Current	Proposed		% Increase
<u>5/8- x 3/4-Inch Meter</u>					
First	2,000 Gallons	\$17.50	\$24.30	Minimum Bill	38.86%
Next	4,000 Gallons	0.00795	0.01100	Per Gallon	38.36%
Next	94,000 Gallons	0.00695	0.00969	Per Gallon	39.42%
Over	100,000 Gallons	0.00419	0.00584	Per Gallon	39.38%
<u>1-Inch Meter</u>					
First	10,000 Gallons	\$77.10	\$107.46	Minimum Bill	39.38%
Next	90,000 Gallons	0.00695	0.00969	Per Gallon	39.42%
Over	100,000 Gallons	0.00419	0.00584	Per Gallon	39.38%
<u>1 1/2-Inch Meter</u>					
First	15,000 Gallons	\$111.85	\$155.89	Minimum Bill	39.37%
Next	85,000 Gallons	0.00695	0.00969	Per Gallon	39.42%
Over	100,000 Gallons	0.00419	0.00584	Per Gallon	39.38%
<u>2-Inch Meter</u>					
First	20,000 Gallons	\$146.60	\$204.32	Minimum Bill	39.37%
Next	80,000 Gallons	0.00695	0.00969	Per Gallon	39.42%
Over	100,000 Gallons	0.00419	0.00584	Per Gallon	39.38%
<u>3-Inch Meter</u>					
First	30,000 Gallons	\$216.10	\$297.00	Minimum Bill	37.44%
Next	70,000 Gallons	0.00695	0.00969	Per Gallon	39.42%
Over	100,000 Gallons	0.00419	0.00584	Per Gallon	39.38%
<u>4-Inch Meter</u>					
First	50,000 Gallons	\$355.10	\$494.91	Minimum Bill	39.37%
Next	50,000 Gallons	0.00695	0.00969	Per Gallon	39.42%
Over	100,000 Gallons	0.00419	0.00584	Per Gallon	39.38%
<u>Wholesale</u>		\$0.00370	\$0.00474	Per Gallon	28.11%

Nonrecurring Charges

Charge	Amount
Connection Turn-On	\$20.00
Connection Turn-On (After Hours)	\$76.00
Field Collection Charge	\$20.00
Late Payment Penalty	10%
Meter Relocation Charge	Actual Cost
Meter Re-Read Charge	\$20.00
Meter Re-Read Charge (After Hours)	\$76.00
Meter Test Charge	\$80.00
Reconnection Charge	\$40.00
Reconnection Charge (After Hours)	\$76.00
Returned Check Fee	\$0.00
Service Call/Investigation	\$20.00
Service Call/Investigation (After Hours)	\$76.00

Tap On Fee Charges

Meter Size	Amount
5/8 x 3/4 Inch Water Tap On	\$1,100
All Other Sizes	Actual Cost

The proposed rates shall not become effective until the Public Service Commission has issued an Order approving these rates. The rates will increase the monthly bill of a typical residential customer using 4,000 gallons a month from \$33.40 to \$46.30, an increase of \$12.90, or approximately 38.62 percent. This filing may be examined at the offices of Webster District located at 478 US HWY 41-A South P. O. Box 320 Dixon, KY 42409-0320, telephone (270) 639-9010.

Any person may examine this filing at the PSC located at 211 Sower Boulevard, Frankfort, Kentucky, Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. or on the PSC website at <https://psc.ky.gov/>; telephone (502) 564-3940. A copy of the PSC Commission Staff's Report can be found at the following address:

https://psc.ky.gov/pscscf/2024%20Cases/2024-00199//20250724_STAFF_REPORT.pdf

Any person may submit comments on the proposed request no later than 30 days after the date of publication of customer notice. Comments shall be in writing and shall be submitted to the Executive Director, Public Service Commission, 211 Sower Boulevard, P.O. Box 615, Frankfort, Kentucky 40602. Comments may also be submitted by electronic mail to psc.comment@ky.gov. If the Commission does not receive any request for intervention or hearing in this matter within 30 days after the date of publication of this customer notice, the Commission will proceed to render a decision in the matter.