

A Log in the River

With the midterm elections behind us in the fall of 2010, the 112th United States Congress is the current meeting of the legislative branch of the federal government, composed of the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives.

The Republicans gained the majority in the House of Representatives, while the Democrats kept their Senate majority, although reduced from the previous Congress. That means there are quite a few newcomers in Washington.

It reminds me of a story I heard recently. A newly-elected politician was touring Washington, D.C., to get acquainted. He was visiting in the home of one of the ranking senators who was trying to interpret for him the bizarre wonder of the capitol city.

As they stood looking out over the Potomac River, an old deteriorating log floated by in view on the river. The old-timer said, "This city is like that log out there."

The fledgling politician asked: "How's that?"

The senator came back, "Well, there are probably more than 100,000 grubs, ants, bugs and critters on that old log as it floats down the river. And I imagine every one of them thinks that he is steering it."



So here is some advice – nay, a plea – from most Americans to all the members of Congress: Forget about the personal agendas, the self-importance that takes over inside the Beltway and the pork-barrel splurges that have become so common, and be the statesman you were sent there to be.

And in case the word *statesman* is about to disappear from our political lexicon because of lack of example, here is its definition: A politician who is widely respected for integrity and impartial concern for the public good.

We need more of 'em.

– Beecher Hunter