

Numbers

by Harry Zirkelbach

Do you have a favorite number? Many don't.

For by the time today's babies reach understanding, they will have been deluged with more sequences of numbers to retain than manageable without a computer brain. You know the drill, date of birth, baptismal, onset of school with all those new faces, names, and constant lessons, all by the time the child is four. And who recalls being four?

Numbers, an overload compounding with each sunrise.

Do you recall the moment when you first defined old age? That time is inscribed in my mind. For, in speaking casually to my parents about another group, I mentioned they were really old, only to be corrected by my mother; the individuals mentioned were younger than mother or dad. No one born could back pedal adroitly enough to recover from this. Mom, ever gracious, let the topic drop immediately. It would be my curse, never to forget; and for years avoid mentioning old age in any context.

For years, Military personnel of each Armed Forces branch issued a unique Service Number. On July 12, 1969 the Army and Air Force changed this I.D. to use of the individual's Social Security Numbers. The Navy and Marine Corps followed January 1, 1972. One less valuable insignificant piece of trivia for the brain.

Honorably retired Military Service Member and dependents requesting any Retiree assistance, appreciative hearing, "Give me your last four," then being provided some reward for years of military duty.

The following is legend.

Every child born was given a secret bag. From it, every morning that individual was obligated to give their guardian angel a coin from that container. And each morning there is just one coin; replaced mysteriously while asleep. That gift to the angel provided the individual with another day of life. On that future date when the search fails to provide that coin, the bag empty, that is the individual's final day on earth.

Form this my favorite number is one. For in my compliance, today I provided my protector with the 33,120th single coin. That guarantees me this one whole day of Writers' gathering, trial, adventure, family contacts, thanks, happiness.

P.S. When printing this piece early Monday morning before the Writer's gathering, the computer ink was depleted; this could not be printed. I will hasten to buy new black and color ink cartons and bring new life to my printer.

And this added insight; my favorite number advances by one daily, and all genuine coin of the world could not add a moment to my, or any, life.