

Editorial COMMENTARY

by Tom Starland, Editor and Publisher

There Has Been A Death In The Family

The *Carolina Arts* family that is. No person has died but I'm in mourning anyway.

Sometime in July of this year I went to make a blog post at *Carolina Arts Unleashed* and the login page gave me an "access denied" message. Sometimes password pages get like that, then I go through a process to reset the defaults, but this time it still denied me access to the login page.

The next day I told Linda, my better half - especially when it comes to computer stuff, what was happening, but she was too wrapped up in getting ads ready for that upcoming August 2014 issue.

When she had time she tried a few of her tricks, but nothing changed. A few days later she contacted our server that maintains our website to see if they could do anything.

Within days of this taking place I switched over to one of our other blogs and started posting what would usually go on *Carolina Arts Unleashed* on our blog *Carolina Arts News*.

When Linda finally talked with one of the tech people at our server, they said our access passwords were changed. They suggested a few things to do, but when we got back access - the front page of *Carolina Arts Unleashed* had gone back to the Wordpress default. So we had access, but all our info was not there, which was funny as I could do searches and get different blog posts on the Internet.

At this point, we had access and could make new post, but we would have to rebuild the front page, which was no easy task as the blog was eight years old and I had made over 2000 posts. We just didn't understand why we couldn't get back

to that old front page. The good thing is we had a backup at our server - that why people could still see all those posts by doing a search on the Internet.

Apparently we had been hacked as far as changing the passwords on that login page. I have said plenty of things that some people would prefer wasn't available on the Internet for anyone to see as long as the internet was there.

Did I mention Wordpress was the blog host we were using? We use Wordpress for all our blogs, but the difference with *Carolina Arts Unleashed* - we were using our own memory space off our website. This allows us to have Google ads on our site, ads we get paid for. It isn't much, but it pays for the cost of our website hosting server.

I just keep posting at *Carolina Arts News* and Linda was waiting for a slower time to do the rebuilding.

After our October issue was launched, Linda contacted our server again with questions she had - after finding some tips about our problem on the Internet.

We don't usually make much contact with our server - mostly only when something happens that Linda can't fix. One problem we have found over the years is that it's like Russian Roulette as to what kind of tech person you might get when you call. It might be someone who has been there for years or someone who just started. Each one has their own set of knowledge and experience. Some just don't seem to know what they are talking about and they give you some tech - yada, yada, yada. Some fix things right away and others seem to have to go ask someone else what we are asking about. Usually the problem gets fixed - sometimes in a few minutes - sometimes in a few hours.

This time our luck was not so good

- before we knew it, they had erased our backup while they were "fixing" our problem.

It took a few days to realize what had happened. When I searched the Internet for some subject or blog entry I knew was there, we got a no longer there message.

Eight years of posts were gone - in the blink of an eye.

That was eight years of posts I made about art trips, commentary about art issues, funny little side stories about non-art related things, thousands of images, and links on other people's websites. Once that backup was dumped it wiped out every link anyone made to some blog post they liked or was mentioned in it. It's like it all never happened.

Do I blame that tech person at Wordpress? Do I blame the person who hacked our login page? Do I blame ourselves for not having a backup of our own? Yes! I blame the people who invented the Internet. I blame the people who invented blogging. I blame anyone connected with social media.

I have a backup of every issue we printed, so that if I wanted to go back and see what was said about an issue or when an exhibit took place and who was in it - I can do that, but I couldn't even look anywhere to see what was lost.

I was still on the fence about starting *Carolina Arts Unleashed* again from scratch, starting a new blog or just to keep posting everything at *Carolina Arts News* - and then I had a meeting with our Blog Guru Zelda Ravenel. Within five minutes of telling her the story of what happened she showed me a picture of the front page of *Carolina Arts Unleashed* and proceeded to show me old posts from as far back as 2008. A few of the last posts I made were gone and a few images were missing (we have a backup of our images), but it was all there - all was not lost.

What I was looking at was an archive site called the Wayback Machine, which has over 435 billion web pages saved over time. I guess we were lucky that *Carolina Arts* is a fairly active website.

Unfortunately, we can't just make a

copy of what the Wayback Machine saved and use it - every entry will have to be relaunched, which will take some time. Search engines will once again have to rebuild the blog's presence on the Internet, but eventually *Carolina Arts Unleashed* will return - thanks to our Blog Guru - Zelda Ravenel. Some of you who had made links to individual blog entries will once again be able to restore those links.

Have You Made Your Entry For ArtFields© 2015?

Nov. 14, 2014, is the last day to make your online entry for ArtFields© 2015. It's your last chance to take home part of the \$110,000 in cash prizes, last chance to be part of the biggest visual art event taking place in the Carolinas. It's your last chance to be one of the 400.

You can't be part of any of that unless you enter - that's the first step. If you make the 400 cut - then you have a shot at winning some of the cash money. And, if you make that 400 cut and are viewed by all the folks who go see this exhibition - other good things might happen. Someone could buy your work. Some gallery owner who has never seen your work before might want to feature you in an exhibit. An editor of an arts newspaper might feature your work on its cover. Who knows...

Make Sure You Vote On Election Day

There is no excuse for not voting during elections - especially if you are registered. If you are not registered - why aren't you?

If you are involved in the arts or just like art - it's important that you vote for other people who like art. It's as simple as that, because people who don't like art will do anything and everything they can to cut funding for the arts and give that funding as a tax break to a rich person or a big corporation - who really don't need any more tax breaks. Their tax breaks are breaking the back of this country.

Don't let billionaires take control of our election process.

Rhett Thurman



Second Sunday

oil on canvas

20 x 30 inches

Opening Reception: Friday, November 14, 2014 5 - 8pm
Through November 29, 2014


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171 King St. • Charleston • SC • 29401


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843•722•2172
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