

Moving To The Heartland

May 13, 2017

Rumors of my death are exaggerated. The reason my wife Mary and I dropped off the face of the earth is because we have not had internet for almost a week, which as y'all know feels like an eternity. We drove up from Florida to close on our new home in a tiny West Virginia town, population 500. Why?

To move close to our parents and family.

The drive up from Florida was quite interesting. The number of Trump signs on display in yards, rooftops and billboards tells me Trump has connected with every day Americans like no other president before him.

It seemed like every time we pushed the search button on our radio another faith-based station came up. While fake news media would like us to believe they have successfully killed traditional American values, wholesome values are alive and well in the heartland.

My wife's brother-in-law said when it snows, his neighbor plows out the road for everyone with his tracker. Mail is delivered at a central location for his group of neighbors. The mailboxes and polls were in need of repair. A neighbor took it upon himself to repair and refresh the mailboxes. Another neighbor fills pot holes in their road. All of these things were done without ridiculous paperwork, meetings or government.

How small is this town you ask? The internet company cannot hook us up until May 23rd. We can make calls on our phones, but they do not work as a hot-spot. I'm on-line at the library which is open limited hours on different days; closed from noon to 1pm for lunch with parking for 7 cars. I keep telling myself, take a deep breath and embrace the solitude.

There is no home mail delivery. When we went to the post office to sign up for a P O box, the cheerful clerk said, "Are you the Marcuses? Y'all bought the white house."

We had to pay a \$200 cash deposit at the Town Hall to get our water turned on. The clerk said, "Are y'all the people who called the other day? Y'all bought the white house." The pleasant clerk said she would call "the" maintenance man to turn us on. One hour later, he showed up and turned on our water.

Most expressive were seniors Virginia and her husband Daniel who greeted me with big smiles when I walked into the library. "Welcome!" Virginia gave me the scoop. "Lunch at the Senior Center is \$2. Today is hot dog day." Virginia filled me in on all the churches, concluding that anyone we choose will be fine. Virginia said they are all good friendly people.

As a black guy, not once have I felt a twinge of the stereotypical racism attributed to the south, quite the opposite. Everyone has been warm and friendly.

The only store in town is Dollar General. Walmart, Home Depot and Lowes are over 20 miles away.

Mary and I stopped into "the" bank. "Y'all bought the white house."

Yes, I am experiencing culture shock, but the people are nice and I think it is going to be fun.

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