

Thursday, October 15, 2020

Volume 26 #610

**"Any fool can make something complicated.  
It takes a genius to make it simple."  
» Woody Guthrie**



## Diver Down

The passing of Eddie Van Halen stopped me in my tracks.

I believe that no matter how many years pass, your favorite band in high school is your favorite band for life.

I make no apologies for the disproportionate amount of their music I played in later years on my radio shows.

Did songs like "Unchained" or "Little Guitars" (never radio hits) belong on a Top 40 Pop/Rock station?

Maybe not.

But I would sneak my own albums into the studio.

I even went so far as to play their version of "Happy Trails" on the country station I worked at for a minute. Sorry, not sorry.

Like millions, I've been reminiscing this week by listening to Van Halen and watching concert videos.

While doing so, I came across a one-hour interview Eddie did a few years ago. In it, he told the story of immigrating with his family as a child.

The Van Halen brothers grew up poor. Ed's story of running a paper route to buy a drum kit, only to have his brother Alex begin playing it while he was out working is pretty well known.



## Year of the Cat?

I've been kiddingly asking (online) groups about what has been the most 2020 thing about 2020 for them.

The fact that we can now use 2020 as a verb, adjective, noun, or gerund is funny.

I'm just kidding about the gerund. I have to look up what a gerund is every single time it comes up. (Shout out to my dad.)

But I digress.

One of my most 2020 things is forcing me to learn a bit (okay, a lot) more patience.

Folks who know me know I'm a dog guy. Now, I'm not hating on cats, per se.

However, I've always said that if I want to feel ignored or disrespected, there are plenty of places I can get that without bringing a cat into my home.

In fact, I used to jokingly compare doglike and catlike levels of commitment during customer service presentations.

I'd point out that whether a dog is having a good day or a bad day, he lights up when he sees you. A dog is always about you.

The upside of learning he was the second-best drummer in the house was that Eddie then picked up Alex's guitar.

One of the greatest guitar players to walk the planet only began playing because his brother was a better drummer.

I've long joked with bankers that when we look back at both life and career high points, quite a few were "happy accidents".

You don't get the thing you think you want, and it turns out to be one of the best things that ever happened to you.

In this interview, Eddie also explained that he couldn't afford the expensive guitars of the day, so he would build his own from parts.

His distinctive looking "Frankenstein" guitars soon became iconic and copied around the world. One now sits in the National Museum of American History.

Not being able to afford a Wah-wah peddle, (a tool used to alter the tone and frequency and mimic the human voice), Eddie invented methods to create unique sounds without add-on gadgets.

Again, genius had come from of a place of adversity.

His techniques became mimicked and still influence the way guitar is played around the world.

Listening to Eddie talk about making the best out of less-than-ideal circumstances resonated.

2020 has provided each of us with obstacles we didn't see coming.

We can use them as excuses or as catalysts to be better than anyone saw coming.

Rock on.

Conversely, cats can take you or leave you. The level of attention you get from a cat is entirely dependent on how the cat feels.

When you play with a dog, the dog is playing with you.

When you play with a cat, the cat is practicing murder. (It's true.)

As 2020 would have it, a too-young-to-be-on-its-own kitten wandered into our backyard a few months ago. It was alone and not willing to let us near it.

Joking about what I may be getting into, I tossed it a piece of hamburger and put a bowl of water near the back gate.

Over the next week, the food bowl moved closer to the back patio. We put out an old towel that became her friend as she hid under the patio furniture for a week.

Eventually, we were able to pet her.

Before you know it, she was sleeping indoors.

She has repaid us thus far with several live lizards released into our home and one squirrel tail.

When friends want to see our cat, she obliges by hiding.

I found myself standing barefoot on our front lawn around midnight recently negotiating with a cat to climb down from an oak tree and come inside.

The creature can be exasperating. Yet, we've laughed more at the cat (well, and me) than anything in months.

I've been forced to practice more patience each day with her than most things in my life. And frankly, that's probably not a terrible thing.

Control what you can, but be patient with what you cannot.

Smile at the absurdities, and be grateful to be around for the next act of the 2020 show.

**"If you make a mistake, try to do it twice and smile. That way, people think you meant it."**

**» Eddie Van Halen**

*Dave Martin, author of The In-Store Advantage, has become one of the most prolific writers in the banking industry. His keynote presentations, seminars, and podcasts have an authenticity and humor that brings teams of all sizes and seniority levels together.*

*For more info about having Dave or an FSI Consultant speak to your group, email Tina Coleman, [tcoleman@SupermarketBank.com](mailto:tcoleman@SupermarketBank.com) or call 800-992-4978.*

Financial Supermarkets, Inc. • [fsi@supermarketbank.com](mailto:fsi@supermarketbank.com)

383 Clarkesville Street • PO Box 1450 • Cornelia, GA 30531

[Click Here to Unsubscribe](#)