

Opie and Aunt Bee

Put me down as an unabashed fan of the Andy Griffith Show. I loved it when it first appeared on Oct. 3, 1960. I loved it when it went off the air with its final show on April 1, 1968. And I love watching the reruns today.

Our world lost someone special when Griffith passed away on July 3, 2012, at his Roanoke Island, N.C., home. His show dealt with everyday problems encountered by the population of small-town Mayberry, all with an undertone of family values and moral living.

Proof of how television viewers embraced the show is evident by the fact that the series never placed lower than seventh in the Nielsen ratings, and ended its final season at No. 1.

One of the priceless programs in the show occurred in the early part of the series. Following the death of his wife, Sheriff Andy Taylor decided to invite his spinster Aunt Bee to come live with Opie, his son, and him. The thinking was that she would add the feminine touch.



Surprisingly, Opie is not too pleased for Aunt Bee to come in and try to “replace” his mother. Andy tries to help the situation by inviting Aunt Bee to go fishing and frog-catching with them so that Opie can become attached to her. Instead, she fails miserably at fishing, frogging, and, later, football.

Finally, late at night, after Opie is in bed, Aunt Bee talks Andy into taking her to the bus station. Opie hears her crying beneath his bedroom window, and guesses that she is leaving.

He runs down the stairs and to the truck exclaiming, “We can’t let her go, Pa. She needs us. She can’t even catch frogs, take fish off the hook, or throw a football. We’ve got to take care of her or she’ll never make it.”

The heart that Opie displayed in that scene is in the same spirit of our associates in Life Care. They welcome men and women into our centers, which become home to them.

And our associates do for these residents what they cannot do for themselves, knowing that without such help, they can never make it. These are real-life heroes who make us all proud.

– Beecher Hunter