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Letters from MRFY (September 2023)

*Summer has come and passed
The Innocent can never last
Wake me up when September ends
Like my fathers come to pass
Seven years has gone so fast
Wake me up when September ends - Green Day*

Somewhere between the springtime melting and the turning of the first leaf is a phenomenon known as summer. For me, I tolerate summer to get to the cool frosty evenings and forest canopy tinged with reds, yellows and ambers. I can tell it's close because, on my afternoon walk the other day, my feet were pressing tiny green acorns into the soft clay earth. Acorns falling is a beautiful thing. All mighty oaks begin as a tiny acorn and they represent the passing of time in a slow, gradual and graceful way.

This summer hasn't been too bad and I don't want to sound ungrateful. The evenings have been cool, the smiles have been frequent, and the daytime high temps haven't been too hard on the farm animals. But, like the weather, change is everywhere and we must adapt and prepare for the pending autumn. The short-sleeve Hawaiian shirts will be packed away in exchange for long-sleeve flannels, and khaki shorts will give way to jeans and corduroy pants. With this change comes a time of reflection and pondering on what mysteries have been revealed this past summer, and I would be derelict in my duties if I didn't share the most profound bit of summer wisdom that I have learned: We eat a lot of beans.

In my business, you take notice of things and I've never seen more bean cans roll through this joint between June and August. Now, I get it, they ARE the magical fruit and they pair nicely with most dishes – but we might have an unhealthy reliance on beans. Black, pinto, green, refried, lima, baked. You can stew them, boil them, put them in a casserole, make a soup with them ... I'm starting to sound like Bubba in "Forrest Gump." Truth of the matter is "WE love beans" (this might be a logo on a MRF t-shirt at some point in the future.) The dangerous byproduct of bean cans is when they are unwashed. There is no stink more profoundly putrid than 1-week-old bean juice. It is the stuff of legend. Wash your bean cans, please.

The MRF is in the waning days of summer madness. The crowds have thinned and we have gotten quite a few "This is our last trip to the dump" as well as a couple "Have a nice winter! We will see you next year!" Michael is hauling our tonnage of cardboard and paper to distant towns, and we are in the beginning stages of winter preparation. It sounds early but taking advantage of the markets is key. Strike while the iron is hot, they used to say. We are making storage space to get through the winter. Our Annual Report for the DNR is in the works as are some strategy pieces for our autos. Smashy Season is right around the corner.

In other news, I submitted some presentation papers to recycling conferences around the country (and one in Italy) extolling the virtues and challenges of waste management in our little island community. I don't think they know what they are in for. Lol.

Be MRFtastic.
Martin A. Curry
Recycling Supervisor