

LIFE AND TIMES OF MARION COTT

Featuring: Randy Austin, KHC Board Chair

Karen Ray, KHC Board Alumni

Warren Hixon, KHC Board Alumni

RADIO ANNOUNCER: And now faithful listeners we bring you another chapter in the continuing saga of “THE LIFE AND TIMES OF MARION COTT.” A program which asks the question, “Can a tall Humanities professional, over the age of 40, from Limestone County, Texas, find happiness in retirement or will she instead face a lifetime of emptiness and despair and ennui?” In today’s episode of “THE LIFE AND TIMES OF MARION COTT,” we join Marion in the month of January, 2007, as she travels down the HIGHWAY OF LIFE in a generally southern direction. Marion is accompanied, as always, by her faithful sidekick and long-standing husband... Ken.

KEN: Oh, Marion it feels so good to finally be going to Florida.

MARION: That’s certainly true Ken. I guess when you said you were going to TAMPA (pause) with me after I retired I never imagined you meant Florida.

KEN: (clueless) Oh yes, I can hardly wait. It has been so cold in Kansas.

MARION: It’s been cold in Kansas?

KEN: Yes Marion, it’s been cold in Kansas

MARION: (broadly) How cold has it been in Kansas, Ken?

KEN: I couldn’t tell you the exact temperature, but last night I saw a chicken crossing the road with a CAPE-ON (capon).

RADIO ANNOUNCER: After a series of hilarious mis-adventures in the bay area... including Marion leading the grandstands at spring training in ten choruses of “Take Me Out to the Ballgame”... we next find our adventurous couple approaching the beautiful Crystal River in Southern Florida, home of the famous Crystal River High School Marching Manatees. As they approach the clear water, we hear Marion say...

MARION: Oh Ken stop the car. Look there what a darling school of sea cows.

KEN: Not a school, Marion.....herd.

MARION: Heard of what?

KEN: Herd of sea cows.

MARION: Of course, I've heard of sea cows...

KEN: No (slowly)...a sea cow herd...

MARION: What do I care what a sea cow heard? I'm retired now, I don't care what anybody's heard. Frankly, my dear, I don't give a damn.

KEN: Yes, Scarlett...(changing subject) You know I was thinking... what are we going to do with all this free time now?

MARION: (brightly) Oh Ken, just looking at these sea cows has given me the most wonderful idea.

KEN: (sotto voce) God help us...I mean, tell me this wonderful idea.

MARION: Now that we're both retired let's go back to Kansas and breed big sea cows. Bigger than Florida sea cows.

KEN: So you want to breed great big sea cows so that Kansas sea cows will be bigger than Florida sea cows.

MARION: That's right.

KEN: You still have a lot of Texas blood in your veins Marion.

MARION: Oh that gives me an idea... we'll name our first cow after my old stompin grounds in Texas.

KEN: .Oh no Marion...please, God... no...

MARION: You've got it Ken, we'll name our first cow after Limestone County... We'll call her... L.C....(Elsie)

KEN: But how will we pay for all this?

MARION: Well first we'll see if there is a National Endowment for Sea Cows, then we'll ask the legislature in Topeka for funding. Only this time we'll ask for enough money in our base appropriation. Then we'll form a support group named "Friends of the Sea Cows."

KEN: Speaking of names, what will we name our new organization?

MARION: Oh Ken I thought you would have guessed by now. We will call ourselves (pause) THE KANSAS HUGE MANATEES COUNCIL (repeats) THE KANSAS HUGE MANATEES COUNCIL. (warming up, getting excited) Can't you see it Ken? We'll travel to rural areas in Kansas... We'll provide galvanized

metal to the local citizens. They'll form this metal into giant stock tanks which we will fill with water and have our huge manatees on display. (very excited) We'll call it the (pause)... AQUA Chautauqua.

KEN: And you could have notable speakers like "Cowboy Jim" Hoy. His topic could be "The Kansas Manatee, Big, Dumb and Primitive...The Phelps Family with Fins!"

MARION: Or Craig Miner, the Dr. Phil of Kansas historians. His topic could be "AGRI- versus AQUA-, CULTURE Wars in Kansas"

KEN: Or Bill TsuTsui, his topic could be "Giant Manatee, HAH! Godzilla Would Kick His Gentle Ass".

MARION: Sweet...

KEN: But Marion, (reflectively...) all this sounds an awful lot like the Kansas Humanities Council, are you sure you have retired emotionally? Seriously Marion, I think you will always be part of the tradition of the Kansas Humanities Council.

MARION: (Henry Fonda as Tom Joad, "Grapes of Wrath") Oh you're right, Husband...(dreamily) as far as Kansas Humanities, I'll always be there (getting very intense) I'll be all around in the dark. I'll be everywhere, wherever you can look. Wherever there's a fight so hungry people can read... I'll be there. Wherever there's a cop beating up a librarian, I'll be there. I'll be in the way scholars yell when they're mad; I'll be in the way kids laugh when they're hungry for knowledge and they know Kidtauqua is coming. And when the authors are reading the stuff they wrote, and teaching in the schools they practically live in - I'll be there, too... (fades) I'll be there (fades softer) I'll be there, Husband (fades) I'll be...

RADIO ANNOUNCER: (interrupting) And so another chapter comes to a close, in "THE LIFE AND TIMES OF MARION COTT." Be sure to join us next week for another chapter in "THE LIFE AND TIMES OF MARION COTT," when we ask the question... can a tall Humanities professional over the age of 40 ever truly leave the exciting world of the Kansas Humanities Council?

THE END