

Covering the Territory *With the Editor*

Stepping Stones and Escalators

Associate Editor Sarah Jane Schuetze (the Editor's granddaughter) graciously fills in while Barbara is undergoing cancer treatment at the KU Med Center in Kansas City.

by Sarah Jane

We all know the pattern of grade school, middle school, high school, college and so on, but what is the true reasoning for this tedious preparation? Why must we learn the “Route of Train A” or the proper way to conjugate a verb in a sentence? What is all this preparation for?

I am currently working towards exams and college, but why? I know in order to be successful I must continue down this path, but it seems that the further I travel into the future the less time I have to enjoy the time I have in the present. Each grade, each school, each stepping stone of life seems to be put in fast-forward like one of those moving walkways you find in airports, where with every step you take you are

accelerated almost twice as fast as the person walking on the normal ground. I want to be the person walking on the carpet on my own rather than the metal grating whipping by so fast that you miss everything. It may take longer but that isn't always a bad thing.

When we are little every kid wants to ride the escalator at the mall speeding up the journey from one floor to the next, just like how every kid wants to be bigger and older to ride that ride or stay up later. We are speeding up the passage of time by trying to reach our goals faster but when we reach an age where we want to slow down and rest we have already put the ball in motion. The faster we want life to go when we are younger, the harder it is to slow down in the future. The fun ride in the mall turns into the long work days and

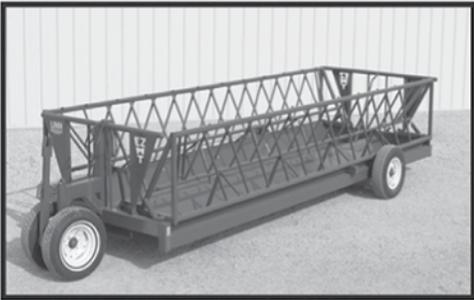
taking the same escalator, not because we want to speed it up but because we are too tired to take the stairs. The person who took the extra time to use the stairs in the first place may be more tired by the end of the day, but will have seen more and enjoyed life at their own pace.

I want to walk slowly. I want to know the vast expanse of life but I know I have to take it only one stone at a time. Sometimes I have to cross the water by leaps and bounds and other times I try to slow things down to my own pace and relax awhile and take very small steps. Some people just can't wait to get to the other side but I want to see each individual rock as I rest upon it, even if only for a short while. I want to carve my own path on the stones, even if some people don't agree with me. The path I make

is none other than my own. I will change what I want and will live with my own decisions, whether it be through the brightest of sunshine or the velvet of darkness. I control my own destiny.

Sometimes a wave is sent to you across the waters of life and you have to hold on by everything you have, but you still have to hang on to your rock. You may have to stay on that same rock to wait out the storm but the important thing is to get up eventually and keep jumping from stone to stone, no matter how slippery they may get. Eventually, the sun will come out and it will once again become easy to travel from one to the next. The thing that everyone must remember is that whether the water is calm or rough, the smell of a lily is always a beautiful thing. ■

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