

GOING GREEN



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It's been a year. From my window only one thing has changed since I first wrote this column — and it sure isn't the good ol' boys who run this county.

What's different is the dry. This is the driest drought to draw down dust we've seen here in a long, long time. Which means it's time... to go green for real, *Florida Weekly* style.

Ain't that a Man.

— Muddy Waters, "Mannish Boy"

Although no one has said so, it's clear that Men in particular, Men with a capital M, now have to step forward and make a personal commitment to the environment.

If we're going to flush away all this hypocrisy about going green, and actually do something to quit soaking up every last resource we have — water, soil, trees, you know the list — Men are going to have to take the problem in hand, because they're the only ones who comfortably can.

In other words, it is now time for American Men to quit soaking up resources and soak them down.

Think of it this way: We have about 300,000 males hanging around Lee County alone (with 150 million or so in America), and maybe a third of them are living in unincorporated Lee. That means, more or less, that 100,000 three-leggers live in the "country."

And at the moment here, two of our biggest problems both in and out of the "country" are drought (a lack of water) and pollution (too much crap in the water we still have). Both are related to flushing, by the way, which requires between three and five gallons on average, per flush.

Let me speak Man-to-Man. The efforts of go-green cheerleaders have not only been ridiculously PC, they've simply been PP (piss-poor).

Clearly, most men are clueless, which may be the traditional male approach to nearly everything. But there is something different going on in this instance: Each of us happy Joes carries the solution right with him.

And now we have to grasp both the concept and the tools required to go green (but not too hard, I hope).

So I propose an immediate county-wide mandate: Each year between Nov. 1 and June 1, and from the hours of 6 a.m. to midnight, every man-jack who lives in the "country" be required to pee OUTSIDE, on the plants that so desperately need it.

If 100,000 men and boys who pee three times a day quit flushing, well folks, right there we've saved 900,000 gallons of water a day, at 3 gallons per flush. That's roughly 200 million gallons in a single dry season.

Now, as you know, men will not normally do anything unless other men lead them to it, whether it's reasonable or idiotic — witness the green movement, on the one hand, or the Iraq War, on the other. Neither will a horse drink anything unless you lead him to it. And even then I've seen horses that would just stand there like dummies, hanging their heads over the watering hole. Men, too. I call



Lead by example: three of Lee County's 300,000 Men go green.

that poorly hung.

So it is only fair that our county leaders, beginning with the four male commissioners (Brian, Ray, Bob, and Frank), the male county manager (Don), and his senior male staffers (Jim, Pete and the boys) — every single one of them a well-hung leader, mentally speaking — lead by example.

They need to get out there and show us how it's done, either in town by special license, or in the country.

The effects of such green leadership would amount to more than just water savings, of course. Urine, after all, is normally non-toxic when fresh, and about 95 percent water. But it also contains urea, which is loaded with plant-enriching nitrogen, and which can also speed up the decomposition of compost. And every country gardener uses compost.

So requiring Lee County males to pee outside would not only save water, but it would help green up our needy flora during the dry season.

A word about American women: they're not exempt from responsibility. But unless our water problems get noticeably worse, I wouldn't support a mandate requiring them to squat in the bushes. It doesn't seem fair, somehow. And as you've probably noticed, American women are not squatters, not unless the demand is pressing.

So we Men have to step up and handle the problem. And that can be a beautiful experience, man. Folksinger Greg Brown knows this; he goes green even at night, in "The Poet's Game:"

I walk out at night to take a leak underneath the stars - oh yeah, that's the life for me.

There's Orion and the Pleiades, and I guess that must be Mars, all as clear as we long to be.

Right on, brother. All as clear as we long to be, and all as clear as a go-green pee.

Going green is good. And it's up to the Men to see that the green movement doesn't just peter out. ■



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