

Time for a New Sign - By Stan Southwick



A blind boy sat on the steps of a building with a hat by his feet. He held up a sign which said: "I am blind, please help." There were only a few coins in the hat. A man was walking by. He took a few coins from his pocket and dropped them into the hat. He then took the sign, turned it around, and wrote some words. He put the sign back so that everyone who walked by would see the new words. Soon the hat began to fill up. A lot more people were giving money to the blind boy.

That afternoon the man who had changed the sign came to see how things were. The boy recognized his footsteps and asked, "Were you the one who changed my sign this morning? What did you write?" The man said, "I only wrote the truth. I said what you said but in a different way." I wrote: "Today is a beautiful day but I cannot see it." Both signs told people that the boy was blind. But the first sign simply said the boy was blind. The second sign told people that they were so lucky that they were not blind. Should we be surprised that the second sign was more effective?

Moral of the Story: Be thankful for what you have. Be creative. Be innovative. Think differently and positively. When life gives you 100 reasons to cry, show life that you have 1000 reasons to smile. Face your past without regret. Handle your present with confidence. Prepare for the future without fear.

We have gone a full year living in the "COVID-19 Desert". Looking back, I realize I may have let some great opportunities pass by. That is not going to happen this year. I'm making a new sign.

"What we call the beginning is often the end. And to make an end is to make a beginning. The end is where we start from."

T.S. Eliot

Favorite Flora:

Bouteloua gracilis 'Blonde Ambition' - By Caryl Davies



These past several weeks we have experienced some pretty strong winds. The winds can uproot trees, break branches or just blow on by. But the wind can also showcase a plant's ability to move. This month's SLAM will focus on a type of plant that embraces the wind and in fact, creates a dance. In particular, the Blonde Ambition Blue Grama grass (*Bouteloua gracilis* 'Blonde Ambition') moves gracefully in the wind and its seedheads rustle back and forth above the foliage. This cold hardy and durable grass grows to 3 feet tall and 3 feet wide. The Blue Grama grass does well if it is left alone most of the year. It's narrow leaves and seedheads dry out to a tan color in winter but

don't cut it back just yet! Holiday lights tucked into its foliage glow beautifully. Enjoy its winter dances in the wind. Then, just before early spring, give it a good hard prune to remove the dormant winter foliage and stand back and watch as the new growth pops out as the weather warms. Plant in full sun and make sure you give it ample water in the summer. You can create a mass of the grasses for a spectacular display or use as a specimen plant tucked alongside a large boulder for a more natural look. This plant looks well paired with most plants from cactus to the more lush looking plants in formal and informal settings. Talk about flexible!



Nelson Ghost Town, Nevada
Caryl Davies