

Thayer's

# Wild Bunch V

By J E Ted Thayer

## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

**Published by J E Ted Thayer**  
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## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

### INDEX

Flyleaf	2
Index	3
Photo Credits	6
Preface	7
Jan 01, 2018 Happy New Year! SSI v. Medicare	8
Jan 04, 2018 Who'da Thunk It?	10
Jan 08, 2018 The Biggest Threat	13
Jan 11, 2018 What is it About 77?	17
Jan 15, 2018 What Next?	19
Jan 18, 2018 Can Dems Win AZ 2017?	22
Jan 22, 2018 About the EAS System	27
Jan 25, 2018 Sunsweet Prunes	29
Jan 29, 2018 Feelings	31
Feb 01, 2018 Worse Than I Thought	35
Feb 05, 2018 Rich v. Poor	38
Feb 08, 2018 No Change at Safeway	40
Feb 12, 2018 DACA	42
Feb 15, 2018 It was a Hard Crash!	46
Feb 19, 2018 I'll Be Everywhere	47
Feb 22, 2018 Guns Are Us	50
Feb 24, 2018 TIME Magazine Extra	54
Feb 26, 2018 Break Time for DACA	55
Mar 01, 2018 Black Valentine	57
Mar 05, 2018 Guns & Abortion	61
Mar 08, 2018 Yellow Journalism	64
Mar 12, 2018 Hey, Yo! Negotiate This!	68
Mar 15, 2018 Media Hype Continues	71
Mar 19, 2018 Home of B Movies	74
Mar 22, 2018 Today's Word: Pragmatist	76
Mar 26, 2018 Blood of the Lamb	80
Mar 29, 2018 Boot Camp	82
Apr 01, 2018 Happy Easter	84
Apr 02, 2018 Marbles in the Overhead	85
Apr 05, 2018 Show Me Your Budget	91
Apr 09, 2018 Who Cares?	93

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

### INDEX (Con't.)

Apr 12, 2018 Go Ahead - Make My Day	95
Apr 16, 2018 Only Interpretations	97
Apr 19, 2018 Strike Benefits	99
Apr 23, 2018 Stupid Stories	101
Apr 26, 2018 About Teachers	104
Apr 30, 2018 Critical Thinking	107
May 03, 2018 Voter Registration Down	110
May 07, 2018 Wash It – It'll Rain!	114
May 10, 2018 Are the Dems Doomed?	119
May 14, 2018 Scouts?	123
May 17, 2018 It Doesn't Matter?	128
May 21, 2018 Keeping House	130
May 24, 2018 One Thing	133
May 28, 2018 Kitties and Bunnies	135
May 31, 2018 Work Hard	138
Jun 04, 2018 Democrat Minority	142
Jun 07, 2018 We Be Cookin'	145
Jun 11, 2018 Amend the Constitution	148
Jun 14, 2018 Guarding His Porch	150
Jun 18, 2018 La Causa	154
Jun 21, 2018 No Breaking Up Families	156
Jun 25, 2018 Secret of Success	158
Jun 28, 2018 One Korea?	161
Jul 02, 2018 Stupid Drivers	164
Jul 05, 2018 An Illegal Entry Law	168
Jul 09, 2018 Create a Crowd	173
Jul 12, 2018 Dems & Roe v. Wade	175
Jul 16, 2018 Not in 92 Years!	177
Jul 19, 2018 Recall?	178
Jul 23, 2018 Democratic or Republic?	180
Jul 26, 2018 Democratic Socialists?	183
Jul 29, 2018 Presidential Summits	185
Aug 02, 2018 The Cloud	189
Aug 06, 2018 What Happened to Lou?	193
Aug 09, 2018 JjinCO Wrote This!	196

## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

### **INDEX (Con't.)**

<b>Aug 13, 2018 OH Dems Triumph</b>	<b>198</b>
<b>Aug 16, 2018 Big Deals for Dems</b>	<b>200</b>
<b>Aug 20, 2018 Natural Power</b>	<b>203</b>
<b>Aug 23, 2018 Hotter'n the Dickens</b>	<b>207</b>
<b>Aug 27, 2018 3 Good 'uns</b>	<b>209</b>
<b>Aug 30, 2018 Lemon Snow</b>	<b>212</b>
<b>Sep 03, 2018 Labor Day</b>	<b>214</b>
<b>Sep 06, 2018 Is There News in Kansas?</b>	<b>216</b>
<b>Sep 10, 2018 Gutless</b>	<b>221</b>
<b>Sep 24, 2018 AZ Voter Registration</b>	<b>223</b>
<b>Sep 27, 2018 Optimism</b>	<b>225</b>
<b>Oct 01, 2018 Socialism v. Federalism</b>	<b>227</b>
<b>Oct 04, 2018 Brand Over Flavor</b>	<b>229</b>
<b>Oct 08, 2018 McSally v. Sinema</b>	<b>233</b>
<b>Oct 11, 2018 An Oppressed Majority</b>	<b>235</b>
<b>Oct 15, 2018 Agree to Disagree</b>	<b>237</b>
<b>Oct 16, 2018 Women!!! (Extra)</b>	<b>240</b>
<b>Oct 18, 2018 Rachel Maddow v. Paul Harvey</b>	<b>242</b>
<b>Oct 22, 2018 Do It Different</b>	<b>244</b>
<b>Oct 25, 2018 Why Polls Don't Work</b>	<b>246</b>
<b>Oct 29, 2018 Jobs, Jobs, Jobs</b>	<b>249</b>
<b>Nov 01, 2018 Murphy's Law</b>	<b>252</b>
<b>Nov 05, 2018 Happy Mid-terms!</b>	<b>254</b>
<b>Nov 08, 2018 What's Next?</b>	<b>257</b>
<b>Nov 12, 2018 One Great Day</b>	<b>260</b>
<b>Nov 15, 2018 What Burns Next?</b>	<b>264</b>
<b>Nov 19, 2018 Great To Be Alive!</b>	<b>267</b>
<b>Nov 22, 2018 Happy Eagle Day?</b>	<b>270</b>
<b>Nov 26, 2018 Wildfire!</b>	<b>272</b>
<b>Nov 29, 2018 Levin, Hanson &amp; Buckley, Jr.</b>	<b>275</b>
<b>Dec 03, 2018 Mt Lemmon Café Chili</b>	<b>277</b>
<b>Dec 06, 2018 Seven Dollars a Gallon!</b>	<b>278</b>
<b>Dec 10, 2018 The Fed is Eating Your Lunch</b>	<b>281</b>
<b>Dec 13, 2018 About NDAs</b>	<b>284</b>
<b>Dec 17, 2018 Yellow Jackets</b>	<b>286</b>

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

### INDEX (Con't.)

<b>Dec 20, 2018</b>	<b>CR or The Wall</b>	<b>288</b>
<b>Dec 24, 2018</b>	<b>Merry Christmas!</b>	<b>290</b>
<b>Dec 27, 2018</b>	<b>Crazy!</b>	<b>292</b>
<b>Dec 31, 2018</b>	<b>Happy New Year!</b>	<b>294</b>

### PHOTO/GRAPHIC CREDITS

Page	Source	Year
Front Cover	'Hutch' charcoal artist Monterey CA	1957
Back Cover	Thayer Archive – Porterville CA	1946
Preface	<a href="http://www.tedthayer.com">www.tedthayer.com</a>	2016
54	TIME Magazine 03-05-2018 Issue	2018
143	Democratic National Committee 05-25-2018 email	2018
150	Las Pilitas Nursery <a href="http://laspilitas.com">laspilitas.com</a>	2018
169	TIME Magazine – Junly2, 2018	2018
169	John Moore of Getty Images	2018
169	John Moore of Getty Images	2018
189	PC Magazine 2018	2018

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## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

### PREFACE

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## THIS Book ...

is a compilation of The Wild Bunch commentaries published via email broadcast and on Facebook pretty much every Monday and Thursday as well as occasionally on the TedThayer.com website in 2018.

As I stated in the original *Wild Bunch*, I love to write, so I save most of my stuff. This exercise became an easy way to write some history and keep it safe. It's interesting to see how facts and opinions change over time.

Each pair of chapters represents a week's offering without the website banner shown above. On June 16<sup>th</sup> of 2016 we switched to two weekly columns because it was nearing the close of another election cycle. We'll keep it at two per week and see how it goes. So, how do you think 2018 will turn out? Stay tuned, boys and girls.

It's gonna be a great ride!

# Happy New Year!

Monday, January 1, 2018

## SSI v. Medicare

Last month Social Security recipients got their notice of benefits for 2018. It says there will be a 2% increase in Social Security benefits. However, Medicare Part B premiums, which are taken off the top, will increase by more than 2%, essentially negating the SSI increase for many people.

Fortunately, there is a hold-harmless clause in the law relating to increases in Medicare premiums ... which means that the Medicare increase can be no more than the difference between the 2018 and 2017 Social Security benefits. My Medicare increase was low enough that I saw a net increase of seven dollars in the combined benefits. My wife, on the other hand - for the second year in a row - saw a net decrease in her benefit of one dollar due to rounding, barely meeting the hold-harmless provision.

Between the two of us, our combined increase in monthly SSI benefits minus Medicare premiums amounts to a whopping six dollars! Claudette's Medicare premium went up by \$20, an increase of 13% for 2018. Mine went up by \$27, a 20% increase over 2017.

What's got to be hard for many Social Security beneficiaries is that their checks are not keeping up with the cost of living. We've seen basic increases in rent, natural gas, gasoline, electricity, television service, telephone, internet service, food and taxes. And that doesn't take into account a 25% increase in Medicare Supplement and other insurance premiums. I figure our real inflation rate since January 2017 has been



## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

something like 12% overall, hardly compensated by the government's piddly 2% increase in the basic benefit.

It seems to me that something is wrong about the way the government calculates the CPI (Consumer Price Index). So far this year, the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) is up a little over 3%, on track for 4% in 2018. That's an incredible change in economic growth. But, we won't be seeing the benefits of that growth until the new tax structure kicks in next year.

Meanwhile, a significant number of older folks are finding work as Greeters at Wal Mart as a way to supplement their income, thus offsetting the inability of the Social Security Administration to keep up with the real CPI.

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Thursday, January 4, 2018

## Who'da Thunk It?

Wul, pilgrim, here we are in the middle of the first week of January 2018! Who'da thunk it? What can we look forward to (hope for) this year? Let's see ...

First, chew on these tidbits from *Kim Strassel* in Monday's *Wall Street Journal*:

Let 2018 be the year of civil-service reform - a root-and-branch overhaul of the government itself. Call it *Operation Drain the Swamp*.

When Candidate Trump first referred to “the swamp,” he was talking about the bog of Beltway lobbyists and “establishment” politicians. But *President Trump*’s first year in office has revealed that the real swamp is the unchecked power of those who actually run Washington: the two million members of the federal bureaucracy.

It’s a federal workforce whose pay and benefits are completely out of whack with the private sector. A 2011 *American Enterprise Institute* study found federal employees receive wages 14% higher than what similar workers in the private sector earn. Factor in benefits and the compensation premium leaps to 61%. Nice, huh?

Civil-service reform’s bipartisan appeal means it has a shot in the Senate. The *Chuck Schumers* and *Elizabeth Warrens* will fight for their federal union buddies. But will [they be able to] defend the *CFPB*, the majority of whose employees take home six-figure

## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

salaries, when the median personal income in the U.S. is about \$31,000?

Washington is now home to a bureaucratic elite, fantastically paid and protected, divorced from economic reality, and self-invested in thwarting conservative policy efforts. Let's drain the swamp, or at least make it smaller.

Second, Social Security (our subject line Monday) and its monitory limitations caused me to go look for more information on the subject. It turns out that there has been serious discussion about eliminating the limit on FICA earnings above \$127,200 and removing the limitation on FICA contributions above \$7,886.40. The current levels are not realistic. The Dems will scream because it hurts middle-income workers and therefore hurts the party politically ... but they'll go for it because it soaks the rich! Republicans will go for it because it makes sense for the government to apply best management and accounting practices and principles for a change. The problem is that Congress, ever mindful of the age-old political requirement to squander the Treasury, will be tempted to use the "windfall" to "buy down" the current \$20 Trillion deficit.

Third - I think this year could also be a turning point for morality. Not because a whole bunch of men have been accused of sexual improprieties, but rather because women have risen to the ages-old challenge that although men may have contributed their sisters' ribs, God is the One who gave them the strength to have children! It's not about subservience or dominance. It's about strength of character! In other words ... any woman who can bear childbirth will put up with just about anything to make things right for herself and family - except for nasty old men misbehaving! This year women are going to tire of the incessant droning from the MSM about

### **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

men who can't keep their hands to themselves and their tally-whackers in their pants! There will come a day when the boys and girls will again remember how nice it was just to be together in unsion and harmony - where she's the one who holds the rolling-pin!

Other subjects that could use some improvement include: The Country's Infrastructure, Immigration Law (including a permanent fix for DACA), HealthCare, Fake News and the looming 2018 Election Cycle.

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Monday, January 8, 2018

## The Biggest Threat

It wasn't that long ago that our government began seriously looking at the consequences of an attack on America's electrical infrastructure. Late in 2016 a desktop computer at one of the utilities in Vermont was hacked. **USA Today** put it this way, "Dec 30, 2016 - Malware linked to a Russian hacking group was found Friday on a **Burlington Electric Department** computer not connected to the grid."

September 6, 2017 **Andy Greenburg** at **WIRED.com** wrote, "Security firm **Symantec** is warning that a series of recent hacker attacks not only compromised energy companies in the US and Europe but also resulted in the intruders gaining hands-on access to power grid operations - enough control that they could have induced blackouts on American soil at will. Symantec on Wednesday revealed a new campaign of attacks by a group it is calling **Dragonfly 2.0**, which it says targeted dozens of energy companies in the spring and summer of this year. In more than 20 cases, Symantec says the hackers successfully gained access to the target companies' networks. And at a handful of US power firms and at least one company in Turkey - none of which Symantec will name - their forensic analysis found that the hackers obtained what they call operational access ..."

One of the things I discovered as a business owner in the '70s was how long it took to get things done when the government was involved. Licensing, inspections, you name it - time is money in small business, so you can imagine the amount of cash the government "money-suckers" extracted from my operation with their incessant foot-dragging. Mind you, this was the '70s and the government was just getting started on oppressive regulations, what with the **Jimmy Carter**

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

Recession, Gas shortages and the EPA just getting off the ground.

In the '80s I became one of the managers at a technical development operation, the *University Instrument Shop*, at the **University of Arizona**, charged with helping Principal Investigators do their research. I had qualified for the job by virtue of equivalency to a Masters/PHD in Electrical Engineering and a PHD/Masters in Business Management.

One of the first things the boss wanted was a computer system that could interact with the (DEC10) University Data Center via (300 baud) PaxLine. We had two Altairs - one a rack-mount, the other a desk-mount, predecessors to the Apple 1 and the IBM-PC. My job was to obtain an operating system (CPM), create printer drivers and a system of labor time and inventory control. What a challenge! There we were, right on the cusp of technical innovation using non-main-frame computers! Using computers was supposed to reduce the amount of time it took to do work and to reduce the amount of paperwork involved. Yeah, well ... Programming computers to be in charge of paperwork is like putting vampires in charge of the blood bank!

We created something else ... computer crashes ... usually caused by thunderstorm-related power failures. Which created the question: How often do you back up your data? So much for saving paper. Of course, it took more time to handle the paperwork than it had before computers came into the picture. However, the real problem we discovered is something few have considered until recently. If there is a major power failure that shuts down the electronic infrastructure longer than it can maintain itself independently, what happens to all that data and how do we do business?

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

I've seen chain stores shut down because of power failures. They don't know how to do business on paper! A few employees can add using a pencil and paper, but very few know how to make change! Then, there's the problem of fuel delivery when electric gas pumps don't work. Keeping perishables cool is an enormous problem. Lack of heating and cooling could pose a major threat to the health and safety of many people. And transportation systems across the country don't work very well without electricity for communications and controls.

I contend that the greatest threat to our country is *not terrorism* and certainly *not Climate Change*! Rather, I'm telling you there can be certain devastation of American commerce, infrastructure, public health and safety, and the country's banking system caused by a protracted *nation-wide power failure*. Such a major catastrophe could be precipitated by electro-magnetic pulses (**EMPs**) caused by nuclear weapons fired from some offshore country. It could be caused by the very real threat of Dragonfly's recent infrastructure hacking. The fact is - *it could happen!*

Have Emergency Services across America developed plans to handle large-scale outages for protracted periods of time? Are there Intergovernmental Agreements in place to make implementation of services provided under a broad area plan in place? Has Law Enforcement created a master plan to maintain order and keep people safe? Are the school systems and large public buildings in the loop? Is there a plan in place that coordinates Police and Fire Departments, Sheriff's Offices, State Police, the National Guard, City, County, State and Federal health and welfare systems, Hospitals and the Emergency Broadcast System with Local, County, State and National Emergency Management Agencies? And, exactly how do they plan to communicate?

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

Certainly there are plans and systems in place. I know this to be true because I served on the **Gila County (AZ) Local Emergency Planning Commission** (LEPC 1999-2004) charged with planning workable strategies for emergencies.

What I don't know is if there are wide-spread coordinated plans all across the country to handle something as devastating as a long nation-wide power failure. A bunch of really smart people needs to be working on this issue because *it could happen!*

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## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

**Monday, January 11, 2018**

### **What Is It About 77?**

I was born in Red Bluff, California on January 11th, 1941 - 77 years ago today. My dad was a Cat-skinner (Caterpillar Tractor Driver) at nearby Shasta Dam, a job he also held at the Giant Boulder (Hoover) Dam between Arizona and Nevada in the '30s. My mom had been among the first teachers at the one-room Orme Ranch School near Mayer, Arizona. The brand of the ranch was (sideways) (>| Quarter-Circle-V-Bar. I think the two of them met when she decided to take swimming lessons from him at Northern Arizona Normal School in Flagstaff, which became Arizona State College. They both attended the College (now NAU.)

I have a brother Bill, who is 74, and a sister Amanda, who is 70. That makes me the eldest surviving member of our Thayer clan. Holy Crap! Both brother Bill and sister Mandy were born in Tucson - Bill while my dad was on TDY for training early during WWII and Mandy when he was the Director of Recreation at the South Tuscon VA Hospital after the war. Our dad died November 30th of 1988 at 82 years of age. Our mom passed away in April of 2013. She was 97. (She probably would have made 100 if it wasn't for the fall and broken hip. Aunt Mary made it one day past 100 and mom was bound and determined to beat that record. The Hance side of the family is peppered with ancient survivors!)

The thing is - I'm supposed to be confronting old age and preparing for my demise. The fact is I don't think of it very often ... all the proper paperwork is done and I'm at peace with myself and my family. True ... I could croak at any moment, but as the song goes "Que Sera, Sera" - what will be, will be. My doctor told me I probably won't know when my time comes because I have a condition called dysrhythmia. My

## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

heart skips a beat every few minutes. I don't remember not having the condition. I always thought it was because I was very athletic - football, track, swimming - and I never paid that much attention to it. And I still don't unless I'm in bed in the twilight zone, feeling the faint pulse in my fingertips. The doctor said my brain would not get enough Oxygen one night and I just wouldn't wake up. Be that as it may ... it won't be painful and I can thank God for that good fortune.

So, what's the deal about 77? Damned if I know! I look forward to kickin' around until I'm in my early hundreds, at least! More Golf and pumping iron are probably in my future. That, and humble thanks to the Great Architect of the Universe for a great life so far.

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

**Monday, January 15, 2018 - MLK Day**

## **What Next?**

Back in Mid December, Claudette and I received our annual Notice of Benefits from the Social Security Administration. Us old geezers were informed that we would be getting a two percent COLA (cost of living increase) in our benefits. We were also informed how much our Medicare Part B premiums would be increasing. I told y'all about this new year's day.

Part B premiums are taken off the top of Social Security payments - off the top, mind you. My Medicare took all but seven dollars of my two percent "raise." Somehow, Claudette's Medicare premium takes not only her Social Security "raise", but also an extra buck ... for the second year in a row! I'm getting a seven dollar COLA after all is said and done. She is getting a net decrease of a dollar. But that's for the second year in a row.

The Congress, in its wisdom (when Medicare was created and payment of premiums from Social Security payments were authorized as part of the deal) created a "hold harmless" clause in the law that guaranteed that nobody receiving Social Security benefits would ever receive a net payment any year less than the previous year. Well, troops ... that's a bunch of bureaucratic balogna. Two years in a row, Claudette's net Social Security benefit has dropped by one dollar per month.

Well, I set about making things right to get her benefit back where it was supposed to be. President Trump has railed that government is too oppressive and clogged with un-needed rules and regulations - and he's demanded that for each new regulation there be two eliminated. So far, the record shows that, actually, twenty-one regulations have been removed for

## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

each new one. Wow! Unfortunately, it hasn't made much of a difference to those of us out here in the sticks!

I sent an email to Social Security based on their assurances that they could help. What I got back a coupla weeks later was a note that they were too busy to handle the problem by email, so I should call the 800 number. I did that ... and after fifteen minutes of gobledegook, I finally got the affirmative word from the sexy voice of the artificial intelligence: "Your estimated wait time is one hour and fifteen minutes."

Not one to wait as directed, I took up the cause with my US Senator's office. John McCain is one of my heros. Had I not chosen to drop out of college in 1959, I would have finished the Marine Corps Platoon Leaders Course, gone to Pensacola Florida to learn to fly jets, and probably would have been shot down over Viet Nam and become a Hanoi Hilton prison-mate of Senator McCain. So, I figured an email/contact with McCain's office could bear fruit. It took a coupla weeks for my request for help to work its way through the system, but it did. Finally. I got a 'phone call last week and we agreed to do business/casework by email.

The first email asked me to fill out a form and send it in with my electronic signature. That I did, and it was followed up with a request for an explanation of the problem. (That was Claudette's reduction in Social Security benefit two years in a row,) Redundant because the original request for assistance included that information! So, I shipped an email meeting that requirement, which was followed by a need for Claudette to fill out a form for herself. I have her Power of Attorney (and she has mine) so I emailed my Power off to Arizona's McCain Offices. What I got back was a statement to the effect that Social Security doesn't recognize Powers of Attorney. Just great! Over a piddly twelve dollars a year? Pheh!

## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

So, I had Claudette sign a blank piece of paper, created a digital signature using my scanner and photo editor, filled out a form for her and attached her signature to it - just like I had done for my own required Privacy Consent form. This bureaucratic exercise began last Monday. When it will end depends entirely on what kind of rigamarole and red tape can be amended to this nonsense! We're talking twenty-four dollars, here - about what the Indians were paid in junk jewelry for Long Island!

Paperwork does little more than clog things up, slow them down and increase the cost of government. At this point I have little hope for a quick (if any) solution because, to my knowledge, we haven't even tapped the Social Security Administration or Medicare! Just at Arizona's minimum wage, I'm betting we've already cost the taxpayers at least \$5.00. What a wonderous way to cut expenses and red tape!

I'll let you know how this adventure turns out, troops.

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Thursday, January 18, 2018

## Can Dems Win AZ 2018?

Arizona is going to be a hotbed of political chicanery this year. The southwest state has always been a place where elections are fraught with ... you name it: trickery, deception, deceit, duplicity, dishonesty, subterfuge, fraud, skullduggery and other evil synonyms. The Valentine State is also a place where strange things have happened because of politics.

The main street in **Show Low** today is called the *Deuce of Clubs* (the lowest card in a standard card deck). Show Low was named by settler **Corydon E. Cooley** the winner of his neighbor **Marion Clark's** land when they played Seven-up to determine who would move away to keep the peace. The two played the game and as the last hand was coming to an end, Clark said "*You show low, you win.*" Cooley turned over the deuce of clubs. These days, whenever there is a runoff for mayor of Show Low, instead of a runoff election the issue is settled by the two opponents drawing from a deck of cards until one draws the deuce of clubs. That person becomes the mayor for the next term.

Then there were the politicians indicted in February of 1991 on charges of bribery, money laundering and filing false election statements. The **AZScam** scandal felled three Republican and two Democrat Representatives, and two Democrat Senators. Representative **Sue Laybe**, accused of taking more than \$10,000 in cash, said, "*This is a political indictment hatched for political reasons.*" That wasn't all of it though ... also indicted were **George Stragalas III**, one-time executive director of the **Arizona Democratic Party**; **Shiree Foster**, a staff assistant at the **Arizona Chamber of Commerce**; **Ernie Hoffman** and **Rich Scheffel**, independent lobbyists; **David Horwitz**, a lobbyist for the **American**

## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

**Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees;**  
and **David Manley**, chairman of the **Maricopa County Democratic Party**.

During that time, it was common knowledge that Arizona Legislators were carrying paper bags full of cash around with them. Many, whose homes were elsewhere in the state, rather than rent, would stay with friends or relatives in the Phoenix metro area during the week and go home on the weekends. The per diem food, lodging and mileage paid them by the state was laundered into cash which was easy to carry in small paper bags. A little of that cash would go to supplement the food budget of the people with which they stayed. Arizona State Legislators received a \$15,000 salary plus \$35 a day per diem. If they lived out of Maricopa county they received \$60 per diem per day for regular and special sessions and \$10 a day after that. The total received in per diem for food, lodging and mileage by the end of a Legislative Session was always a tidy sum. Before 1981 Legislators receive a \$6,000 salary. Their pay was raised to \$24,000 by voter approval in 1998. The custom of carrying bagged cash pretty much stopped after the AZScam debacle.

**Evan Mecham** was elected Arizona's governor in November 1986 in a fractured, three-way race. On taking office, one of his first acts was to rescind the state's **Martin Luther King Jr.** holiday, a move that inflamed racial tensions and prompted public protests. Within six months, a recall drive was under way to give Meacham the boot. In January 1988, a grand jury indicted him and his brother on charges stemming from an investigation into campaign-finance violations and fraud. The Arizona Legislature, however, made the recall effort moot by impeaching him.

Governor **J. Fife Symington III** was forced to resign two years after a federal jury convicted him on bank- and wire-

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

fraud charges. During his first term, which began in 1991 he was investigated and cleared of any involvement with the failed **Southwest Savings & Loan** scandal, and he went on to win re-election in 1994. However, on September 4, 1997, he was indicted on 21 federal counts ranging from fraud to extortion to perjury. His conviction was overturned on appeal in 1999, and President **Bill Clinton** pardoned him in 2001.

**Rick Renzi**, a Republican member of the US House of Representatives, from Arizona's 1st Congressional District, was convicted on Federal criminal charges of fraud, racketeering and public corruption for his involvement in a questionable land-swap deal. Renzi was accused of embezzling insurance premiums to fund his political campaigns and using his power as a lawmaker to force changes in a proposed federal land swap to benefit a business associate. He was sentenced to three years in prison in June of 2013. The sentence was upheld by the **9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals**. His legal team filed with the **U S Supreme Court**. But, the SCOTUS declined Monday a week ago to hear Renzi's appeal that sought to question the process of how he was prosecuted. He served a three year sentence and was released from prison in January of 2017.

More recently, according to the **New Times**: Sheriff **Joe Arpaio**, had been involved in more than two dozen controversies involving everything from bad jail conditions to abuse of power, improper clearance of cases, failure to investigate rape cases, feuds with judges, misuse of funds, racial profiling, and even staging a failed assassination attempt. In July, United States District Judge **Susan R. Bolton** found the 85-year-old Arpaio guilty of criminal contempt of court, a misdemeanor punishable by six months in jail. Arpaio was convicted of violating a court order to stop racially profiling Latinos, but President **Donald Trump** pardoned him before the scheduled sentencing. Arpaio, who



## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

billed himself as "The Toughest Sheriff in America", served as Maricopa County's top Law Enforcement Officer for the 24 years between 1993 and 2016, when he was voted out of office.

U.S. Representative **Martha McSally** (R), former Air Force combat pilot, said Friday she will run against Arpaio, who threw his hat in the ring last week for the US Senate seat being abandoned by **Jeff Flake** (R). Contenders also include Representative **Kyrsten Sinema**, a centrist Democrat, and **Kelli Ward**, a conservative Republican and former Arizona state senator. Polls have McSally favored over second choice Arpaio. One thing's for sure: Odds are 3:1 (75/25) that Flake's Senate seat will go to a woman.

So, here are how the numbers worked out as of October 1st: There are 3,665,316 registered voters in Arizona, comprised of 1,289,893 Independents & "Others", 1,268,748 Republicans and 1,106,675 Democrats. Historically, voter turnout in Arizona for mid-term elections has run around 30% over the last two decades. What has changed nation-wide, as well as in Arizona, is the number of Independent voters, which has grown to exceed the registration in either of the other two parties.

Democrat organizers from all over the country are gearing up to change Arizona from Red to Blue. They will do whatever it takes to put Democrat Kyrsten Sinema in Flake's Senate seat. While national Democrat (**DNC**) fund-raising efforts have collected less than half that of the **RNC** this year, the Dems have been working on grass-roots organizing at the state and local levels, registering armies of new Democrats across the country. If you do the math you'll see that to catch the GOP in Arizona, Democrats will need to register 48,622 new voters - that's just to pull even with the Republicans - 54,966 to match

### **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

the number of Independents. And then they'll have to turn out more than 30%. That, my friends, is one heck of a tall order!

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Monday, January 22, 2018

## About the EAS System

A little over a week ago, a Hawaiian Emergency Systems employee, during shift change, accidentally hit the "Alert" button on the system computer and set off a thirty-eight minute island-wide panic. It took that long for the folks in charge to figure out that it was a false alarm and call it off. The degree of ignorance shown by that exercise is almost incomprehensible until you stop to contemplate who was involved. State-level employees and elected officials with no specific responsibility had to figure out what to do under extreme pressure. Well, they screwed up!

The fact is that the only outfit that can issue an alert of that nature is the US Military stationed in that area. They are the ones who detect missile launches and calculate trajectories to determine where a missile could land. They are the ones who would activate the Emergency Alert System, which would distribute the alert exactly the same way it happened the other day. The EAS is about as automatic as it gets ... but it's only as good as the information being disseminated.

Local EAS alert tests happen weekly all over America. You hear them on local radio and TV and most local cable channels. Regional test alerts are held more-or-less monthly. And there have been a number of National EAS tests in the past few years. One of the great success stories about the EAS is the Amber Alert. Do doubt about it. The delivery system works.

This from a September 2006 Homeland Security report: "From the air raid warning and plane spotting activities of the Office of Civil Defense in the 1940s, to the film strips and backyard shelters of the 1950s, to today's allhazards

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

preparedness programs led by the Department of Homeland Security, Federal strategies to enhance the nation's preparedness for disaster and attack have evolved over the course of the 20th century and into the 21st."

Unfortunately, who pushes the "GO" button is not certain. Is there an heirarchy? Who is in charge? Hawaii shows that an incoming missile is definitely the pervue of the military. EAS is meant to be a mitigating factor when it comes to all kinds of life-threatening emergencies. But somebody has to be in charge at every level - local, regional, state, national, law-enforcement and military. Who is it that calls the shot at each level? And when? Isn't it curious that the EAS was never instituted during the fires that devastated Santa Rosa California and the Wine Country around it?

I alluded to this problem in my January 8th column. Each of the local, regional, state and national Emergency Management Agencies must have contingencies for every imaginable scenario - fire, flood, chemical spill, electrical grid failure, earthquake, typhoon, tornado, hurricane, volcano, plane and train crashes, incoming missiles ... and the list goes on forever!

But the root cause of the problem in making the system work has not changed since the beginnings of the Civil Defense system. The root cause drills down to nobody really knows who's in charge! Somehow, Doctor Strangelove comes to mind.

It seems just like they say: ***The more things change, the more they stay the same!***

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Thursday, January 25, 2018

## Sunsweet Prunes

My wife Claudette and I met in 1961 in Gilroy, California, the garlic capitol of the world. There are two things about Gilroy that few people are aware of ... first, it's the last place you have clear skys before hitting the massive wall of smog generated by the San Francisco bay area - which magically appears just south of San Jose, between Morgan Hill and Gilroy. Second it's the reason Sunsweet prunes used to have such a unique taste.

The smog speaks for itself. Pack people, cars, trucks, trains and planes tightly in an area and their emissions will create smog, no matter what you do to mitigate it.

The unique taste of Sunsweet Prunes is the result (or used to be) of garlic fumes in the air! You see, the Sunsweet plant in Gilroy air-dried their prunes on big racks out in the open. This allowed Gilroy's unique atmosphere to permeate into the flesh of the drying prunes. It was just a tiny bit of Gilroy's "air polution" that made Sunsweet Prunes so tasty.

Mind you this was back in the day ... the '60s. I was the local D.J. spinning *black bisquits labeled for listening* at the time. The great songs of that time included Etta James' classic version of the WWII hit *At Last*, the Harmonicats' version of *Peg O' My Heart*, *Tossin' and Turnin'* by Bobby Lewis, Patsy Cline's *I Fall to Pieces*, Roy Orbison's monster *Cryin'*, *Raindrops* by Dee Clark, the Shirelles' *Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow* and Brook Benton's fabulous *Bowl Weevil Song*.

This was a time when I became acquainted with a pretty local farm girl whose dad allowed me to go to his dairy and skim a gallon of cream off the top of the monster milk tanks for 50

## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

cents and never accepted payment. This was a time when the Portuguese radio program host made sausage and stashed it under the counter in the radio station! Eeeeew! It really reeked - but damn - it was goo-oo-ood!

This was the place where my bride and I met and fell in love and eventually married. I have a special place in my heart for stinky ol' Gilroy, California.

Last week I bought a canister of Sunsweet Prunes. Oh, be still, my heart! I was so looking forward to chomping out a few of those Gilroy-cured babies. Guess what? The label says, "AMAZIN PRUNES FROM CHILE." No mention of Gilroy or California! Aaaaarrggh! But, that's not all, Prune fans. The container was only HALF FULL!

Somehow ... Ernest Lawrence Thayer's "Casey at the Bat" comes to mind. I don't know why, but it does. Sunsweet's prune demise could be as big a strike-out as the mighty Casey's!

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Monday, January 29, 2018

## Feelings

Last year I worked ever so slowly on my second book, a compendium of stories gathered from around the neighborhood and out of my head. So far, *¿Quién Sabe? Mas Historias de un Hombre Viejo (More Old Man's Stories)* contains four stories about our human senses - hearing, seeing, smelling and tasting. That leaves one more: Feeling or touch. Here we go ...

Feeling can be broken into two parts - that which one feels with the heart, gut, or mind ... and that which one feels with one's body, skin, muscles or bones.

First, let's deal with the body. It's unlikely that you recall the difference between the comfort of your mother's womb and the cold, bright, loud delivery room. Those had to be some kinda scary feelings! But, I can remember the touch of my mama's lips on the nape of my neck when I was little. Can you? Remember getting the bottom of your little feet tickled? How 'bout the first time you stubbed your toe? Wow!

How many of us remember when mom said, "Don't touch that burner - it will hurt you." How many of us just HAD to put our little fingers on that burner? Remember the feeling? Yowww! It hurt! It burnt! And it broke your mama's heart. Maybe those were some of your first feelings. (Well, the ones you can remember, anyway.)

Three things: I stepped on a board with a rusty nail in it. That hurt. Squeezed the picture wound to make it bleed. That hurt, too. Went to the doctor, who checked it out, treated it, put a band-aid on it and gave me a Tetanus Shot. Ouch! That

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

Tetanus Shot ached for what seemed like a week. Odds are you've probably been there and done that ...

I have three scars on me from lacerations. One on my left arm from playing with a razor-blade, one on my right arm from playing with an axe, and one on my left shin, just above the ankle, from tripping over barbed wire. None was as gruesome as it may sound! I recall that none of them hurt as much as cutting one's finger with a kitchen knife. Instead, each of the lacerations was clean and just stung - yes, stung like an insect bite. Just lucky, I guess.

Before I got old I was six-foot-five. I've shrunk some since, but the same thing happens as when I was taller: I bang my head on things. I live in a Park Model mobile home. It has a six foot by six foot sliding glass door as the entrance. It took me about two years to learn to duck going in and out of that damned thing! Back in the late fifties, when I was in high school, I used to bang my head on the cafeteria automatic door-closer all the time because they propped the doors open at lunch time. By the time I was a Senior, there were no bruises or scrapes on my head - but I was beginning to go bald. Speaking of entrances ... Ford and Chevy brought us the wrap-around windshield, making entering and leaving the car a chore for us tall people - banging our heads on the street-side edge that dratted window. As a result of banging into things with my head over the years, I can grow hair almost anywhere except the top of my head!

Next, let's work on the other feelings - hearbreak, fear, panic, loathing, joy, love, ecstasy, gut feelings and premonitions.

***Heartbreak*** - usually involves loss ... you and your lover break up, your pet dies, or you loose a family member to age and infirmity. Maybe you witness a car or airplane crash where nobody survives. Heartbreaking.



## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

The crashes or pending disasters like that create *fear* in everyone. Fear is what makes people want to turn away or run.

Many people go into full-out *panic* mode when disaster hits. Panic usually results when it seems there is no way out of a situation. It creates a kind of paralysis of both mind and body.

One of the worst human feelings is *loathing*. This is hatred so deep that a person could actually fly into a rage and take the life of another living thing.

Just the opposite is *joy*! I call it abject happiness - glee, if you will. It's the feeling that something has happened or is happening that makes you feel all warm and giggly and wonderful all over.

*Love* is such a special feeling that poets have written volumes on it and have scarcely scratched the surface. I guess love is a feeling of attachment, or of belonging or of preference. I love my wife and family. And I love chocolate-mint ice-cream!

Now, *ecstasy* is an order of magnitude greater than joy! Ecstasy is the feeling of being completely overcome with joy and happiness.

All of us have had *gut feelings* before. Gut feelings are almost like *premonitions*, but not quite as strange. Let's say that your car has almost bald tires on it and you have to drive across town some six or eight miles. You have this gut feeling that you're gonna have a flat before you get home. Different is the premonition that you're gonna have a flat just before you get to your destination across town, and sure enough - as you're pulling into that parking lot - BAM! Your gut feeling was telling you that it might be a good idea to get new tires

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

on the way across town. The premonition was a view into the future that predicted the outcome.

Feelings set us humans apart from each other and from the animals. I wonder what kind of feelings nature's creatures experience. Your pets, I'm pretty sure, experience love and happiness and fear and trepidation. But what about that little Praying Mantis lurking out there on the porch? And what about that fly he's stalking? I'd rather not go their either!

And then there was *Feelings* , **Morris Albert**'s monster hit from 2006 that was nominated for **Grammy Award** Song of the Year. <https://youtu.be/CyBcHUe4WeQ> YouTube. Enjoy!

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Thursday, February 1, 2018

## Worse Than I Thought

The lead line in my January 18th column went like this: *"Arizona is going to be a hotbed of political chicanery this year."* Well, according to an old friend, it's worse than that. He's a law officer and I trust his word. **Dan** posted the following on Facebook a week ago:

"Here is why the Democrats are fighting to keep illegal immigrants in the United States. I have a good friend that came across the border and got her citizenship. While she was going through the procedures for her citizenship she was told over and over that [if] she registered to vote she could only register Democrat. How I learned this - she told me that she wanted to vote for Trump, but she couldn't because she was Democrat. She did not know she could register Republican. She was told she couldn't. So there is part of the immigration procedures from the Democrats. This is what I was told from her."

**Peggy** posted the following comment:

"I have heard this before, thanks, Dan for confirming it with a person that has gone through it. Very eye opening as to why the big push from the Dems for so many immigrants."

**Jeri** followed with this:

"Wow that needs to be public knowledge. When I first registered to vote my Dad said I was Democrat that the GOP was just for rich folks that didn't care about

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

the country. One of the only times my dad was wrong."

Earlier, Dan had posted this:

"What I see with these Dreamers, [is] they stand out in the street with their signs demanding that the United States give them citizenship. Their signs [are] demeaning [to]the President, the very one [who would] sign the bill authorizing it. They don't even realize where they are ..., instead of carrying the United States Flag, they carry around the Mexican flag. They need to know at the bottom of that [DACA] bill there [are] two boxes to check, Approved and Veto. They act out on the street that they don't want approval, [but] they disapprove [of] President Trump. [It's shameful] the way they act and demand, when they aren't even citizens - they are illegals. [A] normal person wouldn't give them [anything]. Just sayin."

Followed by:

"... you know that I am not a racist, my granddaughter is black and I have two grandsons that are Mexican. I call it like I see it - and they are all over TV. And I am not a bastard I have a father. The truth hurts."

A recently confirmed fact is that illegal immigrants in Arizona commit crimes at more than twice the rate of other residents. The **Washington Times** reported last week that, according to the **Crime Prevention Research Center**, illegal immigrants between ages 15 and 35 account for 3 percent of Arizona's population but make up approximately 8 percent of the prison population. And the crimes of which illegals were convicted tended to be more serious. Contributor **John Lott** noted, "*The type of person who goes through the process to*

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

*legally immigrate in the United States appears to be very law-abiding [in comparison to] even the U.S.-born population."*

Is it possible that my friend Dan misunderstood? Maybe. Perhaps his good friend wanted to vote in the Republican **Primary** but was registered as a Democrat. That would explain it. But if she wasn't informed that she could vote for Trump in the November **General** Election, there was definitely skulduggery afoot.

While I was growing up my family didn't speak much about politics. Mom was a public school teacher and Pop was employed by the City. In those positions, back in the day, you didn't talk much about politics. This was back when civil discourse didn't include religion or politics. All I knew as a youngster was what Jeri's dad told her. Republicans were for the rich folks and Democrats were for the unions and poor folks.

Those of you who've been reading the column for some time know that I served on the Pima County Republican Central Committee in Tucson. After moving here to Globe I became a Democrat. (Gila County Democrats are more conservative than Tucson Republicans!) After a while, I worked my way up to Vice-Chair of the Gila County Democrat Party, a position I held for nine years. In the over a quarter-century that Claudette and I have lived here, never ever - not even once - have I heard a story like Dan related. Never!

Take my word - this year's election cycle in Arizona is gonna be one for the books!

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Monday, February 5, 2018

## Rich v. Poor

A little more than a week ago House Minority Leader **Nancy Pelosi** and former DNC Chair **Debbie Wasserman-Schultz** quoted the same liberal talking point in response to American corporations handing out bonus checks for their employees as a result of reductions caused by the new tax law. At a Town Hall held at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton, both Pelosi and Schultz complained that the middle class gets crumbs while corporate executives have banquets.

The **Washington Examiner** put it this way January 26th:

"When **Home Depot** announced a onetime \$1,000 bonus in the fourth quarter, Pelosi wasn't impressed. *'There's a little mouse trap who's got a little piece of cheese on there and there's a mouse about to take it,'* Pelosi said Thursday, bizarrely describing her favorite cartoon, *'and that's called the middle class.'*

*"And around it are fat cats, they look a lot like elephants but anyway,"* Pelosi continued. *'And that's the thing. Get this little thing and we get this big bonanza. You get the crumb, we get the banquet.'*

"What Pelosi doesn't understand, is that for a middle class family, \$1,000 can balance a check book, make a mortgage payment, or put a dent in a semester's tuition. What Pelosi dismisses as crumbs, normal people see as welcome windfall. What Pelosi risks with that line is a permanent rebranding that bumps Marie Antoinette off of history's list of the most unfeeling leaders." [*Let them eat cake!*]

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

What House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi and Representative Debbie Wasserman-Schultz, Senator **Elizabeth Warren** and Senate Minority Leader **Chuck Schumer** (the *uber*-left of the Democrat Party) don't understand is that the rank and file aren't being fooled by their divisive rhetoric. In a modern capitalist society like ours, there has to be a bunch of "fat cats" owning businesses that employ "the middle class" - generally paying them in proportion to their experience and skills. That pay can range from minimum hourly wages to salaries running into the high six-figures. The same goes for the "crumbs" paid out as bonuses or raises.

What the supposedly highly educated, liberal Democrat members of our Congress don't understand is that the progressive American tax system takes in proportion to net income, and it returns/refunds in similar proportion. In other words, the richest among us get soaked while the poorest among us pay little or nothing. In fact, there are low-income folks who get cash refunds as a result of child tax credits provided as subsidies by the government. Our government's policies have made it so the non-working poor - those having no taxable income - can receive subsidies totaling almost as much as an average American middle-class worker earns!

Compared to the rest of the World, America's capitalist system does a pretty good job of caring for its people, no matter their income or station in life, provided they are willing to take advantage of those benefits. Let's face it ... it's their choice - crumbs or banquets!

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Thursday, February 8, 2018

## No Change at Safeway

Other than a tiny neighborhood store, a raft of gas stations, Circle Ks and Dollar Stores, and part of a WalMart Super-store, there are only two big markets here in Globe-Miami Arizona - Fry's in the Midland City area and a Safeway kitty-corner from the Post Office in Globe.

I have a little tin container that I carry around in the car. It's an Altoids breath-mint container and it will hold more than five dollars-worth of quarters. I feed the quarters to the machines in the laundromat. So, I collect the quarters from my shopping change and put the rest of the change in the little donation containers you see at check-out stands. This is important information that you need to know - I'm always on a quest for quarters!

Now, to the story: Fry's stock is driven, not by management, but rather by brains at corporate. Corporate provides the layout specifications and what products are to be stocked where and in what quantities. Sometimes they do crazy things.

For instance, you'll find six cans of Aunt Penny's Hollandaise Sauce hiding behind a hanger sign in the aisle with Italian food - yes, Italian!

The best selling hot wings on earth are TGI Friday's Buffalo style, but Fry's only stocks the TGI Friday's Honey-Mustard style. Over in Claypool, WalMart stocks both styles. Bet you know where I buy my hot wings!

We used to buy canned peach halves at Fry's, but they discontinued them in favor of sliced peaches. When I asked



## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

about it, a cashier went looking for peach halves and came back empty-handed! The manager said corporate just discontinued stocking them.

We have a recipe for boiled peach halves with cinnamon that goes with a scrambled eggs and bacon breakfast. Sliced peaches don't make it in the aesthetics department, so I was dispatched to Safeway to get peach halves.

Safeway's got nothing on Fry's when it comes to crazy stuff! Peach halves were on sale, so I got a bunch of them. When I paid for them the cashier gave me a dollar and the automatic change machine spit out a quarter, four dimes and a few pennies. I held out three dimes and asked her if I could have a quarter and a nickel. She said, - I swear to God - "Sorry, sir. We aren't allowed to make change from the drawer." Now, where did that dollar come from?

I had some other shopping to do at Fry's and I shared the Safeway change story with my cashier. She was incredulous! She said that was the stupidest thing she'd ever heard! When I gave her two dimes and a nickel from the change machine, she gave me back a quarter. Ah, yes ... one more for the Altoids container! Naturally, the moral of the story is if you need change, don't ask a cashier at Safeway. You can get it at Customer Service ... or at Fry's!

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Monday, February 12, 2018

## DACA

Over the last couple of months Congressional Democrats have managed to dig themselves into a huge hole ... and kept digging! When none of the Dems in the Senate voted for the first Continuing Resolution to keep the government operating, it caused what many called the "Schumer Shutdown" - closing many government offices and providing no paychecks for employees for three days. The effect was not as horrible as feared because the shutdown was over a weekend and the following Monday. **Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer** finally gave in and let enough of his people vote to pass a Bill to keep the government running. To pass, the Bill needed a 60 vote Super-Majority rather than a simple majority.

**Wikipedia** says, "There are three types of appropriations bills: regular appropriations bills, continuing resolutions, and supplemental appropriations bills. Regular appropriations bills are the twelve standard bills that cover the funding for the federal government for one fiscal year and that are supposed to be enacted into law by October 1. If Congress has not enacted the regular appropriations bills by the time, it can pass a continuing resolution, which continues the pre-existing appropriations at the same levels as the previous fiscal year (or with minor modifications) for a set amount of time. The third type of appropriations bills are supplemental appropriations bills, which add additional funding above and beyond what was originally appropriated at the beginning of the fiscal year. Supplemental appropriations bills can be used for things like disaster relief."

Republicans constitute a simple majority of 51 in the Senate, but **Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell** wouldn't

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

invoke the "Nuclear Option" which would allow a simple majority to pass legislation like he did to approve appointments of Supreme Court Judges. Even **President Donald Trump** has called for the Nuclear Option to force Democrats in the Senate to act in a more bi-partisan way. Instead, Schumer caved in to the backlash from Middle America. As a result he became the recipient of ferocious attacks from the far left of the Democrat party. They were so upset that unruly crowds showed up at Schumer's home, demonstrating and pledging to keep him awake all night with their noise.

Schumer was caught in his own catch-22 ... by not allowing his people to pass the CR he created tremendous bad feelings across the country - not only among Republicans, but also among a broad cross-section of Dems and Independents. TV ads over the weekend shouted, "Democrats would rather support illegal aliens than fund our military!" **CNBC** posted a report that "Trump accused Democrats of 'turning down services and security for citizens in favor of services and security for non-citizens,' meaning the undocumented young people who were brought to this country as children by their parents ..."

The old saying goes, "When you find yourself in a hole, quit digging!" Schumer's mistake was not replacing the shovel with a ladder. By letting his Democrats vote for a three-week CR, he set the stage for an even more acrimonious fight in the Congress over DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) instead of an actual budget for the remainder of FY-2017-18. Last week the CR they finally passed expired before the House could approve a new one based on compromises in the Senate. What resulted was one of the shortest government shutdowns in history - a matter of a few hours went by before they passed the new CR, which will expire on March 23rd. Because House Leaders promised to take up DACA this week

## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

over Rand Paul's objections, the Bill included \$300 billion in new funding over the next two years, much of it for the military. Paul was furious because, he claimed, it would create a trillion-dollar budget deficit next year.

But really, the whole deal is about DACA. **CNBC**: "Senate Democrats are seeking a permanent fix for some 800,000 undocumented young people who were shielded from deportation under Obama-era DACA [Executive Order] rules until last fall, when President Donald Trump canceled the DACA program." Because of Trump's own Executive Order, DACA permits will expire March 5th. The President encouraged a compromise that would allow an additional million undocumented youngsters to apply for DACA protection, hoping that would draw more young people out of the shadows, where they have been living in fear of being deported.

The House and Senate minorities wanted DACA legislation adopted as separate part of any future budget agreement - they got what they wanted as a compromise to keep the government funded. They want permanent Green Cards for DACA kids going to college, being gainfully employed or serving in the American military. The President wants funding for the Border Wall promised during the election, an end to the immigrant lottery, and an end to "chain migration" in trade for permanent permits and a "path to US Citizenship" for up to 1.8 million DACA kids.

The spectre of young people defacing public and private property, disrupting the peace, participating in unruly demonstrations, flaunting Mexican Flags and carrying placards condemning the President doesn't sit well with a vast majority of Americans. Becoming a Naturalized US Citizen requires a working knowledge of how our government works, passing a test about those workings and the US Constitution,

### **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

becoming fluent in the written and spoken English language, obtaining gainful employment, assimilating into American society and professing an unswerving allegiance to the United States of America. Nothing more - nothing less.

The line has been drawn. Dreamers who won't join our continuing American quest for civil Life, Liberty and Pursuit of Happiness will meet with a huge surprise. They will not be welcome here anymore. The question remains ... will Schumer blink again?

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

**Thursday, February 15, 2018**

## **It was a Hard Crash!**

I had both my February 15th and 19th columns all done and ready to go when it happened. It was a hard crash. I had installed Windows 10 in my computer late last year and it had been giving me grief - doing the ol' BSOD (Blue Screen Of Death) somewhat regularly. I'm pretty good at backing stuff up, but this time it wasn't good enough! The damned thing wiped out my new Operating System, taking with it everything stashed on there for the last two weeks!

I think it was the small Solid State Drive that had the problem. (I had already had my 500GB SSD take a dump. But ... I reloaded Win 10 on the 250GB SSD and got things going again. But that left me with two columns and no data! Rats!

Well, I have all weekend to cough up some goodies (as if there weren't any!) Wish me luck.

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Monday, February 19, 2018

## I'll Be Everywhere ...

Last week I watched what may be the greatest American movie of all time. It was probably the twelfth or fifteenth time I've seen it - but it never seems to get old, even though it was released in 1940, the year before I was born!. The movie is the celebrated Hollywood film version of **John Steinbeck's** prize-winning novel, starring **Henry Fonda** and directed by **John Ford**.

Quoting intermittently from **Wikipedia**: "The **Grapes of Wrath** is an American realist novel published in 1939 and written by John Steinbeck ..." Frequently read in American high school and college book classes, it "won the **National Book Award** and **Pulitzer Prize** for fiction, and it was cited prominently when Steinbeck was awarded the **Nobel Prize** in 1962."

"Set during the Great Depression, [both the movie and] the the novel focuses on the Joads, a poor family of tenant farmers driven from their Oklahoma home by drought, economic hardship, agricultural industry changes, and bank foreclosures forcing tenant farmers out of work ...

"The narrative begins just after **Tom Joad** [played by Henry Fonda] is paroled from McAlester prison, where he had been imprisoned after being convicted of homicide. On his return to his home near Sallisaw, Oklahoma, Tom meets former preacher **Jim Casy**, whom he remembers from his childhood, and the two travel together. When they arrive at Tom's childhood farm home, they find it deserted. Disconcerted and confused, Tom and Casy meet their old neighbor, **Muley Graves**, who tells them the family has gone to stay at Uncle

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

**John Joad's** home nearby. Graves tells them that the banks have evicted all the farmers, but he refuses to leave the area.

"The next morning, Tom and Casy go to Uncle John's. Tom finds his family loading their remaining possessions into a Hudson Motor Car Company sedan converted to a truck; with their crops destroyed by the Dust Bowl, the family has defaulted on their bank loans, and their farm has been repossessed. Consequently, the Joads see no option but to seek work in California, described in handbills as fruitful and offering high pay.

"The Joads put everything they have into making the journey. Although leaving Oklahoma would violate his parole, Tom decides it is worth the risk, and invites Casy to join him and his family."

At the end of the movie, Tom has run into trouble with the law, is afraid his life is in grave danger, and is preparing to be on his way elsewhere. To ease his mother's fears he recites this cosmic siliology that has gone down in history as one of the most classic presentations of the way America's working man looks at life and its relation to the hereafter:

*"Well ... maybe it's like Casy said.*

*"A fella ain't got a soul of its own ... jus' ... a little piece of a big soul ... the one big soul that belongs ta everybody. And ... an' it don't matter.*

*"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 eat - I'll be there. Wherever there's a cop beatin' up a guy - I'll be there. I'll be in the way guys yell when they're mad. I'll be in the way kids laugh when ... they're hungry and know supper is ready.*



## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

*"And when the people are eatin' the stuff they raise 'n' ... livin' in the houses they build ... I'll be there, too.*

*"Just somethin' I been thinkin' about ..."*

I was just thinkin', too ... last September, I wrote the following:

We know from **Genesis** that *"In the beginning God created the Heavens and the Earth. And the Earth was without form, and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."* And when God said *"Let there be light"* there WAS light - the **Big Bang**, if you will. And there we were ... BANG! ... just like that - flying away into deep space at the speed of light, collecting in groups and clusters, creating the stars and the planets and their moons!

Our physical bodies are microcosms of the Universe that God created. Our mental processes operate by the same principles of physics that apply everywhere in the Universe. This is why we never really die - why we are always present, even after the death and subsequent decomposition of our physical being - this is why people believe in ghosts or spirits. We are everywhere in the Universe. As the Universe expands infinitely away from the original location of the Big Bang, a finite number of us remain to make up its part and parcel, spreading at the speed of light across time and space ... it follows that God is everywhere.

We are the Universe. We are the World. We are the children. We are everywhere. Tom Joad was right on the money when he said, *"I'll be everywhere - wherever you can look."*

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

**Thursday, February 22, 2018**

## **Guns Are Us**

Kids from the Parkland, Florida School, where 17 of them lost their lives to a deranged killer, went to their state Capitol yesterday, rallying to get their state legislators' attention. They did a wonderful thing for their country. The young people who spoke were motivated and positive. They showed clearly that our kids know how things work. They understand politics. They understand history. And they know how to make things happen.

They spoke from both sides of the aisle - conservative and liberal - and they pleaded that state and federal legislators quit the partisan squabbling and make the laws governing the sale of firearms much more effective. And they came with specific ideas for change. They want no person under 18 to be able to buy an AR-15, have sales of assault rifles banned altogether, and nobody under 21 should be able to buy a handgun. They want nobody with mental problems to ever be able to purchase a firearm of any sort. And they asked that the background check system be improved.

One young man lectured that the second amendment was created so the nation would have a standing Militia to keep its people safe - but that we no longer need a Militia because we have the most powerful military in the world.

The youngsters spoke up for responsible gun owners of all ages and a couple condemned the National Rifle Association and politicians who would accept donations from it. However, all of the young people who spoke were of the same mind ... kids need to feel safe in school and action to make that happen needs to be taken now - not in a week or a month or a year, but right now.

## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

Parkland can be proud of its kids. They showed greater savvy than most elected officials.

Also, yesterday ... President Trump hosted a "listening session" to hear from survivors of the Parkland shooting, their parents and representatives of several school districts, seeking suggestions on how to bring this scourge to an abrupt halt. One school administrator from Washington, DC explained how - in one of the roughest sections of the city - his kids are safer at school than on the streets ... they adopted the way the TSA screens airline passengers - with metal detectors, baggage x-rays and greeters. Improvements to background checks, age limits, and types of firearms and accessories were also scrutinized during the Presidential hearing.

There are few politicians as loved as Southern Arizona's Gabby Giffords, the one who was shot in the head January 8th, 2011 at a rally in Northwest Tucson. Giffords, a three term 8th District Congresswoman, managed not only to survive the shooting but also to come back from her injuries to a full life with her astronaut husband Mark Kelly. The prominent Democrat, under the banner of the National Democrat Party, sent out several pleas of late. Unfortunately, they only demonstrated why the DNC will have a hard row to hoe this election cycle. To quote:

Friend --

I know politicians fear the gun lobby.

But I also know that fear cannot compare to what those innocent children in Florida felt as the gunshots rang out, bullets flew through the halls of their school, and their teachers and classmates were gunned down.

That fear is nothing compared to what parents must have felt

## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

waiting in the parking lot of the high school waiting for news about their children.

Our nation's schools should be the safest spaces in our communities. They should not be the place of horror. And while I wish that the scenes from earlier this week were unthinkable or unimaginable, they are not.

We have seen them before, and we will see them again... unless our elected leaders show the courage to act -- the courage to finally take on the gun lobby.

But that will only happen when politicians realize they have more to fear from all of us together than they do from the gun lobby. And that starts with making our voices heard:

Sign my pledge: "I promise that I will Vote Courage in November and support candidates who will stand up to the gun lobby and take action to make our communities safer from gun violence."

For a long time I bought into the fiction that after a horrific shooting, there is a required period of silence -- where we aren't supposed to act. I know people felt that way after I was shot, as well.

But the truth is, the only one who benefits from that waiting period is the gun lobby -- which is why their defenders offer little more than "thoughts and prayers" for the families and condemnations for anyone who demands that our communities deserve more.

In 2018, I am going to work tirelessly to ensure we elect a Congress that is willing to stand up to the gun lobby. And I know the Democratic National Committee will do the same.

## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

Add your name. Pledge to Vote Courage in 2018:

<https://my.democrats.org/Take-the-Pledge>

Every day we fail to take action, we choose this fate. We tolerate politicians who fail to acknowledge this crisis and vote against our safety. We let our gun violence epidemic continue day after deadly day.

This cycle has to end. And it will end... with us.

All my best,

Gabby Giffords

Unfortunately, as they are prone to do, the ultra-liberal DNC leadership roped another beloved politician into pleading for support (in the form of a pledge backed by a monetary contribution) for a cause that, unlike the kids from Parkland, Florida, presents no solution to stop or reduce mass shootings in our country. Instead, it's the old Buck 'n' Wing - "Stand up to the gun lobby." There is no DNC proposition presented on exactly how to do that. The DNC just continues shooting itself in the foot by creating yet another divisive non-issue.

The Parkland kids and parents get it, though. As Linda Ellerbee used to say, "And, so it goes ..."

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Thayer's Wild Bunch V

Saturday, February 24, 2018

## TIME Magazine Extra

TIME Magazine has published a magazine this week devoted entirely to photos and stories about the Opioid scourge killing some 64,000 people every year in America. I want you to visit the TIME site and read it/look at it. Please.



[The Opioid Diaries: Inside the Epidemic That's Ravaging America](#)

Photographer James Nachtwey traveled across America to capture the devastating toll of opioid addiction  
[time.com](http://time.com)

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Monday, February 26, 2018

## Break Time for DACA

The US Senate couldn't agree on Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) so they went on a ten day break. They had voted on each of four Bills that tried to address the problem created by an Executive Order from former President **Barack Obama**. According to **Heritage.org**, "*In March 2011, Obama said that with 'respect to the notion that I can just suspend deportations through **executive order**, that's just not the case.'* In May 2011, he acknowledged that he couldn't '*just bypass Congress and change [immigration] law myself. ... That's not how a democracy works.*'" Meanwhile, DACA kids demonstrated at the Capitol, urging the Senate to do something.

As I published last week, the course is set for the DACA ship: "*They want permanent Green Cards for DACA kids going to college, being gainfully employed or serving in the American military. The President wants funding for the Border Wall promised during the election, an end to the immigrant lottery, and an end to 'chain migration' in trade for permanent permits and a 'path to US Citizenship' for up to 1.8 million DACA kids.*" The Senate couldn't find a way to put those four requirements together in a single Bill that would pass muster.

There are only two sticking points (as opposed to talking points) in the DACA quandary. A path to citizenship is seen as **Amnesty** by Conservative Republicans. Funding **The Wall** is seen by the Democrats as an unacceptable way to restrict immigration to America. They don't seem to be able to reach compromise on either issue. The Senate was unable to collect the required sixty votes to invoke cloture to cut off debate and pass a Bill ... any Bill. The only solution was suggested by the

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

President a while back - get rid of the Super-Majority requirement and let the majority agree to pass some Bills.

Earlier this year, **President Trump** issued an Executive Order that brings DACA to a halt on March 5th. That Order has been held in abeyance until the Courts have decided whether it can go forward. Two **Federal Courts** have issued Restraining Orders and the **Supreme Court** has discussed considering the issue - probably in June. Meanwhile DACA kids are left dangling.

**The House** is supposedly taking up the DACA discussion as it hammers together an **Omnibus Bill** to fund the Government through September 30th (the end of FY 2017-18). **The Sticky Wicket** is this: Conservative Republicans want DACA considered as a separate Bill and Liberal Democrats demand that DACA be included in the Omnibus Bill. On February 23rd, the President tweeted, "For those of you who are still interested, the Democrats have totally forgotten about DACA. Not a lot of interest on this subject from them!" Followed Saturday by, "Dems are no longer talking DACA! 'Out of sight, out of mind,' they say. DACA beneficiaries should not be happy. Nancy Pelosi truly doesn't care about them. Republicans stand ready to make a deal!"

Meanwhile, the Continuing Resolution to fund the Government, passed earlier this month, will expire on March 23rd. There have been five CRs this year. If Congress can't agree to pass the Omnibus Bill, there could be a sixth CR or a third shut-down. Good luck wid dat!

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Thursday, March 1, 2018

## Black Valentine

The day we celebrated Arizona's birthday this year, America received a Black Valentine that took the lives of seventeen people, mostly high school students, and it was unceremoniously delivered to Parkland, Florida.

The heinous crime was allegedly committed by a disturbed young man who had been enrolled in the **Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School's JROTC** program. **Nikolas Cruz**, 19, told police he was responsible for the shooting and added that he hid extra ammunition in his backpack and shot students in the hallways and on school grounds. The school's assistant football coach, its athletic director, a geography teacher and cross-country coach as well as 14 students were killed with an AR-15 semi-automatic rifle. At least another 14 were injured and transported to area hospitals. Cruz, who had fled on foot, was stopped by a police officer in Coral Springs - two miles from the school - and was taken into custody without incident. He was charged with 17 counts of pre-meditated murder.

The coach, who was also a security guard, received no help from the School Resource Officer, who stayed outside the freshman building where the attack took place. Sheriff's Deputy **Scot Peterson**, 54, was outside for "upwards of four minutes" while students were gunned down inside. At a news conference the Sheriff said, "What I saw [in a video of the scene] was a deputy arrive ... take up a position and he never went in." Ninth grade English teacher **Felicia Burgin** said the criticism of Peterson is unfair. Peterson wouldn't have stood a chance against the gunman in hallways that were filled with students at the time. "There is no one that is going to tell you a negative thing about Deputy Peterson," she said. Peterson,

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

who stayed on his radio during the shooting, was suspended from duty without pay and subsequently retired. There remains the question of whether he was waiting for back-up or not. After the Sheriff came under extreme scrutiny late last week and early this week, it turns out that three more of his deputies crouched behind their squad car doors to avoid being shot by Cruz, who they thought at the time was out on the school grounds.

Three of Cruz' JROTC classmates were killed in the shooting - all were shielding other students when they died. Fifteen-year-old **Peter Wang** was called a hero. A White House petition was circulated calling for him to be buried with full military honors. Wang, **Alaina Petty**, 14, and **Martin Duque**, also 14, were posthumously honored by the U.S. Army with the ROTC Medal for Heroism at their funerals. Wang was buried in his JROTC Blues uniform. On February 20th, he was awarded a posthumous admission to the United States Military Academy at **West Point**.

**President Trump** held a "listening session" February 21st that lasted nearly an hour-and-a-half with affected Parkland kids, family members and teachers. Singled out by the media were the stories told by two people at the session. The first was a traumatized teen who watched helplessly as friends were gunned down. The other was **Andrew Pollack** who lost his daughter **Meadow Pollack** to the shooter just outside the school grounds. Referring to the **University of Texas** tower shooting that took 17 lives in August of 1966, he shouted passionately. "Should have been one school shooting and we should have fixed it! And I'm pissed because my daughter I'm not going to see again." Pollack angrily exclaimed, "This stuff has to stop!"

Mr. Trump met the next day with state and local officials to discuss school safety and floated the idea that "you can't hire

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

enough security guards” but teachers could carry concealed weapons and “nobody would know who they are.” Teachers could go through “rigorous training” and could get “a little bit of a bonus.” He stressed that many teachers have military and law enforcement backgrounds, so implementing such a plan would not be difficult. There was a lot of push-back from Liberals, Teachers' Unions and the media about the President's suggestion.

Later, Trump tweeted **@realDonaldTrump** Feb 22, "I will be strongly pushing Comprehensive Background Checks with an emphasis on Mental Health. Raise age to 21 and end sale of Bump Stocks! Congress is in a mood to finally do something on this issue - I hope!" The National Rifle Association doesn't like raising the age of legal purchase to 21 and NRA Chief Wayne LaPierre said as much last weekend.

From my vantage point, it appears that "the fix" is not one thing, but rather, a number of them. Enhancing the **Background Check** system and including mental health in its data can be done administratively. Raising the age one can purchase a firearm without parental permission might be another, if mandated by the Congress. I would say the age 21 issue should be tempered to include a few exceptions: If a person has served in the military and been honorably discharged, age should be of no concern and a parental sign-off should not be necessary, just a DD-214; and if a person is married and has reached the state's statutory age of majority, that should be an exception to the age 21 requirement, also. The **ATF** already has the responsibility for regulating Bump Stocks and can easily tighten up on them under the President's direction.

"Hardening" schools across the country is another story altogether. The first question I ran across on **Facebook** was

## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

"Where is the money supposed to come from? Many low-paid teachers are never reimbursed for classroom supplies they pay for out-of-pocket. And many states have rolled back increases in funding for education. Is Congress going to underwrite the cost of ridding the country of 'Gun-Free' schools?" This, in my estimation, is an issue for state legislatures and individual school districts to address. Putting employees at risk should be a decision made as closely to those individuals as possible - and with their input.

President Trump had a bi-partisan meeting yesterday with House and Senate Leaders and the purveyors of a number of Bills in the hopper to do something about gun safety. When they were done with the publicly broadcast meeting, they parted in agreement to try to consolidate the Bills into one comprehensive batch of changes to the way guns are handled in America. Yesterday afternoon even Chuck Schumer came out in favor of the way Trump pushed for solutions.

All of the above is so much water under the bridge because, in my opinion, it's just so much political blather. When you come right down to it, it's like the elephant in the room - or the forest full of trees - we recognize neither the elephant nor the forest! As I see it, the biggest chore our country has, as it relates to all kinds of violence and unacceptable misbehavior, is to somehow induce in our children a healthy respect for authority at a very young age. And that's a tall order because today's Millennial and Gen-X moms and dads don't know how!

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**Monday, March 5, 2018**

## **Guns & Abortion**

Last week a couple of my Facebook friends got into a discussion about Guns and Abortion. Craig said "I'm not sure how people can support individual rights on the one hand yet want to limit them on the other hand." Scott blamed today's controversies on the Republicans. And it appeared to me that Craig concurred. So, I wrote the following [with editing since]:

Craig and Scott, you're both mistaken. Both of these issues are non-partisan, although, both Republicans and Democrats scrap over them all the time. Back in the day (when I was a Republican) the GOP platform was a very Conservative pro-choice and the Dems (and Liberals) were anti-abortion. Now it's all golly-wompus upside-down - Republicans are pro-life and the Dems are pro-choice.

Was it Republicans who brought the issue of abortion to the Supreme Court? No. It was Texas resident Norma McCorvey who, under the pseudonym Jane Roe, sued Dallas County District Attorney Henry Wade, a Democrat, in 1970. Roe v Wade made it all the way to the SCOTUS and on January 22nd, 1973 the High Court recognized (7-2) that the constitutional right to privacy extends to a woman's right to make her own personal medical decisions - including the decision to have an abortion without interference from politicians.

That ruling has withstood the test of time (and many court tests) over the last 45 years. McCorvey was a Republican and the ruling was handed down by a Republican-dominated (Conservative) Court ... but she changed her stance (not her Party) in 1995 after being baptized in a back-yard swimming

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

pool by Rev. Philip "Flip" Benham, the head of the anti-abortion group Operation Rescue. Although they banged heads over the issue for a long period of time, they became good friends. McCorvey hardened her conservative roots over time, and in 2008 she endorsed Ron Paul for President. She passed away in February of last year from complications of heart disease.

Although today's SCOTUS leans Conservative (5-4), it's doubtful that it would overturn Roe v Wade in the future, even with the change in stance by the Republican Party.

When I was a leader in the Gila County Dem Party some years ago I had no stance on abortion. The Party was in transition and I believed that no man (or political entity) has any business telling a woman how to make her own medical decisions. I guess that was a pro-choice stance, although I've never been in favor of abortion. I believe McCorvey thought the about the same at the time.

When it comes to guns and gun rights, I'm a staunch Conservative. The Second Amendment was penned to assure that America would always have a standing Army to protect it and its families. The Supreme Court has consistently ruled over the years that government (at all levels) has the right to place limits on the purchase of certain types of weapons (aka military) not in common use. *Common use* is the operative phrase that, incidentally, includes America's best-selling firearm, the AR-15 semi-automatic shoulder weapon.

Back in June of 2013 Pew Research published the following: "More than a third of Americans say they or someone in their household owns a gun." Today, there are by various estimates of anywhere from 270 million to 310 million guns in the United States - close to one firearm for every man, woman and child.

## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

Pew's 2017 report includes this: "Gun ownership is more common among men than women, and white men are particularly likely to be gun owners. Among those who live in rural areas, 46% say they are gun owners, compared with 28% of those who live in the suburbs and 19% in urban areas. There are also significant differences across parties, with Republican and Republican-leaning independents more than twice as likely as Democrats and those who lean Democratic to say they own a gun (44% vs. 20%)." I never thought of gun ownership as a partisan issue - not as a Republican, nor as a Democrat and certainly not today as an NPD.

So, boys, I don't believe your arguments hold water because the vast majority of Americans could care less about political stances on either issue. Perhaps because, when you come right down to it, they are individual issues and, therefore, none of our collective business!

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Thursday, March 8, 2018

## Yellow Journalism

I read three newsmagazines every day: The **DrudgeReport**, **WND** and **RealClearPolitics**. Each provides links to news stories in both conservative and liberal newspapers such as The Wall Street Journal and the New York Times. There are also links to the CNN and Fox news sites. Also on my radar is access to almost any subject on **Wikipedia**, **Snopes** and **Google**. This way I can understand the many sides of just about any issue and how a story is being reported by the Mainstream Media. Also explored are the many interesting yet untold stories that don't make national or international news. A few things have become clear (at least to me) in the way the news is delivered to the people of America. Let me elaborate.

"Yellow" journalism flourishes across our country. By this I mean that many of today's wordsmiths craft the slant of a story based on their own social and political biases and beliefs. A local newspaper allowed this kind of journalism to be published on its front page a couple of weeks ago. Although I'm not naming the paper, its editor or the author, perhaps you'll understand what I'm talking about here after you've read it.

"Jess Bolinger tendered his resignation as Globe Regional Justice Court Judge. Bollinger gave notice to Gila County on February 1; his resignation will be effective February 28.

"Calls have been made to the Bureau of Alcohol and Firearms to substantiate a source's claim the the ATF pulled Bolinger's firearms license because of alleged illegal gun sales.



## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

"It has been reported that Bolinger's pawn shop, Globe Gun & Pawn has been closed for several weeks. A hand-written sign taped on the door says, 'Business is Closed.'

"It is not yet known if Bolinger's resignation is related to his pawn shop closing or if the ATF has pulled his firearms license, but I will continue to monitor this situation and bring you more as it..."

The way the story is reported, the reader gets the impression that Bolinger was forced to resign because, allegedly, he did something wrong. Such is not the case.

**"Calls have been made"** does not confirm the allegation of illegal gun sales. **"A source's claim"** is nonsense unless the source is named as well as the result of calls, answered or not returned. Without the name or position of an individual, claims are inconclusive at best.

**"It has been reported"** also gives no named source of the **"closed for several weeks"** claim.

**"It is not yet known"** is a phoney statement meant to plant a seed. This phrase is linked to an either/or choice that only goes to reinforce the readers' misunderstanding that Bolinger did a bad thing. He did not.

The fact is that Bolinger turned 67 earlier this year and did his homework on retirement. He learned that the sooner he retired the sooner he'd be making about a hundred bucks a month more than he was making as the JP. So, he decided to retire.

The claim about the pawn shop closing has nothing to do with ATF. An elderly lady operated the shop for Bolinger when he was the JP. About a year ago, her husband became deathly ill

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

and she could not work because she was caring for him. He passed away about a month later. She never came back to work and couldn't be replaced. Bolinger decided to close then ... not a few weeks ago. He has since sold or auctioned off the majority of his stock.

It is true that the federal **Gun Control Act** (GCA) requires that people engaged in the sale of firearms be licensed by the **Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives** (ATF). Federal firearms licensees (FFL) are critical partners in promoting public safety. Although I have no first-hand information on the subject, I know that Bolinger has not given up his FFL and will not do so unless or until he has sold his personal holdings. (Let me say here that Jess is retired now and might want something to do ... could that be operating a pawn shop?)

You should be able to understand by now ... how words can be twisted to make something completely innocent appear to be on the verge of criminality. This chicken-sh\*t technique is used by many in the mainstream media - and at least one local reporter - to cast people of otherwise good character in a bad light. This is exactly why both print and electronic news is no longer trusted by a majority of Americans.

According to the **Knight Foundation**, "Results of the 2017 Gallup/Knight Foundation Survey on Trust, Media and Democracy show that most Americans believe it is now harder to be well-informed and to determine which news is accurate. They increasingly perceive the media as biased and struggle to identify objective news sources. They believe the media continue to have a critical role in our democracy but are not very positive about how the media are fulfilling that role." All it would take - I think - is for editors to require journalists to report their sources. In other words ... no sources - no story.

### **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

This story hurts me a lot. It pains me to say that a well read and well received newspaper would allow a reporter with a personal grudge against an extended family of upstanding character and service peddle unverified information that holds them in a bad light. I have to fault the publisher for not knowing of the vendetta that has been going on for more than a decade. And that hurts.

In my opinion, there is little difference between Yellow Journalism and Yellow Snow!

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Monday, March 12, 2018

## Hey, Yo! Negotiate This!

**President Trump** has held several meetings with political operatives from the US House and Senate over the last month or so, making liberals and the mainstream media crazy. The fourteen-year host of **The Apprentice** is an accomplished host and expert at leading meetings of minds. The man can charm the pants off the crustiest politicians and find common ground where anybody else could find nothing but acrimony. President Donald John Trump is perhaps the best negotiator on the planet. That must be true ... he wrote the book on it! *The Art Of The Deal*. In the book's opening lines he observes, "I don't do it for the money. I've got enough, much more than I'll ever need. I do it to do it. Deals are my art form."

In the book, Trump crowed about his negotiating prowess. "A new 727 sells for approximately \$30 million. A G-4, which is one-fourth the size, goes for about \$18 million ... I offered \$5 million, which was obviously ridiculously low. They countered at \$10 million, and at that point I knew I had a great deal, regardless of how the negotiation ended." That's how he does it.

Negotiation is the art of offering to pay something like a third of the asking price of something and settling for just over half. The only hitch is you've got to be talking with someone who is authorized to negotiate. Go into a Safeway store and try to negotiate the price of a quart of 2% milk. Now, that ain't gonna happen. But there are grocery store managers that may negotiate the price of a case of quarts because they know a certain percentage of stock will outlive its "sell by" date and have to be discarded and written off. (By the way ... a third off for milk won't work.)

## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

Same goes for cars. Want a new car? Just drop into your favorite dealership! (Now that's a humongus mistake!) Start at the dealership having the worst reputation - nice cars are one thing, but the care and feeding of one involving a crummy factory maintenance shop can be something else again!

Check out the stock and see if you can find one that meets your needs and, without discounts, your pocket-book. The price is posted on the car. Make the salesperson a proposition. (Oh, c'mon! We can be politically correct here!) Include any factory discounts and any amount you think you can get for your trade-in - if any - and say you have a budget of thus-and-so in your monthly spending plan. There will be a counter-offer not much different from the original. That's when you take your leave. Seriously. Just go! Leave! Bail! It's not Rude. It's sales!

Go visit the other dealerships. Do the same routine. And take notes. When you've exhausted all the options, review your notes. Then go back to the dealer that offered the best deal. We're not done yet. Unless you're paying cash, you need to negotiate the payments. (Forget about how many years/months are involved.) Ask yourself what you can afford. (Here's a point where you can actually reduce your monthly spending if you're sharp!) Make a proposal about twenty-five percent less than they want - and stick to it. If they want \$325 a month ... offer \$225. And settle for \$265 a month. They want to sell a car and make as much money as possible on the sale. You, on the other hand want to buy a car with as little out-of-pocket expenses as possible up front and monthly. The dealer and the banker will make the sale for you.

Once you've got 'em pinned down, go back to the next best offer. And scam them with the offer you just negotiated. You'd be surprised what kind of deal you can make with just

### **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

a little time playing the dealerships and the banks off against each other!

Perhaps now you have a working knowledge of how the big guys do it. All you need is good credit and the ability to walk away, Just remember the **Cub Scout** Motto. **Do Your Best.**

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Thursday, March 15, 2018

## Media Hype Continues

A little over a week ago the **New York Times** reported, "Texans voted on Tuesday in primary elections marked by widespread infighting. Democrats have been clamoring to flip three congressional seats in districts that Hillary Clinton won in 2016. But in recent weeks, establishment Democrats have had to grapple with progressive candidates, and far-right Republicans have set their sights and advertising dollars on moderate Republicans."

Over the last few weeks, the mainstream media has been reporting that Democrats are ramping up for big wins in Congressional races across the country. As usual of late, the media is blowing up, out of all proportion, the premise that if Dems can get their voters to turn out at the polls they'll win elections. Last week the MSM was crowing about the Yuuuge increase in registered Democrats in Texas and how that will make the difference in the 2018 elections.

Well, overall in Texas, the number of voters who actually turned out was incredible! Some 1,037,054 people voted Democrat in the U.S.Senate race while 1,541,281 voted Republican. The GOP winner with 99% reporting was **Ted Cruz** with 1,315,468. Democrat **Beto O'rourke** garnered 641,129 votes - less than half of the amount Cruz got. There are 15,249,541 registered voters in Texas. Texas doesn't register voters by political party ... they can vote in whatever primary they want - but just one! 2,578,335 voted in Texas - roughly 16% of those registered.

In the race for Governor, Democrats **Lupe Valdez** and **Andrew White** will spar in a runoff election in the Spring. Between them they got 714,953 votes. Meanwhile,

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

Republican incumbent Governor **Greg Abbott** collected some 1,390,236 votes, almost double the top two Dems.

So, that begs the question: Where were those throngs of newly registered Democrats? Were they voting for Republicans? Or just staying home with the other 84% of registered voters? There's a 1984 **Alabama** song, *"If you're gonna play in Texas, you gotta have a fiddle in the band."*

As I see it, the **DNC** has dropped the ball. They claim to have their ground game in super shape with thousands of organizers and volunteers "working hard" to turn out the vote. But apparently, that doesn't play in Texas.

There's a difference in approach between the two parties. Take fund-raising, for instance. I'm on the email donor lists of both Parties and get at least three requests per day - every day - for small donations. The Dems want between a dollar minimum to whatever you can afford. The GOP asks for \$3.00 to \$500.00. Is it any wonder the **RNC** is outperforming the DNC in fundraising? (There's an old sales saying: *"If you don't ask for what you want, you're not going to get it."*) The GOP is outperforming the Dems because it asks for three times as much! There's also a Biblical saying: *"Ask and ye shall receive."*

**BloombergPolitics** reported late in January:

"The Republican National Committee said it raised \$132.5 million during the first year of Donald Trump's presidency, a record in a non-election year. The Democratic National Committee reported \$65.1 million.

"As of Dec. 31, the RNC said it had \$38.8 million in the bank. That's almost six times more than the \$6.5 million reported by the DNC. The RNC also reported zero debt, while the DNC owes \$6.1 million."



## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

Not that it's a fact, but it looks as if Democrats don't know how to handle money and the GOP seems to be quite adept at it. I won't say that's probably why our National Debt is in the tens of Trillions of dollars. *You* might say that ... but, *I* certainly wouldn't!

It won't be until next Tuesday that we'll know for certain who won the Pennsylvania-18 election. Around 600 out of 226 thousand some-odd ballots cast separated the two candidates ... and there are over-seas military, more absentee, contested and provisional ballots left to be counted before the election is finally called officially. They said it would be a nail-biter!

According to all the well-meaning Mainstream Media pundits and so-called experts, the Democrats are headed for a massive takeover of the House - and perhaps the Senate. All they have to do is motivate their registered voters to go to the polls.

Lamb ran as a blue-dog Democrat - a conservative - and may have pulled it off! I can't say it from a fully-educated position, but I believe that Republican voters like what they have - and the direction our economy is going - so they will turn out in droves to protect their holdings. When push comes to shove in the ballot boxes, I'm predicting a shift toward the right - again - in November. In the house, the GOP should hold its majority. In the Senate, I'm looking for the GOP to maintain its majority or, at the very least keep it at 50 Republicans, 48 Democrats and 2 Independents.

That all remains to be seen.

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Monday, March 19, 2018

## Home of B Movies

Back in the day there was a lot of money made from the "B" movies. These were low-budget films aimed at broad audiences that would pay to see an adventure pitting a good guy against the forces of evil. Viewers knew what was coming next, no matter the plot. It was formula film. There was always a fierce villain, a shrieking maiden and a hero coming to save the day!

There seems to be an analogy to those days happening right before our eyes today. It's called television news. All the parts are there: A fierce villain like **Donald Trump**, **Chuck Schumer**, **Charles Manson** or **Ted Bundy**; a shrieking maiden in the form of **DACA kids**, **Nancy Pelosi**, **#MeToo** ladies or holders of **401k** retirement accounts; and an American hero like **Joe Biden**, **Joe the Plumber** (Sam Wurzelbacher), **Bill Gates** or US Airways Captain "Sully" **Sullenberger**.

It really doesn't matter who the players happen to be ... you can count on them being on the small screen day after day, ad infinitum, presented by the same video "journalists" on CNN, MSNBC, FNC, CNBC, ABC and CBS. And the scenario is always the same.

TV News viewers today have the same deal as they used to have at the movies - they know what's coming up. Tune in Rachel Maddow on MSNBC and you can always count on her picking on the villainous Donald Trump. Whoever has the first-out-of-the-shute exclusive story on a Friday can count on it lasting the weekend and well into Monday's news cycle. Lazy journalists won't dig for a better story so viewers have to watch the same ol' same all weekend and then have it for

### **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

breakfast on Monday. And, it's all "B" grade stuff, which is what makes it so maddening!

Wouldn't you love it if a big plane crashed into a power plant, there was massive flooding in the Mojave desert, a monster gas explosion in downtown Portland, 2000 people stranded in a white-out snowstorm in the middle of nowhere and a plague spreading in someplace like New Jersey? On a Friday! Wow!

'Round the clock coverage with news crews on site with blow-by-blow commentary from passers-by and the truck driver who just happened to see the whole thing! Even with all that going on, you can count on the reports being boring and continuous "B" grade.

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Thursday, March 22, 2018

## Today's Word: Pragmatism

A piece published by conservative columnist **Charles Krauthammer** caught my eye the other day. It was about why he appreciates President **Donald J Trump**. Now, hold on, my more liberal friends. This is good stuff! (I try to give you the REALLY good stuff.) Some excerpts from it:

"Definition: A pragmatist is someone who is practical and focused on reaching a goal. A pragmatist usually has a straightforward, matter-of-fact approach and doesn't let emotion distract him or her.

"I neither view nor do I believe Trump views himself as a conservative. It [is] my opinion that Trump is a pragmatist. He sees a problem and understands it must be fixed. He doesn't see the problem as liberal or conservative, he sees it only as a problem. That is a quality that should be admired and applauded, not condemned. But I get ahead of myself.

"Viewing problems from a Liberal perspective has resulted in the creation of more problems, more entitlement programs, more victims, more government, more political correctness, and more attacks on the working class in all economic strata.

"Viewing things according to the so-called Republican conservative perspective has brought continued spending and globalism to the detriment of American interests and well being, denial of what the real problems are, weak, ineffective, milquetoast, leadership that amounts to Barney Fife Deputy Sheriff, appeasement oriented and afraid of its own

## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

shadow. In brief, it has brought liberal ideology with a pachyderm as a mascot juxtaposed to the ass of the Democrat Party.

"Immigration isn't a Republican problem, it isn't a Liberal problem, it is a problem that threatens the very fabric and infrastructure of America. It demands a pragmatic approach not an approach that is intended to appease one group or another.

"Successful businessmen ... like Trump who have weathered the changing tides of economic reality understand what is necessary to make business work, and they, unlike both sides of the political aisle, know that if something doesn't work, you don't continue trying to make it work hoping that at some point it will.

"As a pragmatist, Donald Trump hasn't made wild pie-in-the-sky promises of a cell phone in every pocket, free college tuition, and a \$15 hour minimum wage for working the drive-through at Carl's Hamburgers.

"You may not like Donald Trump, but I suspect that the reason some people do not like him is because:

"(1) he is antithetical to the "good old boy" method of brokering backroom deals that fatten the coffers of politicians;

"(2) they are unaccustomed to hearing a president speak who is unencumbered by the financial shackles of those who he owes vis-a-vis donations;

"(3) he is someone who is free of idiomatic political ideology;

"(4) he says what he is thinking, is unapologetic for his outspoken thoughts, speaks very straightforward

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

using everyday language that can be understood by all (and is offensive to some who dislike him anyway) making him a great communicator, for the most part, does what he says he will do and;

"(5) he is someone who understands that it takes more than hollow promises and political correctness to make America great again.

"I submit that a pragmatist is just what America needs right now. People are quick to confuse and despise confidence as arrogance, but that is common among those who have never accomplished anything in their lives.

"Donald Trump put his total financial empire at risk in running for president and certainly did not need or possibly even want the job; that says it all. He wants success for the U.S. and her citizens because he loves his country!"

Dr. Krauthammer was paralyzed from the waist down from a swimming accident during his first year in medical school and in the many years since has earned the admiration of his peers and a reputation as a great practitioner of logic and common sense. After recovering from the trauma of his accident, he returned to med school and went on to graduate from **Harvard School of Medicine** to become an MD in Psychology. He eventually abandoned his medical practice and turned to political commentary. The man knows that of which he speaks. His own pragmatism has made him a shining example, for anyone with doubts or disabilities, of what any individual can accomplish. Today he writes political columns for the **Washington Post** and the **Weekly Standard** and appears regularly on **Fox News**.

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

Last August Krauthammer disappeared from his panel post on **Special Report** with **Bret Baier**. He sent Baier - a good friend - a note in mid-February updating his condition after serious surgery. "Things are progressing steadily slower than I would like, but steadily," the Krauthammer message said. "Still I wish I could give you - and myself - a better idea of when this marathon ends. I am sure it is strange for your viewers that a regular panelist should disappear for months without warning and without any real explanation. After my surgery, there were serious complications that took several months to stabilize," the message continued. "My improvement has finally allowed me to concentrate on intensive rehabilitation to recover my strength and stamina. This too is progressing well but as usual is intense and slow. Nonetheless, I am determined to make it back. I've got to - I can't let you guys have all the fun."

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Monday, March 26, 2018

## Blood of the Lamb

**Connor Lamb** won the special election earlier this month for the Pennsylvania District 18 House Seat by 627 votes. There remained about 375 uncounted provisional, military and overseas ballots to be counted after the final election count was reported, not enough to change the results. However, Lamb will have to run again later this year in the mid-term election for the new court-reorganized Congressional District.

Lamb's win pointed the way for Dems to win House and Senate seats. Unfortunately, most of the Democrat base along the Left and East coasts is not enamored of Lamb's conservatism. He won for two reasons. First, he's a well-spoken, very attractive man with an un-mistakable air of confidence. Second, his campaign focused on the very things that won the same area of the state for President **Donald Trump**.

In Illinois last Tuesday the battle lines were drawn again. Seven-term Democratic Congressman **Dan Lipinski** faced off with new-comer **Marie Newman**, whose liberal views and major endorsements created a mind-bending race, testing how strong Chicago's political influence has spread. Today, it appears that voters in Illinois are comfortable with the status-quo. Lipinski , leading by 2.4% (some 2124 votes), floated across the finish line like a true blue dog, leaving the Left to curse the darkness surrounding the old Liberal face of the Democrat Party. The Lipinski Primary win virtually guarantees him re-election in his District in November because Republican challenger, **Arthur Jones**, is a neo-Nazi Holocaust denier disavowed by the GOP.



## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

The **Bernie Sanders** and **Hillary Clinton** factions of the Democrat Party want no part of any Trump-like platform. As I pointed out last week, using quotes from **Charles Krauthammer**, Trump is a pragmatist. That scares the dickens out of today's Democrats because he's not a Conservative and he's not a Liberal. Instead, he concentrates on solving problems.

Democrat Lamb won in PA-18 because he effectively emulated the qualities that won Trump the election in 2016. And Connor Lamb was a far better candidate than Republican Rick Saccone. It's hard to imagine the Left Wing of the Democrat Party supporting candidates that espouse such pseudo-conservative pragmatism as Lamb so effectively displayed. Furthermore, where are the Dems going to find the new candidates that can attract majority votes. In other words, where can they expect to find the new blood of the Lamb?

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Thursday, March 29, 2018

## Boot Camp

*A little over a week ago I posted the basis of this story on Facebook.*

I believe Marine Corps Boot Camp is the best way to fix [our drug] problem. I'll tell you why:

The main thing during the first week or so of Marine Corps Boot Camp is uncertainty - nobody but the Drill Instructor knows what comes next. It's scary! You learn what it takes to keep the DI happy. You start to learn how to work in concert with others. And while a universal hatred of your DI is slowly shared with your peers, you develop a tremendous amount confidence. By the time you finish Boot Camp, you realize that the DI is not a monster to be hated, but rather a respected Brother Marine who inculcated in you how to be a motivated, confident, responsible individual as well as a team player.

A Marine Platoon becomes like one big monster, capable of doing whatever the "team" needs to make happen. This is called *esprit d' corps* - literally, "the spirit of the body." Not much can stop it and it grows in each individual until it's permanently instilled in each as one. This is what Boot Camp is all about: *ex multis - unum*. From the many - one. Each Boot finishes with a single mind that blends with his/her peers. That's why the Corps' Motto is *Semper Fideles* - Always Faithful. At this point in time, nothing is more important to the Boot Camp graduate than the ability to accomplish any task - as a group or individually. That's why *Semper Fi* is unique to Marines - fidelity to one's Brothers goes without saying. And that's why we proclaim, "Once a Marine - always a Marine."

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

There is something universal to be said about *the self-contained unit* - a single Marine. A druggie who completes Marine Corps Boot Camp won't need drugs for the rest of his/her life! I say, instead of prison, give them Boot Camp! I don't know very many screwed-up Marines - some have problems with PTSD, but very few. That's because they were trained to take care of themselves as a group and as individuals - collective units and self-contained units.

Back in the day the courts used to give young offenders a choice: Go to jail or join the Marines. Others were partial to the Navy or the Army or the Air Force. The whole idea worked then and it can work now: Young folks who can't behave need to be taught. Boot Camp is the answer.

Today, prison doesn't cut it. So, how great it would be to meet some squared-away druggies, given the choice at a very difficult second chance in life - instead of continuing living as a sick criminal. I say send them to MCRD San Diego, CA or Parris Island, SC instead of prison! Some might actually want to enlist after getting clean.

I'll leave you to enjoy two Marine Corps videos from YouTube:

The lady DIs at Parris Island on day one -  
[https://youtu.be/LVeY\\_RxsvJ4](https://youtu.be/LVeY_RxsvJ4) 3:14

And the bad-ass dudes at San Diego -  
<https://youtu.be/XkfOebBYm-U> 1:05:15

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**Sunday, April 1, 2018**

## **Happy Easter**

My wife Claudette and I were chatting about the meaning of Easter last night. We talked about how the Bible says things happened back then (depending on which version you were reading.) But we agreed that the story was pretty much the same no matter which one you read.

The whole deal is about Jesus giving up his life so that all of us - no matter how vile - would be forgiven our sins when we finally stood in our place in line at the Pearly Gates. Can you understand that? Jesus Christ, the son of God, went through all that nonsense and pain and degradation, knowing that he would be crucified and die so that all of us then, and here in the future, and forever will be forgiven of our sins, no matter how gruesome, now and forever - and have place in heaven with the Holy Trinity.

Now, you gotta admit, that's some heavy stuff!

There are parts of Christianity that believe all that is true ... but only if you believe that Christ is the only living God ... and that if you believe in Him you're saved from the fires of Hell. Others have different ways of portraying the death of Jesus Christ as the salvation of humanity forever. The fact is that all Christians and most Jews celebrate Easter as the reason humanity survives.

Today, let's all remember why we're here and thank God for it. Happy Easter, my friends.

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Monday, April 2, 2018

## Marbles in the Overhead

There's been a lot of goofy talk about guns and gun control for the last month or so. It's been making me crazy! So crazy that I'm pitching a handful of marbles in the overhead to get the good Captain's attention.

Would someone kindly tell me what keeping our kids safe in school has to do with gun control? **LA Times** writer **Curtis Lee** wrote in January that "489 people were killed in unintentional shootings in the U.S. in 2015, the most recent year for which data is available. That was down from 824 deaths in 1999, according to the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**." A misleading statistic from **CNN** claims that "about 1500 people are accidentally killed by firearms every year." When you throw in school shootings the count doesn't rise significantly. This doesn't compare at all with the carnage that happens on America's streets, roads, highways and Interstate Highways. The **National Safety Council** estimated that 40,100 people were killed in 2017 accidents. So why the big deal about gun control to keep our kids safe at school?

So, here it is, troops ... Kids in our schools need to feel safe from:

- \* Bullies
- \* Gangs
- \* Lunch-money thieves
- \* Knives
- \* Baseball Bats
- \* Sexual predators\* Stolen pistols, BB Guns and Pellet Guns
- \* Explosives, and caustic liquids
- \* Swords\* Long guns

In that order, mind you!

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

How come, compared to all that, there's this big rush to change gun laws? Why can't we protect our kids (at whatever grade level) the same way we protect our malls and grocery stores, our airports and bus stations, our concert venues and sports facilities? When are our elected officials going to start paying attention to common sense instead of the loudest squeaker of the wheels?

A recent **Fox News** poll shows a majority of people support a number of gun control measures. The poll - unveiled on ***Fox News Sunday*** on Palm Sunday - shows 53 percent of the people interviewed say "protecting citizens from gun violence" is more important than "protecting the rights of citizens to own guns."

The breakdown for support on individual gun control measures is as follows:

91% support universal background checks, "including those buying at gun shows, private sales."

84% support mandatory mental health checks on "all gun buyers."

72% support raising the minimum legal age to 21.

69% support putting armed guards in schools.

60% support a ban on "assault rifles and semi-automatic weapons."

37% support the proposal touted by the President to have teachers and school officials armed.

According to the poll, a majority of people consider it important for Congress to pass gun control legislation. However, 43% say it's "not at all" likely that they will actually get it done.

The Fox poll shows clearly that a majority of the people interviewed have no clue about the reasons the founding fathers included the Second Amendment to the U S

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

Constitution. Let me reiterate from an earlier column: "*The Second Amendment was penned to assure that America would always have a standing Army to protect it and its families. The Supreme Court has consistently ruled over the years that government (at all levels) has the right to place limits on the purchase of certain types of weapons (aka military) not in common use. Common use is the operative phrase that, incidentally, includes [one of] America's best-selling firearms, the AR-15 semi-automatic shoulder weapon.*"

Whoever it was at Fox News that suggested outlawing semi-automatic *weapons* is misinformed. Most of the handguns sold these days are semi-automatic - like the **Glock** 9mm and the **Walther** 22LR. These are the weapons that protect their carriers at home. These are the center of the on-going battle for open- and concealed-carry laws - like those in Florida and Arizona that have been largely responsible for over-all reductions in violent crime in those and other states as well. That's mainly true because the crooks can't tell who's packin' any more!

I'm all for background checks that include mental health, an "age of majority" provision except for written parental or spousal permission, armed SROs (school resource officers), trained and certified school staff concealed carriers, nationwide open- and concealed-carry reciprocity, and outlawing the sale of automatic military weapons to civilians.

I would include semi-automatic military weapons except that the **M1 Garand** 30 calibre semi-automatic shoulder weapon is not only a revered classic left over from the Korean War but also a great deer rifle. Also included in that class would be the notorious **AK-47**, developed in the Soviet Union by **Mikhail Kalashnikov**, and the **AR-15** made in America by **Anderson, Smith & Wesson, Armalite, Daniel, Colt, Rock River** and **Sig Sauer**.

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

Texas Attorney General **Ken Paxton** wrote the following for **The Hill** on March 24th:

"Texas allows school districts to approve 'marshals' or 'guardians' as the last line of defense against a shooter. Under this program, faculty members volunteer to keep a firearm within reach in case the unthinkable happens. They undergo mental health screenings and rigorous firearm safety training - in some cases they are held to a higher standard than police officers.

"In an active shooter situation, law enforcement takes roughly three minutes to respond on a good day (through no fault of their own). It's disturbing to consider the damage that can be inflicted in that amount of time. Only school marshals - who, contrary to the media portrayal, represent a select few trained and capable staff members - can deliver response times measured in seconds rather than minutes.

"Coverage in the aftermath of Parkland has focused disproportionately on the AR-15. The gun has been established as a symbol of mass shootings, a device designed for wanton destruction. What use, we are repeatedly asked, could private citizens have for an AR-15? Texans like myself have been frustrated by this collective amnesia. On November 5, 2017, a private citizen heroically stopped the fleeing shooter of the First Baptist Church in Sutherland Springs using an AR-15.

"Those willing to kill the innocent in cold blood will hardly be hindered by a new gun regulation. ... it defies logic that they will respect a gun law. It stands to reason, therefore, that schools should be made a hard target, just like airports, stadiums and government buildings. ... student safety shouldn't have to hinge on the intractable gridlock of Washington politics.

"A sign outside of **Argyle High School**, which has opted into the program, reads "***Please be aware that the staff at Argyle are armed and may use whatever force is necessary to protect our students.***" Is a would-be shooter more likely to



## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

target such a school or a "gun-free zone?" The answer is obvious."

**David Unsworth** wrote the following in the **Washington Examiner** last Tuesday:

"Heart disease kills an estimated 614,348 per year. Cancer comes in second at 591,699 deaths per year. Chronic lower respiratory diseases (including emphysema, bronchitis, and asthma) are third, at 147,101 people a year. Accidents kill about 136,000 per year. Strokes kill 133,033 ...

"Needless to say, these figures vastly exceed the death toll from school shootings, mass shootings, and gun violence in general. A typical year in the US usually records 33,000 gun-related deaths, two-thirds of which are suicides. The 12,000 gun-related homicides a year are, unsurprisingly, heavily concentrated in inner-city neighborhoods afflicted by drugs, gangs, and crime ...

"So, yes, angry young men who shoot up schools are a serious problem. Yet, the idea that they pose the gravest clear and present danger to the safety of America is preposterous. The American public should really be directing its attention to ensuring that we live healthier lives; not worrying about the astronomical odds of being involved in a school shooting. When it comes to tragically preventable deaths, one can make a compelling case that smoking, soft drinks, refined sugars, fast food, processed food, office work, and Netflix are far more dangerous to our well-being than guns or school shooters. Our public policy should be driven by data and facts, not opinions and hysteria."

Look, people, I'm out of marbles ... hope you have some of your own to send to Washington!

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Thursday, April 5, 2018

## Show Me Your Budget

They were all cranky about the Omnibus Bill a while back. And President Trump was about as cranky as he could be in public, considering all the three- and four-letter words he could use.

This is what I want to hear very soon from my President to the Congress:

"I want a complete 2018-19 one-year budget assembled under Regular Order before the end of September - with all the bells and whistles - like you guys are supposed to do every year ... not a Continuing Resolution. You need to get off your butts and do your job! Take this to the bank: I will not sign another Continuing Resolution and I will not sign another Omnibus Bill. This country is supposed to run like a business ... and it's time we made that happen again. If you send me anything other than a for-real, in-the-trenches, American budget for 2018-19, I will veto it. That will shutter this government and you people will take the heat until you've created a real honest-to-goodness Budget for the United States of America."

The first year a President is in office the country operates under the previous year's budget. President Trump's first year was under the Obama 2016-17 budget - or rather the series of Congressional Continuing Resolutions. The last full budget was the 2007-08 Bill. 2008-09 was passed by the Congress in April of 2009 after a series of Continuing Resolutions. There has not been a budget created by the Congress since.

But, according to **Pew Research**, "in the four decades since the current system for budgeting and spending tax dollars has been in effect, Congress has managed to pass all its required

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

appropriations measures on time only four times: in fiscal 1977 (the first full fiscal year under the current system), 1989, 1995 and 1997.

"The 'standard' appropriations process, as laid out in the **1974 Congressional Budget Act**, goes like this: After the president submits his budget proposal, the House and Senate adopt their own budget resolution. While it doesn't have the force of law, the budget resolution sets out the overall spending framework for the coming fiscal year and serves to guide lawmakers as they address specific tax and spending decisions.

"Next, Congress is supposed to pass a series of separate bills funding various agencies and activities of the federal government. (For the past decade, the number of spending bills has stood at 12, one for each subcommittee of the House and Senate appropriations committees.) The deadline for doing that is Oct. 1, when the new fiscal year starts. But since 1997, Congress has never passed more than a third of its regular appropriations bills on time, and usually has done considerably less than that: For instance, for six straight years (fiscal 2011 through 2016), not a single spending bill was passed by Oct. 1.

"And rather than pass stand-alone spending bills as it's supposed to, Congress has increasingly used omnibus bills (which bundle several appropriations measures into a single, giant law) and full-year CRs to resolve annual spending disputes. The first such omnibus measure was passed in 1950 as a one-off experiment, and omnibus spending bills were used a couple of times in the mid-1980s. However, they've become much more frequent in the past two decades: In each of the past seven fiscal years, in fact, all or nearly all of the regular appropriations bills were combined into such after-deadline package deals.

## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

"If a deadline passes without either a new set of spending bills or another CR to fund the government, operations considered nonessential would be forced to shut down. In a lengthy shutdown, as occurred in October 2013, applications for things like drilling permits, small-business loans and export licenses might not be processed; museums and national parks might have to close; government statistical reports could be delayed; and hundreds of thousands of federal workers could be furloughed. (During the 2013 shutdown, some 800,000 federal workers were furloughed while 1.3 million others had to stay on the job without knowing when they'd be paid.) But mail would still be delivered, Social Security payments would be made, and workers deemed essential to protecting life or property (such as air traffic controllers and personnel at veterans' hospitals) would still get paid."

President Trump and the OMB submitted the FY2018-19 Budget Request and Analysis to the Congress on February 12th. On Easter Sunday April 1st (April Fool's Day) the Senate Budget Committee was to submit its "concurrent resolution," a precursor to Congress's budget resolution. I can't say for sure, but I'd bet money they were fashionably late rather than early! April 15th is the deadline for Congress to pass its budget resolution to guide decision-making for the twelve appropriation subcommittees, which begin hearings on specific proposals that can last into the summer. Is there any chance at all that this bunch of ne'er-do-wells will Git-R-Done by September 30th? That, my friends, remains to be seen ...

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**Monday, April 9, 2018**

## **Who Cares?**

One thing I learned as a broadcast DeeJay and journalist ... the bottom line is "Who cares?" Perhaps that's why the news media is so screwed up today. They're not asking "Who cares?"

No, really ... do you know anybody who lost sleep because eleven or twelve years ago Donald J. Trump had a fling with some pornstar who, until lately, nobody had ever heard of? Who cares?

Where on earth did the idea come from that the White House is a shambles because the President keeps firing people? This President will not put up with Department Heads, employees and/or advisors who take issue with him publicly or through "leaks" to the MSM. It seems clear that he has been slowly building a very strong team of advisors and Cabinet Members. This guy likes people on his team who will disagree with him, but who understand how to keep those opinions inside the Oval Office. He likes his people to be cut from the same pragmatic cloth as him. Does this mean that, as the MSM has been headlining, Trump's White House is falling apart? I mean, Jeeze! Who cares?

Then, there was the New Orleans Saints Cheerleader squawking a while back about equality - they're sexually discriminating between men and women as football players and cheerleaders. OMG! Really? Is this actually national news on the FOX News Channel? Holy Crap! According to the most trusted news source in 2018, this is primetime news! Oh, hurry! Let's all skittle off and hide in our safe space! Man ... who cares?

## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

We didn't get to see the story (that finally showed up as an aside in TIME magazine) that goes with 40 school kids and their teachers, along with another 35 or 40 people, who perished in a movie theatre fire in Siberia because the emergency exits were locked and nobody was allowed to try to save them. Yeah, well ... who cares?

Perhaps the Mainstream Media has become jaded because today's journalists were raised with the likes of Trailer Trash Shows by Maury Povich and Jerry Springer and shock jock Howard Stern. They (and their bosses) may actually believe that trashy stories and made-up nonsense actually titillate their audiences when, in reality, it makes them distrust the MSM. But then, who cares?

When you're on the air playing those "black biscuits labeled for listening" you can chit-chat over the music before the singing starts. It's a cool challenge - but you'd better not step on the singer! That was one of the traits of a great DeeJay - being able to perfectly time the chatter right up to the singer. In the middle of my Broadcast career (about a hundred years ago!) somebody figured out that using a stopwatch to time the "entro" of a song and then putting that time, in seconds, on the record or CD label was a great crutch. But the big deal was not so much the chatter or the timing ... it was being able to do all that and have a clear answer for "Who cares?"

I write these twice-a-week pieces because it's fun and challenging. And, perhaps, because I'm one of those old freaks left over from rock 'n' roll radio who really does care. So, who cares? Me.

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Thursday, April 12, 2018

## Go Ahead - Make My Day

Guns and gun control have been center-stage for more than a month, now. Municipalities, Counties, States and the Congress have been gnashing their teeth over ways to curtail gun violence. There have been a lot of proposals, including one from a former US Supreme Court Justice suggesting that the Second Amendment be jettisoned.

The number two amendment to the US Constitution guarantees that all citizens have the right to keep and bear arms to protect themselves and their families - AND to assure that the country has the means to defend itself from enemies, both foreign and domestic. The Founding Fathers of our country had the presence of mind to assure that all of its citizens were able to protect themselves from the bad guys that threaten their security. Take the likes of MS-13, the burglar at the door, the thief in the night, the drive-by shooter, the school-ground nutcase with an AR-15, and even the tyranny that could be foisted on the country by an overbearing Government.

There is a **YouTube** video making the rounds that explains in clear and convincing words what elected officials across the country have been doing to us. **Mark Robinson** of Greensboro City, North Carolina spoke during an April 3rd hearing at a meeting of his City Council. They were considering actions to stop gun violence. Robinson was there to represent the majority of residents and he didn't mince words. *"What I want to know is, when are you all going to start standing up for the majority? And here is who the majority is. I'm the majority. I'm a law abiding citizen who's never shot anybody."*

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

According to the local **CBS** affiliate, his comments are racking up millions of views, and he is gaining a national spotlight that he never expected. *"I really didn't. I thought maybe somebody might play it on the local news, and somebody would see me at work and say I saw you on television, but I had no idea it would turn into what it has turned into ..."* Robinson [said] originally he didn't even plan to speak at the meeting, plus he doesn't even own a gun. *"I don't have a lawyer either, but I would hate to wake up tomorrow and find out my right to counsel has been taken away. I'm passionate about the United States constitution."* His voice has meant a lot to people across the country, and their words have meant a lot to him. *"I've never had a chance to make an impact on this many people. I've had people call from all across the country, saying 'thank you,' telling me 'hey, you said what I feel,' and it's just been a very, very humbling experience,"* [he] said.

Here is the link to his remarks on YouTube:  
[https://youtu.be/vo\\_X53dNTS8](https://youtu.be/vo_X53dNTS8) Enjoy.

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Monday, April 16, 2018

## Only Interpretations

I watched an interesting presentation on **Fox Business News** the other day. The contention was that the 2018 mid-term election results will depend entirely on whether more Trump Haters turn out than Trump Lovers. That remains to be seen. There is little doubt that **President Donald Trump** will have an effect on almost all of the elections ... one way or another. There was another contention that the Democrats are going to be more motivated during this election cycle and that Republicans are more difficult to motivate. That, too, remains to be seen.

The thing is this: Both Parties - together - do not represent two-thirds of the electorate. There is this big bunch of Independent voters out there that represents a bigger bloc than either the GOP or the Democrats. So, based on the first premise above, how much of the total electorate hates Trump and how much loves him? Damned if I know! And I don't believe that anybody knows because of the polls. Look at [https://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/latest\\_polls/](https://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/latest_polls/) and then tell me what poll is even close! They're all over the map! Just like before the 2016 elections! They're still sampling the Left and East coast mega-cities and ignoring middle-America.

It's Spring in the United States of America and soon we'll be subjected to all the usual balderdash that comes with the bi-annual election cycle. Good grief, Charley Brown, the Primaries are a ways off and the majority of candidates have yet to file their papers. Sure, there are a number of Special Elections between now and the Primaries, but at this point they are just fodder for the Mainstream Media.

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

So, who are the Trump Haters? Left-wing Democrats, Occupy Democrats, Progressives, Feminists, tree-huggers and Antifa.

Who are the Trump Lovers? Mainstream Republicans, the newly-employed, small businesses, farmers, growers and folks who work with their hands.

Who are the middle-ground? Independents, rust-belt employees, Union members, miners, manufacturing plant workers and the elderly.

Mind you, these are just my observations based on a brain full of mush! Between the opinions of bunches of on-line magazines, cable news, folks at Fry's and WalMart and over a thousand Facebook friends, my mind is a continual mess trying to sort out the truth. Two people keep me on track, however: **John Lennon**, who said "*The more I see, the less I know for sure.*" And **Friedrich Nietzsche**, who declared "*There are no facts, only interpretations.*"

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Thursday, April 19, 2018

## Strike Benefits

How long can a strike go on before the costs exceed the benefits? Good question, especially for teachers who have been striking or threatening to strike for better wages. For the sake of discussion, let's assume that a tenured teacher is paid \$52,000 a year. Weekly pay is \$1,000.

Here's the math to determine the amount of pay given up while on strike:

1 wk - loss = 1000

2 wk - loss = 2000

3 wk - loss = 3000

4 wk - loss = 4000

5 wk - loss = 5000

6 wk - loss = 6000

Just one week off the job for a 10% raise only nets about 8.1%. This is called the Law of Diminishing Returns! Do the math:

$52,000 + 5,200 (10\%) = 57,200 - 1,000 \text{ (strike cost)} = \$56,200$ . So, a one week strike costs the teacher \$1,000 in lost pay, but it's successful in getting the raise. But considering the cost, the increase in pay over time is just \$4,200, an increase of roughly 8.1%. The strike loss is not made up until the new contract goes into effect ... and then it's only in monthly increments.

Striking 5 weeks for a 10% raise to \$57,200 will net only \$200 in extra pay. Do the math:

$52,000 + 5,200 (10\%) = 57,200 - 5,000 \text{ (strike cost)} = \$52,200$ .

The math is the same for six weeks, but a 10% raise won't cover the cost of being on strike.

## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

Striking 6 weeks for a 10% raise to 57,200 will create a net loss of \$800. Again, do the math:

$52,000 + 5,200 (10\%) = 57,200 - 6,000 (\text{strike cost}) = \$51,200.$

Some Unions give their members a stipend when on the picket line, but rarely enough to make up the loss in pay by not being at work.

Strikers going for a 20% increase as a bargaining tool are more likely to get a raise, but only if they strike for a week as a last resort. And there is always the danger of being fired for not showing up for work. That's not unprecedented.

Remember when President Reagan fired 11,000 Air Traffic Controllers who refused to show up for work on August 5th, 1981. When they went on strike he hired new ones. The skies were not crippled, as the PATCO Union had predicted. Things just slowed down a little as new employees came on board. PATCO was decertified in October of that year. The odd thing about that episode in American history is Reagan had been President of SAG/AFTRA (the Screen Actors Guild), one of the most powerful Unions in the country, from 1946 to 1960!

Union or not - contract or not - if the boss orders you to go back to work and you don't show up, you can be fired. Keep that in mind when bargaining for a raise.

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

**Monday, April 23, 2018**

## **Stupid Stories**

One of the things that makes journalism (ok, old-style journalism) fun ... is the art of finding and reporting stupid stories. Here are a few examples that were out there recently.

There was this bank-robber who waited patiently in line to speak with a teller. (I swear, I heard this on the car radio!) When the robber got to window at the 17th Street Bank in Brooklyn, he whipped out a hand-printed note demanding all the money in the teller's drawer. It was January 25th. The teller very forcefully told the bank-robber there was no way she was giving up any money from her drawer so he might as well just leave. He snatched the note back, stormed out the front door, jumped in the waiting get-away car and has not been heard from since!

Then, there was the one about the two Florida kids, Rojelio Sebastian, 14, and Miguel Garcia, 12, who 'jacked the car belonging to a Domino's Pizza delivery man, only to fail because it didn't have an automatic transmission and neither one of them could drive a stick! The two were charged with grand theft auto and possession of burglary tools.

Look, it's only April, and yet political stories (albeit the same ones over and over and over) about the coming November Democrat Party rout of the US House and America's Governorships are all over the news. I'd like to get away from that nonsensical biased BS until after the Primaries, say September. Don't know about you, but I'd like to hold on to my Summer. Are there any goofy political stories out there? Ummmmm ...

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

Texas' **Joe Barton** claimed that carbon dioxide "is not a pollutant" because "I am creating it as I talk to you. It's in your **Coca-Cola**, your **Dr Pepper**, your **Perrier Water**." But later he backed away from his claim with, "If anything I said this morning has been misconstrued to the opposite effect, I want to apologize for that misconstrued misconception."

Staten Islander Rep **Michael Grimm**, responding to a reporter who had asked him about a federal investigation into his campaign-finance practices, exclaimed, "You ever do that to me again, I'll throw you off this fu\*\*ing balcony.... I'll break you in half. Like a boy." After all the ensuing news coverage, he was re-elected by a thirteen-point margin!

November 30th, 2014 **GQ Magazine** posted on its website the following proclamation: "The **Supreme Court** has yet to give a definitive ruling on the constitutionality of the Constitution."

Another Texas Congressional Rep, **Louie Gohmert**, speaking against federal funds to protect endangered species that included some rare breeds of dogs and cats in China, stated that "There's no assurance that if we did that, we wouldn't end up with moo goo dog pan or moo goo cat pan."

On February 12th of 2002, US Defense Secretary **Donald Rumsfeld**, exclaimed, "Reports that say something hasn't happened are always interesting to me, because as we know, there are known knowns; there are things we know we know. We also know there are known unknowns; that is to say we know there are some things we do not know. But there are also unknown unknowns – the ones we don't know we don't know."

In my book, the classic goofy saying happened in March of 2008 when Vice President **Dick Cheney** was being

### **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

interviewed by an **ABC** News correspondent. After she cited a poll showing that most Americans didn't believe the Iraq War was worth fighting, he came back with, "So?"

Finally, it was Former Washington, D.C. mayor **Marion Barry**, who exclaimed on March 24th, 1989, in a speech before the **National Press Club**, "Outside of the killings, DC has one of the lowest crime rates in the country."

I can't wait 'til September, can you?

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**Thursday, April 26, 2018**

## **About Teachers**

My mom was a teacher. Her first job was at the Quarter-Circle-V-Bar ranch in Mayer, AZ. My dad was into recreation and was the Rec Director at the VA in Tucson as well as in Petaluma and Monterey, CA. He went into the education business as an Athletic Coach and Math teacher at Pacific Grove High School. Mom taught at Fremont Junior High near Monterey. Both Mom and Pop earned their Teaching Certificates at NAU in Flagstaff, AZ. Neither earned a tremendous amount of money from their work, but they earned tenure and went to Summer College at NAU to get the annual raises that came with it.

I asked my Dad one day why my Mom wasn't making as much money as he was ... and he replied, "Education." Summer School for teachers is a must if they expect to better their station in life. After a move to Tucson, Pop took a year off to collect the information he needed for his Doctorate. He earned his Doctorate at the UofA. He was a Dorm Resident at the UofA at the time to help make ends meet. He explained that educators don't make as much money as other professionals. He said they are devoted to their craft and to their kids. "There is nothing more rewarding than meeting a kid, who used to be in your class, all grown up and successful with a family and a great job," he said.

He used to grouse about "those jerks" trying to organize teachers into Unions, taking their minds away from their jobs and stirring them up about how "poor" they were. He explained that teachers are held in such high esteem that, if they like, can run in the highest echelons of society, among the movers and shakers, the rich and famous.



## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

In fact he was right - at the time - being a Freemason, member of the BPOE and one of the most expert elbow-rubbers I ever knew! Mom was a member of Beta Sigma Phi ( $B\Sigma\Phi$ ), a high-class snooty Women's Sorority, and she hosted regular Progressive Dinners with other professionals. (Beta Sigma Phi, by the way, hosts the annual "Cow Plop Festival" at the Roosevelt Resort here in central Arizona. How's that for snooty!)

Both Mom and Dad were volunteers in the Scouting movement. We boys were in Cubs and Boy Scouts and my sister was a Brownie and Girl Scout, as I recall. We were enrolled in Junior Assemblies and Cotillion to learn civility and manners in a formal dance environment. Brother Bill and I joined DeMolay, the Masonic Fraternity for boys, and sister Mandy joined the Job's Daughters, the Masonic Sorority. I think if our folks had not been teachers, we would have missed out of some pretty cool stuff! The thing is my sister Mandy, my brother Bill and I would probably not have learned the finer trappings of life if it weren't for our folks being educators.

The striking teachers across the country these days have no idea the power they could wield if they just did their jobs and integrated into the world of the hoity-toity. Elbow-rubbers get a lot more done than people on a picket line. Getting whipped up into a frenzy by **Red for Ed** and **Arizona Educators United** is a waste of everybody's time and money. I'd like to remind our teachers, walking out or on strike, of the hard truth that any **Steelworker**, **Teamster** or **IBEW** member knows for a fact: You will never, ever get your money back!

Accept your roll as community leaders and educators, not activists. Write letters, speak up about things that can make a difference, ask your School Boards for raises, lobby the Legislature for more adequate funding for education. But,

### **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

knock off the threats - they only leave a bad taste in the public's mouth and turn them against you. Your strength is found molding those heads full of mush into well-educated, well-heeled future contributors to our American society. So, knock off the ill-mannered, ill-informed rabble-rousing and Get with the Program!

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Monday, April 30, 2018

## Critical Thinking

The other day I was day-dreaming, just sitting in my living room, mind wandering. Heck, the older you get the easier it is to let your mind wander. I hope I don't get lost one of these days! Letting one's mind wander is an easy way to strengthen the muscles in the mind that do the heavy-lifting involved in critical thinking. Critical thinking is one of the greatest tools to sort out the pros and cons of all sorts of discussions - science, religion, education, politics, even cooking!.

So, exactly what is critical thinking? We read about it. We have heard famous orators speak about it. All great scientists swear by it. The best educators try to teach young people from a very early age how to think critically. But somehow, the vast majority of humans have skipped over or ignored the benefits of this skill. Those who cannot think critically can be swayed by just about any smooth-talker - be it sales, politics, religion, science, education - non-critical thinkers are like cattle - commonly referred to on our social media as "sheeple."

According to [www.criticalthinking.org](http://www.criticalthinking.org) , "Everyone thinks. It is our nature to do so. But much of our thinking, left to itself, is biased, distorted, partial, uninformed, or downright prejudiced. Yet, the quality of our life and that of what we produce, make, or build depends precisely on the quality of our thought. Shoddy thinking is costly, both in money and in quality of life. Excellence in thought, however, must be systematically cultivated.

"Critical thinking is that mode of thinking - about any subject, content, or problem - in which the thinker improves the quality of his or her thinking by skillfully taking charge of the

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

structures inherent in thinking and imposing intellectual standards upon them.

"Critical thinking is, in short, self-directed, self-disciplined, self-monitored, and self-corrective thinking. It presupposes assent to rigorous standards of excellence and mindful command of their use. It entails effective communication and problem solving abilities and a commitment to overcome our native egocentrism and sociocentrism."

Autonomy and critical thinking are linked ... at least in my mind. It's very difficult to work autonomously because most employers don't want their employees wandering off on their own trying to find better ways to do stuff - mostly because it usually costs money rather than creating new income or reducing costs.

I was fortunate in my broadcast engineering career. As Chief Engineer at a number of radio stations I was free to come up with new ideas. I re-built two stations from the ground up and incorporated new and unique ways of doing things that made it easier for staff members (and deejays) to do their jobs. There were advances in broadcast engineering and technical advances involved that actually made it into the print media at the time.

At **Hughes Aircraft** in Tucson (now **Raytheon**) I was given my head to create new ways to save money in the manufacturing process. I saved the company over two million dollars by finding better ways to build its products. Without autonomy and the critical thinking that comes with it, that would have never happened.

**James Fallows**, a national correspondent for *The Atlantic*, penned the following for the May 2018 issue: "The challenge of journalism is always to make what's important interesting.

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

This is hard enough in the best of circumstances. It's harder when the reality you're conveying involves a mixture of developments both encouraging and alarming, rather than a stark exposé or a success story. It's harder still when the reality involves TV and video. And it is nearly impossible in the case of cable-news channels, above all politically driven ones like **Fox**. What 24-hour cable news [CNN] introduced and Fox perfected in the modern news consciousness is an unending stream of horrors from ... somewhere else. The natural result of well-meaning liberal media is thus a kind of pity for the heartland, and of conservative media, a survivalist fear about what people Out There are trying to get away with."

The problems I grapple with on a daily basis usually involve critical thinking - or lack of it - on somebody's part. My columns are the result of daily research, delving into the truth of the stuff that's out there, and trying to sort out real facts. They also involve some sort of entwined intuition based on decades of critical thinking, the purpose of which is to ferret out the things we can all accept as gospel. (Sometimes, to be honest, this just makes my brain hurt!)

The next time you have an opportunity to word-wrestle with a friend (or political foe) remember to step back some and do your critical thinking. Try to find the middle-ground ... together.

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

**Thursday, May 3, 2018**

## **Voter Registration Down**

Democrats are having a hard time in Arizona, despite what their top leadership is feeding to the lyin' Mainstream Media. Total voter registration in Arizona since October last year is down.

At the start of the 2017-18 Fiscal Year Arizona's total voter registration stood at 3,655,316. As of March 1st this year it stood at 3,610,377, down some 44,939. The worst hit by the decline was the Democrat Party which lost 16,365 compared to a GOP loss of just 9,754. Actually, that isn't true: Independent registration declined by a whopping 28,820, more than the Republicans and Democrats combined!

So, the question is ... where did all those voters go? Did 44,939 voters die since October? Death purges voter registration in Arizona. The County Health Department notifies the State Health Department of the death - which then notifies the State Department - which purges the name from the State voter records and then notifies the County Recorder, who purges the name from the County records. Did some 45,000 folks pass since last October?

Could be ... November, December, January and February are the months when older folks pass on as a result of illness exacerbated by the Winter season - many die from reactions to Flu and Pneumonia shots every year. Is it possible that almost 45,000 people died for a number of reasons, including old age and reactions to annual shots or changes in the seasons? Nope!

We checked with the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) and found that only 27,378 people died in all of

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

Arizona between October 1st, 2017 and March 31st this year. So, of the 44,939 voters whose registration was cancelled, what happened to the remaining 17,561? Were all of those voters purged from the rolls? If so, was it because they failed to vote in the 2016 Presidential election? Well, in Arizona, voter registration can be changed from active to inactive when a person fails to vote in a Presidential election, as they can in some other states.

Here is some background information courtesy of ***MotherJones.com***: "**Willie Miller** was born in 1948 in Noxubee County, Mississippi, an agricultural community along the state's eastern border named after a Choctaw word that translates roughly to "stinks like fish." As a teenager, she saw the civil rights movement transform the region, where previously no African Americans had been registered to vote. In 2000, Miller, who is black, was elected to the Noxubee County Election Commission, and she's been reelected every four years since. Today, the county of 11,000 is more than 70 percent African American and has a poverty rate nearly three times the national average. *'You got a few that's gonna crawl out of the cotton fields and go on and do something else with their lives, and most of them are gonna leave,'* Miller says. For those who stay, Miller does her best to make sure they're able to vote.

"In June 2014, Miller and her four fellow election commissioners received a letter threatening legal action if they did not purge voters from the rolls. The letter came from the American Civil Rights Union (ACRU), a Virginia-based group that has fashioned itself in recent years as a conservative counterpart to the ACLU. The ACRU requested that the commissioners reduce the number of registered voters by the midterm elections that fall because, it claimed, there were more people registered than there were voting-age citizens in the county. The commissioners wanted to fight

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

back, but lacking the funds to hire an attorney, they decided not to respond and waited to see what would happen next.

"The letter they had received was one of many that the ACUR had started sending to small, rural counties across Mississippi, Texas, Kentucky, Alabama, and **Arizona** the year before. These letters were part of a legal campaign spearheaded by three former Justice Department officials from the **George W. Bush** administration to purge voter rolls across the country. The effort began in remote areas with few resources for legal defense, but recently it's expanded to include population centers in key swing states. Voting rights advocates worry that the campaign is targeting minorities and likely Democratic voters."

Could it be that Arizona took four years to comply with the 2014 ACUR demand letter? I couldn't find any other specific information about that in Arizona, but my friend **Sadie Jo Bingham**, Gila County, AZ Recorder, gave me a few other reasons a voter's registration can be removed or status changed. Anyone convicted of a felony has certain rights removed including the right to possess a deadly weapon and the right to vote. When a person becomes incapable of caring for oneself and property, that person's voter registration can be ordered deleted by a court. And when a person moves to a new address and fails to respond to queries from the Recorder their status can be changed to inactive. By the way, Sadie Jo told me that Gila County's voter rolls have grown, "In October 2017 there were 30,554 registered voters and as of March 2018 there were 30,839."

So, could there be some 17,561 Arizona residents who fall into those assorted categories? Probably. Consider that in November of 2016 there were a total of 221,170 felons in Arizona. I couldn't locate the information on how many were convicted between October 2017 and March 2018, but I'd bet



## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

it's a significant portion of that 17,561. And we do have a lot of elderly folks in our state ... slowly aging and losing their abilities to care for themselves. In addition there are plenty of people in Arizona who move and fail to respond to their Registrar's overtures.

As of March 1st, 2018 here are the numbers:

Independents/others:	$1,223,219 + 31,072 + 6,782 =$ 1,261,073 (Down 28,820)
Republicans:	1,258,994 (Down 9,754)
Democrats:	1,090,310 (Down 16,365)
Total Registered Voters	3,610,377 (Down 44,939)

The 2018 election cycle could get very interesting when you stop to consider the number of registered Democrats, Republicans and Independents and the huge voter registration decline in the fourth quarter of 2017 and the first quarter of this year. Brace yourselves, troops!

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

**Monday, May 7, 2018**

## **Wash It - It'll Rain!**

Sources close to the National Weather Service have confirmed the old wives' tale that if you wash your car it will certainly rain within a coupla days! Now, that may seem like an outrageous claim, but actually ... it's true. It's a statement to which I can personally attest! No, really!

Just the other day (actually, Monday a week ago, I got out my canister of quarters and went to the car wash across the street from the Circle-K and got to it. First, it was soapy water on the top, then the hood and trunk, followed by the sides and the tires. That task completed, the hood was opened and I cleaned the dust out of the engine compartment. That was when the beeps started from the coin drop - so another coupla bucks-worth of quarters went in and the thing was set to rinse. The hood was shut, the bugs removed from the front-end and mirrors; then the whole thing was rinsed. A quick change to "no-spot rinse" and the time ran out just as it was completed. I write these columns four to six days before they are published - you need to know this. Today is Wednesday, May 2nd. I washed the car on Monday. It rained today, leaving water (dust) spots all over the car and streaks on the windows. That's how it works, folks!

I can attest to the fact that after I have washed the car there is every chance for a disaster. It's true!

It was mid-October 1962 in Salem, Oregon, where Claudette and I lived during my stay at KBZY, the rock radio station where I pulled the mid-day shift. I washed our car on Saturday, October 10th. It was a jaunty-looking Dodge Lancer - a fire-engine red, slant-six, four-on-the-floor, four-door coupe. (That's it and herself pictured next page...)

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V



At any rate, Monday October 12th was Columbus day in Salem. It was raining and the wind was blowing. We take a look at **Wikipedia** for the details: "The **Columbus Day Storm of 1962** (also known as the **Big Blow**, and originally as **Typhoon Freda**) was a Pacific Northwest windstorm that struck the West Coast of Canada and the Pacific Northwest coast of the United States on October 12, 1962. It is considered the benchmark of extratropical wind storms. The storm ranks among the most intense to strike the region since at least 1948, likely since the January 9, 1880 '**Great Gale**' and snowstorm. The storm is a contender for the title of most powerful extratropical cyclone recorded in the U.S. in the 20th century; with respect to wind velocity, it is unmatched by the March 1993 '**Storm of the Century**' and the '1991 Halloween Nor'easter' ('**The Perfect Storm**'). The system brought strong winds to the Pacific Northwest and southwest Canada, and was linked to 46 fatalities in the northwest and Northern California resulting from heavy rains and mudslides." That storm blew down the brick wall of a downtown Salem parking garage, killing a nearby pedestrian, and it devastated the airport, tearing private planes from their moorings and throwing them across the tarmac, trashing them like they were little toys. A wind gust of 90 mph was observed there. Again, from Wikipedia: "In less than 12

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

hours, more than 11 billion board feet of timber was blown down in northern California, Oregon and Washington combined; some estimates put it at 15 billion board feet"

I failed to note earlier that I had done one other thing, which I believe exacerbated the wrath of the Weather Gods. On the radio Saturday, when I gave the weather report, I sang a few seconds of the **Hopi Snake (Rain) Dance** song, something I had learned as a kid while visiting Hopi Tribal **Medicine-man Emery Dennis** and **Chief Tewaquaptewa**, both family friends living on Third Mesa at Old Oraibi, AZ.

"The most widely publicized of Hopi rituals was the Snake Dance, held annually in late August, during which the performers dance with live snakes in their mouths. The dance is thought to have originated as a water ceremony because snakes were the traditional guardians of springs. Today, it is primarily a rain ceremony and to honor Hopi ancestors. The tribe regards snakes as their 'brothers' and rely on them to carry their prayers for rain to the gods and spirits of their ancestors." This from the **Legends of America** website. "Before the dance begins the participants take an emetic (probably a sedative herb) which is not an anti-venom and then dance with the snakes in their mouths. There is usually an Antelope Priest in attendance who helps with the dance, sometimes stroking the snakes with a feather or supporting their weight. The dance includes swaying, rattles, a guttural chant and circling of the plaza with snakes. After the dance the snakes are released in the four directions to carry the prayers of the dancers. Although part of the Snake Dance is performed for the tribe, this is only a portion of a lengthy ceremony, most of which is conducted privately in kivas." More at <https://www.legendsofamerica.com/na-dances/3/> Ask any Hopi and the truth will out ... the Snake Dance works! It always rains within three days of its performance!

## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

When we were very young the Thayer family used to visit Emery Dennis and The Chief every Summer. Very little might be a better word! One year - my brother Bill must have been about three at the time - old friend Medicine Man Emery asked my Dad if it would be ok to let Billy participate in the ceremony. Pop said "Sure," much to Mom's dismay, and Billy was whisked away into the kiva. He was stripped of all but his shorts, painted up with proper colors and dressed in the proper attire. Mom was beside herself, not knowing what was happening to her baby! When the dance began the dancers came out of the kiva ... each with a snake in his mouth ... including little Billy! He had a big Antelope Priest guiding him and hovering over him, using an Eagle feather to distract the snake - yes, it was a Rattler ... a big one! My dad turned to Mom and said, "Ruth ... not a peep." When the dance was done, Billy and his new buddies returned to the kiva and the snakes were taken to the four winds and let loose by four holy men who dusted the wind with yellow powder - a traditional blessing by many tribes.

Since the days of our Summer visits to Old Oriabi, the Hopi Tribe doesn't welcome the public to their Snake Dances anymore. White folks, since that time so long ago, had showed no respect for tribal customs and were forever taking photographs of the Hopi people. Tradition has it that if you take a picture of an Indian - not just a Hopi - you take a piece of his soul. That no longer happens because menacing Hopi teenagers, protecting tradition, see to it!

It didn't dawn on me that the Hopi song could have increased the strength of the storm in 1962.

Over two decades later, something similar happened. We had moved to Tucson AZ in 1971 with our two kids - John, 2 years and 7 months old, and Janet, 3 months. In late September and early October of 1983, five days of almost

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

continuous rain caused radical flooding in the area, pushing the Rillito and Santa Cruz rivers to their limits, flooding nearby Marana and destroying property in Tucson. The photo below (courtesy the **Arizona Daily Star**) shows how devastating the Rillito River flooding became. That's a house, folks - slipping away as the river eats its banks!



Between 6 ½ and 7 ½ inches of rain fell over those five days. I was working at the University of Arizona at the time and I wondered if the disaster was my fault. After all, I had washed the car before the rains came and when I heard there were going to be a few thunderstorms, I broke into the Hopi Snake Dance Song in the elevator on the way up to the third floor of the **UofA** Physics Building. Little did I know!

If you want it to rain, just wash the car. If you want a disaster, learn the Hopi Snake Dance Song and sing it while you wash the car!

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Thursday, May 10, 2018

## Are the Dems Doomed?

Contrary to what you may have been led to believe, the Democrats are having a hard time this election cycle. I went browsing the internet and came up with a number of examples of this phenomenon that has Dems across the country confused.

Let me interject here that an old Democrat friend has begged out of receiving my twice-weekly screeds because (I think) I may be being too hard on Democrats! Let me say in defense of my prose, that Democrats are being hard on themselves. Let me elaborate via recent quotes from the Mainstream Media ...

**Politico** reports:

"... specific grievances with **Trump** include racism, sexism, personal corruption, climate denial, right-wing judges, tax cuts for the rich ... Dems want to ban assault weapons, undo voting restrictions, are against fracking and for-profit schools, for gay marriage, a \$15-an-hour minimum wage, reform of education and protection of the environment.

"... the midterm elections will help indicate whether more Americans share [**Adele**] **Graham**'s or Trump's [political views]. 'We need normal. We need reasonable. We need steady,' [she] says. 'I'm not so sure we need theatrical. We've got plenty of theatrical right now.'"

According to **WND**:

"Sen. **Bernie Sanders**, I-Vt., who narrowly lost the 2016 Democratic Party nomination to **Hillary Clinton**, is now pushing a plan to provide a government job to every American, along with taxpayer-funded health care and

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

college tuition. While conservatives recoil at such an agenda, a new Rasmussen poll shows 46 percent of Americans like the Sanders plan."

### **New York Times:**

"Brad Zeigler, 68, a retired [Warren County, Il police chief.] feels politically homeless ... 'The Republicans are about money and big business and the Democrats have lost their way. They are not taking care of that core group they know is out there.'"

### **CNN:**

"The biggest challenge for Democrats is to avoid letting anti-Trump fervor drown out their own message. To be sure, attacking the President is often an important part of wave elections. Though they already had control of the House in 1982, Democrats expanded their majority by urging voters to take a stand against the Reagan Revolution. In 1994, **Newt Gingrich** used President **Bill Clinton** -- and his failed health care plan -- as a foil to excite voters to turn out in the election. **Nancy Pelosi** returned the favor in 2006 as Democrats were determined to send a message to President **George W. Bush**, just as Tea Party Republicans did in 2010 when they took back the House. ... But in each of those cases the anger toward the incumbent president was combined with a program or agenda.

"... Democrats are making a big political bet if they think that the news over Russia, payments to porn stars and ongoing lies will be enough to bring voters out to the polls. This is especially risky given that unemployment is now at historically low 3.9% and Trump might be on the cusp of helping to orchestrate a major peace deal between North and South Korea.



## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

"... But taking advantage of the political window that Trump has created for Democrats won't be an easy victory. Democrats must avoid two big pitfalls - failing to deliver a compelling agenda and dampening their own turnout [through] excessively hard-line tactics in the primaries. And that could leave Republicans in much better shape than they otherwise would be in the age of Trump."

Pollster and Political Columnist **Dick Morris**:

"The Democrats ... have bet all their marbles on **Mueller** and his probe and on [Stormy] **Daniels**. They just do not seem to realize that, however glittering the headlines may be, and however titillating the story line may appear, the Daniels scandal is just not a credible basis for a party to use in winning an election. It's fool's gold."

Former Speaker of the House **Newt Gingrich**:

"Democrats unanimously voted against the tax bill. As the economy improves, they look more and more like the party of food stamps, welfare, and higher taxes."

I try to be balanced in my approach to national politics, so I could care less what the two national parties are up to. The majority in America (not Republicans and certainly not Democrats) will be calling the shots in the not so distant future. The elected officials in the House and Senate won't be going away very soon, but they will be paying much more attention to middle America and much less to the whackos on the Left and East Coasts as we approach the '20s.

The core of America is confused by things like teen-age girls joining the Boy Scouts. They don't understand why herds of women gather to protest Heaven-knows-what while wearing pink knitted caps. And they don't get why Kanye West is vilified for standing up for Conservative black folks who have been "*mentally imprisoned for ... 400 years*." When did

### **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

it become wrong for a man to open a door for a woman? What has become of America's work ethic ... and are the Millennials reviving it? What ever happened to pragmatism and common sense? These are issues America's Democrats need to address if they expect to take back the House and Senate.

As I see it, America is yearning for sanity.

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Monday, May 14, 2018

## Scouts?

New York Times May 22, 2015

"**Robert M. Gates**, the president of the **Boy Scouts of America**, called ... for an end to the organization's ban on openly gay leaders. The group was already facing state civil rights investigations in New York and Colorado and the looming threat of lawsuits that the Scouts seemed almost certain to lose.

"In his powerful speech to the Scouts' national meeting in Atlanta, Mr. Gates, the former secretary of defense, said that unexpectedly swift changes in society as well as swelling dissent among local Scout councils required bold action. But he also warned bluntly that the Boy Scouts' exclusionary rule left them vulnerable to painful court-ordered change ...

"Even as he acts to head off legal challenges and dissent from more liberal scouting groups, Mr. Gates must also placate the large share of troops run by church groups, some of which are strongly opposed to allowing openly gay leaders."

The Hill May 9, 2018

"The **Mormon** church will sever all ties with Boy Scouts of America at the end of next year.

"The **Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints** released a joint statement with the scouting organization Tuesday night announcing its decision to end the 105-year relationship.

"'We have jointly determined that, effective on December 31, 2019, the church will conclude its relationship as a chartered organization with all Scouting programs around the world,' the statement read.

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

"The decision comes a week after the scouting organization changed the name of its signature group from Boy Scouts to **Scouts USA**.

"The move to a gender-neutral name arrived on the heels of the organization's decision to accept girls into its ranks next year.

"Girls already started enrolling as Cub Scouts this year, and more than 3,000 have reportedly joined so far.

"We wanted to land on something that evokes the past but also conveys the inclusive nature of the program going forward,' Chief Scout Executive **Mike Surbaugh** said of the name change. 'We're trying to find the right way to say we're here for both young men and young women.'"

### From **Wikipedia**:

" ... The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was the first partner to sponsor Scouting in the United States, adopting the program in 1913 as part of its Mutual Improvement Association program for young men. ... The BSA holds a congressional charter under **Title 36 of the United States Code**, which means that it is one of the comparatively rare 'Title 36' corporations in the United States. ... The 1916 statute of incorporation established this institution among a small number of other patriotic and national organizations which are similarly chartered, such as the **Girl Scouts of the USA**, the **Civil Air Patrol**, the **American Legion**, the **Red Cross**, **Little League Baseball**, and the **National Academy of Sciences**. The federal incorporation was originally construed primarily as an honor; however, it does grant the chartered organization some special privileges and rights, including freedom from antitrust and monopoly

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

regulation and complete control over the organization's symbols and insignia ..."

Gender discrimination was charged against the Boy Scouts of America some time back for not allowing girls to join the young mens' international organization. The threat of legal action in Federal Court, charging illegal hiring practices, brought the quandary to a head.

This stuff makes my head want to explode! The Boy Scouts already had two co-ed factions ... Venturing and Sea Scouts - both organization for boys and girls ages 14 to 21 and 13-year-olds who have at least finished 8th grade. Good grief! There is no way to please Liberals when it comes to political correctness. They will not be happy until they've destroyed what Scouting has been about since the days of its founder Lord Robert Baden-Powell.

When one understands the Cub Scout Motto ***Do Your Best***, one can connect with First Lady **Melania Trump**'s recently introduced program for kids to ***Be Best***. And the Boy Scout Oath: *On my honor I will do my best to do my duty to God and my country and to obey the Scout Law; to help other people at all times; to keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight*. That last part - ***morally straight*** - is what makes LBGTQ practitioners, feminists and liberals crazy! How can any Boy Scouting member, past or present, be comfortable with girls and openly gay people being allowed by law into their male environment? They started at the Cub Scout level and won't be happy until the reference to God in the Scout Law is removed.

The Scout Law? **A Scout is:**

**TRUSTWORTHY.** Tell the truth and keep promises. People can depend on you.

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

**LOYAL.** Show that you care about your family, friends, Scout leaders, school, and country.

**HELPFUL.** Volunteer to help others without expecting a reward.

**FRIENDLY.** Be a friend to everyone, even people who are very different from you.

**COURTEOUS.** Be polite to everyone and always use good manners.

**KIND.** Treat others as you want to be treated. Never harm or kill any living thing without good reason.

**OBEDIENT.** Follow the rules of your family, school, and pack. Obey the laws of your community and country.

**CHEERFUL.** Look for the bright side of life. Cheerfully do tasks that come your way. Try to help others be happy.

**THRIFTY.** Work to pay your own way. Try not to be wasteful. Use time, food, supplies, and natural resources wisely.

**BRAVE.** Face difficult situations even when you feel afraid. Do what you think is right despite what others might be doing or saying.

**CLEAN.** Keep your body and mind fit . Help keep your home and community clean.

**REVERENT.** Be reverent toward God. Be faithful in your religious duties. Respect the beliefs of others.

I earned my rank of **Eagle Scout** back in 1956. Boy Scout Troop 2 in Monterey, California was supported by the soldiers, officers and staff at the Presidio. **R D "Lefty" Sproull**, renowned **KU** basketball, baseball and track star from 1913 to 1915, was our Scoutmaster. He was one of the first to receive the highest honor in Scouting, the **Silver Beaver** Award, for his world-wide involvement in the Scouting movement. Lefty kept a thumb-stick, used as a hiking aid, upon which he burned the names of each of his Eagle Scouts. During the Eagle Scout investiture ceremony he would recite - from memory, using the Thumbstick as a

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

guide - the history of each of his Eagle Scouts, when they earned their distinguished rank, tell of their endeavors and where they were living at that time. Without exception, each of those young men went on to pursue productive lives and great careers. Lefty stayed in touch with all of his Eagle Scouts until his death in August of 1981.

I can't feature 11 to 18 year-old girls trekking from **Laguna Seca Trailhead** near Greenfield in the Salinas Valley through the hot and dry **Los Padres Wilderness** the 25.4 miles to **Barlow Flat** east of **Big Sur**. It takes a 40-pound back pack, hiking boots, strong legs and indisputable character to make that hike in one day. It's a grueling 12-hour trek, but we boys pulled it off! The hard part of this scenario is if girls had come along it would have been impossible for boys to be boys out in the boonies. No skinny-dipping, no pranks, etc. What they'll be allowed to do in 2020, I can't imagine! Can you?

It seems these days that girls want to be boys and boys want to be girls, what with gender-neutral bathrooms and all. Oh, for the good old days! Back then, you knew you were in the wrong restroom when, depending on your sex, there was a couch in the corner or a urinal on the wall!

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Thursday, May 17, 2018

## It Doesn't Matter?

**Washington Post** - May 14, 2018: "**Mercedes Schlapp** reportedly said at a recent White House meeting that 'I stand with **Kelly Sadler**' - referring to the White House aide who said of Sen. **John McCain**'s opposition to CIA nominee **Gina Haspel** that 'it doesn't matter, he's dying anyway.'"

I have to take issue with the reporting of this sad taste of today's Americana. What do you mean, "It doesn't matter?" When a guy is down, you don't stomp him, for God's sake! The worst part about this debacle though, is not what Sadler said, but that it did not stay in the Oval Office.

The Oval Office - or anywhere the President holds a confidential meeting for that matter - is (or should be) like Las Vegas: *What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas*. The fact that there is a mouse in the corner, taking copious notes and reporting to the mainstream media is absolutely unconscionable.

The whole idea of having closed-door meetings anywhere is so people can feel free to speak their minds with out fear of reprisal. When I was the Leader of a **Hughes Aircraft** Focus Team, that was one of the prime tenets, making it possible to place all ideas and suggestions on the table, making for open and frank discussions.

The foundation of a Focus Team is **Kaisen** - **CMI**, continuous, measurable improvement - a long-term approach to work that systematically seeks to achieve small, incremental changes in processes in order to improve efficiency and quality. The sanctity of the information - no matter how scurrilous - in such meetings, goes without



## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

saying. How else could participants feel secure in sharing possibly controversial ideas? This is the principle on which meetings with the President are based.

It doesn't matter so much that Mrs Kelly Riddell Sadler made a crude observation in a closed meeting with the President. It does matter that her faith in her remarks remaining private and secure was dashed by the schmuck who leaked them to the public.

Our President speaks his mind openly in public and private. Apparently, his advisors, associates and confidants don't have that freedom, especially when there are blockheads lurking in every corner, willing to rat-out anyone who would speak freely.

I believe the President should clean house of anyone whose integrity and ability to keep confidences is in even the remotest question. Kelly Sadler spoke freely and in confidence, and was stabbed in the back by a slimy creep that belongs in - instead of the White House - the dankest, darkest corner of some forgotten dungeon in the deepest part of South America's Amazon Basin for the rest of eternity.

In my humble estimation, anyone who would betray a trust is the lowest form of scum on the face of the earth. Whether you hate him or support him, our President deserves much better. So does my still-living-with-cancer Arizona Senator and American hero John McCain.

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**Monday, May 21, 2018**

## **Keeping House**

Pretty much every morning about a quarter-after-six, the cat jumps up on our California King, stomps around and over me, peers in my face and peeps little peeps as if to ask, "Hey, dad ... are you awake yet?" I open one eye, peer back at him, and say quietly, "Not yet, pal." That's when he licks one of my fingers and then nestles down for a quick nap. I, too, get a nap ... until 7:15 ... then it's ...

### **Breakfast!!!**

I get up, clad only in my skivvies, make my way to the pantry, dig out a can of cat food, open it up and put half of it in the kitty dish. Someone who shall remain nameless has jumped up on the barstool that we keep in the kitchen and has been peeping while watching this operation in focused anticipation. When it's ready, he jumps down and I put it next to his crunchies bowl. Well, that part's done.

Next it's pill time. Claudette is pretty much homebound, a victim of COPD, kidney disease, arthritis and a brain injury several decades ago. She takes four courses of medication each day and she's also on O2 twenty-four-seven, supplied by a machine feeding a 40-foot hose attached to the cannula that goes over her ears and into her nose. She is not totally incapacitated and uses a bright blue walker to get around the house. In the car is a candy-apple-red walker with a seat and basket so she can shop if she wants. (An Oxygen bottle goes along in the basket.) There are five pills in the first course at 7:30 mornings. After that, Claudette gets up and dresses herself while I get on my drawers, a shirt for the day and socks - the shoes can wait until I to go outside.

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

I turn on the computer, make a cup of coffee and settle in to read the news. First, it's the email - of which I get a lot. Both the Republicans and the Democrats send tons of the stuff. So do candidates and pundits from all over the country. After culling and reading the email, which includes **Fox News**, **RightSide Alerts**, **Dick Morris**, the **White House** and the weekly *Ground Game* from the **Boston Globe**, it's off to the **Drudge Report**, **WND** and **RealClearPolitics**. This usually takes me to half-passed nine, time for Claudette's second course of meds.

At 9:30 my bride gets seven pills, 8 oz of **Ensure**, a banana and a cup of strong coffee. She also huffs two puffs of **Symbicort**. (Interesting thing about the coffee: I read a scientific journal report on a study in England in which some eighty people with a cross-section of ages had their brains scanned to establish a baseline, then were fed a pill equivalent to two cups of coffee. They were then re-scanned to detect any differences in brain activity. Without exception, they all showed increased activity. I tried the coffee - using one cup of espresso - and Claudette's attention, sense of humor and ability to communicate increased a bunch!) By the time 9:30 has rolled around, himself - the cat whose name is Cinnamon - has been sequestered under the bed, where he will stay until around three in the afternoon - time for cat crunchies and a sip of water - and then he goes outside until late in the evening.

Around noon, I usually take a jaunt into town, via the mailbox, to "pick up a few things" - as the ladies are inclined to say - and to hit the **RecCenter** for some exercise. Claudette likes it that I can get out. Wednesday afternoons after lunch is golf. There's also a golf tournament on Friday mornings that I attend regularly. This is also a good time to hit the bank or take coloreds to the laundry. The whites are done another day in the coin-op machines close to home. I try to alternate

## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

colored and white wash weeks because we have enough underwear and socks to go three weeks at a time without running out. Noon is also a good time to break out the vacuum cleaner and feather-duster every now and then.

Mid-afternoon comes and it's time to start thinking about the evening meal. I hit the computer for the menu, which is prepared bi-weekly, and start collecting the stuff that will become dinner. (Yeah, I do the cooking, too!) Plus, it's time for Claudette's snack and 3:00 o'clock meds. If they're not done yet, I do the dishes and put them away. Now, you gotta remember, I'm retired and not bound to a strict schedule to do anything at any particular time on any particular day ... except medication.

Usually about 4:30, I start on dinner, planning to serve it sometime around 5:30 or 6:00. A few days ago I cooked Welsh Rarebit (with pear salad) and not long ago I actually put together a stunning couple of awesome Indian Tacos! There are recipes for this stuff on the website [www.tedthayer.com](http://www.tedthayer.com). Meanwhile ... Claudette is either glued to the tube or napping!

After dinner I might do the dishes ... or not! We usually watch TV until bedtime, 9-ish and time for my girl's last course of meds. Cinnamon may or may not have come inside by then.

Just so you know, I was short of material for this edition so Claudette suggested that I write about what I do when not reading or writing. She said the "girls" might appreciate it that some ol' geezer out here in the sticks might actually know how to keep house! So, there ya go ...

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Thursday, May 24, 2018

## One Thing

Perhaps the greatest movie line of all time was uttered by **Jack Palance** toward the end of the 1991 hit comedy film, **City Slickers**. Curly Washburn advised his wet-behind-the-ears cohort Mitch Robbins (played by **Billy Crystal**) what it's all about ...

"One Thing," he said.

We all have a penchant for looking for the meaning of Life, the Universe and Everything. It's the very reason **Douglas Adams'** wrote his literary trilogy "*The Hitch-hiker's Guide to the Galaxy*", "*The Restaurant at the End of The Universe*" and "*We Thank You For All the Fish*." Palance put it all in perspective with, "One Thing."

They're riding along in the middle of nowhere when ...

Curly pulls up his horse and asks Mitch, "*Do you know what the secret of life is?*"

Mitch replies, "*No. What?*"

"*This*," Curly says, holding up his index finger.

Mitch asks, "*Your finger?*"

Curly: "*One thing. Just one thing. You stick to that and everything else don't mean shit.*"

Mitch: "*That's great, but what's the one thing?*"

Curly: "*That's what you've got to figure out.*"

That "One Thing" depends on who is doing the figuring. An agnostic, who may not believe in a higher power, might well find it in one's own strength of character. If one is a Christian Scientist, it might be self-control. To a Southern Baptist, it's more than likely accepting Jesus as your Personal Saviour. To a devout Catholic, it might be a belief in the grace and

## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

forgiveness of Mother Mary. To Hindus and Buddhists, it could be the belief that dharma is one's lifelong task - and that karma constitutes the steps that one has to take to complete the task. For just about everyone, it's the "One Thing" that keeps them going through thick and thin, valiantly fighting through all of life's trials and tribulations and helps them weather the many vicissitudes and inclemencies of its seasons.

It's that "One Thing" that makes a cop a cop, a fireman a fireman, an EMT an EMT, a Marine a Marine, and anyone else who feels a great purpose in life. It's that magic fire in the belly of each of the great politicians, philosophers, teachers, scientists, preachers, poets, writers and inventors. It's the grist in the mill of life that makes all things work properly. When you know that "One Thing" ... all is right with the world.

The Secret of Life? Watch: <https://youtu.be/-1bTe54j6PQ>

Remember ... just One Thing.

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Monday, May 28, 2018

## Kitties and Bunnies

There was a time almost five decades ago when our cat - **Tiger** - came in through our Tucson townhouse kittie door holding a bunny in his mouth. He was carrying it the same way a mother would, his mouth around its little neck, gripping the thick fur on the back. And the bunny was relaxed, just like all baby animals when mom is carrying them. The thing was, the bunny was screaming and the top of its lungs! Not struggling, mind you, just screaming bloody murder!

Well, we rescued the little bugger ... but not until after Tiger had spit it out and it ran under the couch! It cowered under there for a while, waiting for certain doom. But, that never happened. I managed to corral the little tyke, pick it up, take it outside to the back yard and let it go without further incident. Tiger was not a happy camper because I wouldn't let him outside until I was certain the bunny has gone its own way.

Then we moved to Globe.

Shortly after the move, at some twenty-five years of age, Tiger went to that great cat-box in the sky and left us with **Murray** and **Misty**. We picked up the two babies from Doctor **Jeff Eubank** at **Samaritan Veterinary Center** on the east side of town. They were two of four to which the Samaritan "house cat" had given birth that year. Murray was the hunter of the pair. He loved to run up and down the huge Cottonwood tree next to our house. He liked to stalk the lizards that lived up there. Every now and then, he'd catch one and bring it in the house through his kitty door and deposit it in his food dish as some kind of trophy. Sometimes the lizard

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

would be dead. If not, we could count on another animal under the couch!

One afternoon, while Claudette and I were watching TV, there was this horrible screeching noise from outside. I got up and looked out there and discovered a juvenile rabbit doing its best to escape the clutches of our boy. Murray had corralled a bunny and was doing his best to capture it and bring it in the house to show it off to mom and dad! What a guy. I went out to the yard and found the bunny, cowering under one of our Bird-of-Paradise bushes. It was easy to pick up and cuddled in my palm as I took it inside. After determining that it was not injured, I took it out to the wood-pile near my neighbor's shed, making sure that Murray didn't tag along. When it was let loose, it scampered into the wood-pile like it was old home week!

Just the other day, our newest .. a yellow and white short-hair named **Cinnamon** ... somehow managed to make like a mama jackrabbit and jumped up on the porch with a bunny in his mouth. I saw what was going on and opened the door for him. He brought the baby bunny inside and unceremoniously spit it out at my feet. I checked it out and discovered that one foot was swelled up a bit, likely from a bite or the catch of a claw. After a while it seemed to be alright, so I decided to take it out by my neighbor's shed. There was another juvenile rabbit out there and it ran around the corner. So, I turned the smaller one loose. It followed the juvenile.

Cinnamon had followed me out by the shed, but pulled up shy, not wanting to be a bother. When I started back toward the house he followed. He done good for a bunny-mommy kitty-boy!

**Finally**, today is **Memorial Day**. Please, take some time out



### **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

to celebrate the lives of those who have paid the ultimate price in the never-ending quest to keep our country safe.

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Thursday, May 31, 2018

## Work Hard

What ever became of hard work? When did we decide that a lifetime of perpetual indebtedness to pay for a useless Liberal Arts Degree was preferable to hard physical labor that pays up to six figures to a trained, dedicated worker? Manual trades at the bottom rung today pay as much as \$50,000 to new-hires. So, where are all those folks who are still unemployed? The number of people who are not available (or willing) to do blue-collar work is stunning!

Over a week ago, **Steven Malanga** wrote in **CityJournal**, "A 2016 survey by **Pascale** found that 43 percent of students with a bachelor's degree consider themselves underemployed, as did 39 percent of master's degree students. Many students don't finish their degrees. About half of adults with only a high school diploma say that they're underemployed. Millions of prime-working-age adults have dropped out of the workforce. Even with today's low unemployment, about 15 percent of males between the ages of 25 and 52 aren't working, compared with just 5 percent in 1967."

Malanga continues, "One common explanation of the underemployment crisis is that not enough 'good' jobs are available to motivate people to return to the workforce. Yet more than a half-million jobs currently go unfilled in construction and manufacturing alone, where even younger workers can earn \$50,000 a year. Social problems have clearly played a role in firms' hiring woes. A recent study by **Princeton** economist **Alan Krueger** suggests that as much as 20 percent of the decline in male workforce participation since 1990 might be attributable to the opioid epidemic. Too many workers drop out of the labor market, addicted, while others can't pass drug tests to land jobs where worksite safety

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

is a major concern. 'At least 25 percent (of job applicants) fail the drug test,' the owner of a Youngstown, Ohio, tank and boiler manufacturer told **Reuters** last year."

**Andy Puzder**, in a May 28th **FoxNews** article, asserts that, "We've gone from an economy where the problem was workers being unable to find good-paying jobs to an economy where the problem is businesses being unable to find workers to fill good-paying jobs. For working- and middle-class Americans, that change is huge. It was the result of President Trump lowering taxes and shrinking the size of government through deregulation. It was not the result of higher taxes or expanded government benefit programs." **SkillsUSA's Tim Lawrence** echos Puzder's claim, "We should be focusing more on the millions of good jobs that do exist that we can't fill rather than the jobs we've lost."

Just yesterday, **Fox Business News** reported, "Employers continue to report a tough time finding qualified workers in a wide range of specialized occupations, according to the **Federal Reserve** survey of businesses. In its monthly **Beige Book**, the Fed said companies have faced a shortage of truck drivers, carpenters, electricians, painters and other trades. Many employers responded in the last month by raising wages and improving their overall compensation packages. Businesses in some of the Fed's 12 districts expect employment and wage gains in the coming months. The **Beige Book**, a collection of anecdotal reports from businesses, said employment rose at a modest to moderate rate across most districts, while the Dallas region saw solid and widespread growth. The labor market remained tight with U.S. unemployment at 3.9%, although wage increases remained modest overall."

I contend that the main reason jobs are not being filled is that America's work ethic has fallen by the wayside. Showing up

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

on time, not being afraid to break a sweat to get the job done, a desire to learn new ways of doing things, a willingness to work past quitting time and dedication to deliver the highest quality of work product are the qualities for which employers pay premium wages. These personal qualities are far more valuable to both employers and employees than are higher degrees that these days can force a lifetime of indebtedness and dead-end jobs.

Malanga reports that *Dirty Jobs* creator and star **Mike Rowe** has his own criteria for training, which he presents in his no-nonsense style. All students accepting scholarships must sign a SWEAT pledge (Skill & Work Ethic Aren't Taboo). It includes such bracing statements as "I believe there is no such thing as a bad job," "I believe that all jobs are opportunities," and "I believe that I am the product of my choices - not my circumstances. I will never blame anyone for my shortcomings." Students must promise to "deplore debt," not follow their passion but bring it with them, and "show up early, stay late, and cheerfully volunteer for every crappy task there is."

Bottom line: Want a job? Learn a trade! Out of all the people who show up for work every day, who do you suppose makes more money - the guy with grease under his fingernails or the guy standing behind the counter? The one wearing the International Orange tee shirt with reflective yellow stripes or the one wearing the white shirt and tie? The guy who goes to work clean and comes home filthy dirty and sweaty or a carwash attendant cleaning windows? The Operating Engineer driving a Caterpillar tractor or the sign-carrying paid demonstrator on the picket line?

Untrained amateurs are taking entry-level jobs that used to be reserved for teens, all the while bitterly complaining that it's impossible to raise a family while making minimum wage. It

### **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

goes without saying that there are plenty of great-paying jobs out there ... just not enough able-bodied men and women willing to train for blue-collar skills, work hard and get dirty!

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Monday, June 4, 2018

## Democrat Minority

*This tome could anger a number of long-time friends who are also dedicated Democrats. So, if you fall into that revered bunch, please forgive me - I try very hard to be an informed journalist. Now, then ...*

I could be wrong, but I really think the **National Democrat Party** has gone completely bonkers! Instead of embracing middle-America and its blue-collar workers as it once did, the party has run off the rails, figuring that Blacks, Latinos and Gays will make up a future voter majority. Only two things are needed to point this out: An article from the **Washington Post** and an email from the Senior Designer of the **Democratic National Committee**.

**Washington Post - Joshua N Zingher** | May 22 article "White voters have been fleeing the Democratic Party, and that's a big reason Democrats are looking to rebound from back-to-back losses ... Whites have slowly but consistently moved away from the Democratic Party. These recent losses are on top of Democrats' losses among Southern whites during the 1960s and 1970s after Democrats' support of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 ... This sorting process has hurt the Democratic Party among whites (especially in the South and Midwest), as there were historically more conservative white Democrats than liberal white Republicans. For Democrats, the increase in support among formerly Republican white liberals has not made up for the loss of white conservatives."

**The Official Democrat Store - Eric Ziminsky** | May 25 email "Y'all, I cannot tell you how excited I am about our first LGBTQ rainbow donkey pin -- just in time for Pride Month!"

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V



Why are once mainstream Democrats leaving the party? Stop and think for a moment about who have been the most vociferous Democrat newmakers of late? Three of five whackos that come to mind are people of color - AZ 3rd Cong Dist Rep **Raul Grijalva**, CA 43rd Cong Dist Rep **Maxine Waters** and MA 4th Cong Dist Rep **Barney Frank**. The other two are *way* far left - MA Sen. **Elizabeth Warren** and VT Independent Sen. **Bernie Sanders**. Do these people actually speak for middle America? A Chicano, two Blacks - one of them Gay - and two Socialists? Really? I haven't even touched on the unruly mobs of women wearing pink knitted caps ... or those **Antifa** creeps wearing black masks and hoodies, trashing property and assaulting innocent people. Is this what today's Democrat Party is scrambling so hard to represent?

What has become of the hard work of countless Union members across America and the blue-collar workers that populate so much of the rust belt, coal country, the oil and gas industries and the west's gold, silver and copper mining towns, not to mention most of the manufacturing sector? Has our once proud Democrat Party come to represent rude, crude, gay communist sympathisers and thugs from the country's northeast and west coast? Could this be why many media pundits are beginning to expect that Republicans will do just fine in the mid-terms?

### **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

In a Presidential Debate with Jimmy Carter in 1980, Ronald Reagan stated flatly, "I didn't leave the Democratic Party - it left me!" I'm sure glad I don't hold a Democrat leadership position today ... I wouldn't know how to defend the party's shift toward the radical left.

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.



**Thursday, June 7, 2018**

## **We Be Cookin'**

We be cookin' ... that's pretty much how folks who create culinary masterpieces talk. Right? Ok, I could be mistaken because I'm not a student of all foods American or otherwise.

I haven't eaten in Boston, New York, Philly, Chicago, Kansas City, New Orleans or El Paso. But I have sampled the cuisine in Portland, Salem, San Francisco, Bakersfield, Las Vegas, Tucson and Albuquerque. All of the those famous cities are where American food is created every day from scratch. They say if you've never sampled the fare in one of these places, you just haven't lived. I obviously have a half-life left before me, which means I'll probably make a ripe 154 before I run out of good places to eat!

My brain hurts from sitting here trying to remember the first thing I ever cooked. Was it sugar cookies after school when I was a 10th-grader? Nope. Was I in the fifth grade when I cooked a hot dog on that red-handled extendable fork in the living room fireplace. No - that's not it either. How 'bout assembling a Ritz cracker, a dot of French's Mustard and a Vienna Sausage at the ripe old age of seven while traveling on vacation to visit grandma in Cottonwood? Or was it the 'Smores - squares of Hershey's Milk Chocolate melted on Graham crackers topped with melted Marshmallows - done over a campfire in the Arizona desert on the Hopi Reservation near Mishongnovi (2nd Mesa) when I was five? Hard to say ... but it was super training for one of the things I love to do!

When I was young my dad used to love to make Buffalo steaks - cooked directly on the hot mesquite coals in the fireplace. The mesquite was allowed to burn until it began breaking into little cubes and developed a light ash on it.

## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

That's when a whole three-quarter-inch-thick piece of aged round steak was put on the fire. It had been kept in the meat-keeper in the fridge for about three weeks, until it just started to turn grey around the edges. Before it went on the fire it was dusted with garlic salt. When the edges of the steak started to turn light tan on the fire it was turned over with a pair of tongs. When that side was done the steak was recovered and the char and ash dusted off with a three-inch paint brush.

Over the years I've explored how best to cook a steak. Watching the Travel Channel and the Cooking Channel on TV has been helpful. It seems like the best steaks are cooked over searing heat for about one minute per side and then left on medium heat for another couple of minutes per side. This builds a medium-rare steak with a little bit of char on the outside. The garlic salt trick always works - learned it from an old Masonic friend who owned the Hidden Valley Inn up Sabino Canyon in Tucson. He served a 16 ounce Porterhouse, medium rare, dusted with garlic salt and had people lined up around the building to eat 'em every weekend.

All the best steaks I ever had were made from beef hung for two weeks, then aged three weeks more, dusted with garlic salt and seared a minute per side. It doesn't seem to matter whether they're cooked on or over mesquite charcoal, on a grill outside, in a frying pan or dutch oven, or on a flat-top.

To me it seems like the best are aged a total of five weeks, dusted with garlic salt, seared on both sides and then cooked two minutes per side. After that all ya need is a baked potato with gobs of butter, sour cream, chives, salt and pepper and a slice of San Francisco Sour Dough with garlic butter on it. Throw in a glass of good Dago Red and that's my idea of heaven!

## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

Dago Red? I'm not certain, but I think the only thing close to it anymore is made by Paul Masson. Originally, it was grown by Joe Carrari on his Rancho Alamo at Los Alamos, California and bottled at the winery in San Martin south of San Jose. Carlo Rossi makes a good red wine with its Paisano brand and so does Gallo. Dago Red always goes with steak and compliments pasta with seafood such as shrimp, lobster, scallops, mussels, clams, calamari, abalone and oysters.

You'll have to excuse me. I need to go to the store now and get some Filet Mignon and red wine. While you wait, visit my Recipe pages: [www.tedthayer.com/Recipes/recipes1.html](http://www.tedthayer.com/Recipes/recipes1.html)

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Monday, June 11, 2018

## Amend the Constitution

A couple of weeks ago one of those dumb questions showed up on Facebook again. It went something like, "***Should US Supreme Court Justices have Term limits?***" It had over 1300 Shares, at least 250 affirmative answers and only about ten negatives. I posted the following:

"What we have here - according to Strother Martin - is failure to communicate. The unbelievable breadth of ignorance of our Constitution displayed here is stark evidence that our educational system has let us down. Civics is no longer [required to be] taught in our schools or [surely] all of the 'Yes' posts would be 'No's.' I wonder how many of these people would be willing to peddle the petitions needed to get Congress to propose another amendment to the Constitution? How many would volunteer to peddle the paperwork to get their states to join in the required Constitutional Convention?

Article III of the US Constitution provides that justices "*shall hold their offices during good behavior.*" The term "*good behavior*" means justices may serve for the remainder of their lives, unless they resign, retire or are impeached and convicted by Congress.

Ignorance of the contents of our Constitution is blatant across America. News crews all over the country post stories very regularly showing how little people know about the document that protects their freedoms. The average man-on-the-street, high school students, even college students stand with open mouths, scratching their heads or giggling when asked simple questions like "What are the three branches of the Federal Government?" (Answer: Legislative, Executive and Judicial.) Yet, folks from all over the world who have become

### **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

naturalized citizens can rattle off answers to questions about the Constitution with ease! How is it that our schools can't educate our young citizens so that they at least know as much about our founding documents as any naturalized citizen? What's it gonna take? An amendment to the Constitution?

It takes a two-thirds vote of BOTH the House and Senate OR application from the legislatures of two-thirds of the states to convene a Constitutional Convention. Actual amendment to the Constitution requires the approval of three-quarters of the States.

I wonder how many of these well-intended folks, armed with this information, would still want term limits for the SCOTUS. And I wonder how many would be willing to volunteer for literally YEARS to make it happen?

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Thursday, June 14, 2018

## Guarding His Porch

I was sitting in my rocker staring out into the morning when I caught a glimpse of the family's porch lizard. Actually, he's a juvenile **Western Fence Lizard**, also known as the **Blue-belly** because of the blue stripes on his underside. He (it?) is only about six inches long - tail and all. Successful Fence Lizards grow to be about as big as a large mouse, fitting comfortably in one's palm with little feet and tail hangin' over the edges. Before we had the big Cottonwood tree brought down (it was falling apart) there was a big one like that living in its branches. He was great at avoiding the cats!

Actually, he got caught one day by our since-passed Murray kitty. The cat was jammin' around in his favorite monster Cottonwood tree, doin' kitty stuff like scratchin' and sharpening claws, when he and that big ol' lizard came eye-to-eye. Murray managed to grab that big, fat Fence Lizard around its middle, hauled it down the tree and through the kitty door into the living room, where he unceremoniously spit the thing out on the carpet. The Lizard was not phased! Murray tried to pick it up and put it in his food dish, but it wouldn't cooperate! Full-grown Western Fence Lizards are not very palatable because of their scales, which are pointy and not very comfortable for kitty lips! Well, I reached over and picked it up, took it outside and put it back on the tree. It clung to the tree trunk and then, all of a sudden, started doing push-ups!

I recall seeing our current little guy for the first time some months ago. Since then he has grown a lot. He has plenty to eat including little cockroaches and brown long-legged spiders and plenty of sugar ants. There are also lots of yummy flies in the immediate neighborhood. And he's great at

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

gobbling up both red and black ants while standing in the middle of the entrance to their nests in the ground. Needless to say, we do not have bug problems in the house thanks to him.



Photo Credit: Las Pilitas Nursery [www.laspilitas.com](http://www.laspilitas.com)

Instead of living on and around our fence - as Fence Lizards are wont to do - this little guy hangs out around our porch. Somehow he manages to avoid the cats, of which there are three. There is Cinnamon, our yellow and white **Domestic Shorthair** Tabby; a nameless black long-hair kitty with white socks, white paws and a white vest; and our neighbor's **Tortiseshell Calico** aptly named Terror. Our Fence Lizard is a crafty little dude. He climbs the screens and the banisters and guards the whole place almost all the time, all the while avoiding the kitties.

So, there I was, sitting in my rocker, watching out the sliding glass doors in the living room. I noticed when the little guy crept around one of the posts that hold the banisters on the porch. He climbed on to the middle banister and assumed his

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

guard position - flat as a pancake, stretched out as far as he could go, lookin' large! All of a sudden one of our Humming birds appeared a mere six inches away, buzzing like a huge bumble-bee! We have a Humming Bird feeder hanging off the porch rafters. This Hummer was obviously doing its level-best to protect its feeder.

Buzz, buzz, went the tiny bird, just inches away from the lizard, when all of a sudden our scaley little guy started doing his "This is MY porch" dance. Well, more like push-ups. Push-ups are a signal that all lizards use (like the big one that used to live in our Cottonwood tree) to show adversaries who is boss and to claim territory! Apparently, he convinced the Hummer because it flew back up to the feeder and got back to pigging out!

Next time you run into a lizard that isn't afraid of you, try dropping and givin' it ten! He'll probably return the insult with eight or ten of his own!

**Next Subject:** Today is **Flag Day**. June 14th commemorates the day in 1777 that **Old Glory** was adopted as America's Flag. According to [www.usaflag.org](http://www.usaflag.org) : "... the idea of an annual day specifically celebrating the Flag is believed to have first originated in 1885. **BJ Cigrand**, a schoolteacher, arranged for the pupils in the **Fredonia, Wisconsin** Public School, District 6, to observe June 14 (the 108th anniversary of the official adoption of **The Stars and Stripes**) as 'Flag Birthday'. In numerous magazines and newspaper articles and public addresses over the following years, Cigrand continued to enthusiastically advocate the observance of June 14 as 'Flag Birthday', or 'Flag Day'. ... Inspired by ... three decades of state and local celebrations, Flag Day - the anniversary of the Flag Resolution of 1777 - was officially *established* by the Proclamation of **President Woodrow Wilson** on May 30th, 1916. While Flag Day was celebrated in various



## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

communities for years after Wilson's proclamation, it was not until August 3rd, 1949, that **President Truman** signed an Act of Congress designating June 14th of each year as National Flag Day."

**Last subject:** Tomorrow is the Official beginning of the **Monsoon Season** in the Southwest. Arizona Governor **Doug Ducey** declared this week June 10-15 Monsoon Awareness Week. The NOAA Weather Service says it's going to rain tomorrow afternoon (30%) and evening (70%). In 2008 **NOAA** ruled (!) that the Monsoon Season runs June 15<sup>th</sup> through September 30th.

<http://noaa.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=e1696f2e2ede430294d50b6aa4d75b26>

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Monday, June 18, 2018

## La Causa

I wrote the basis for this little ditty on Facebook June 5th, naming five Democrat "whackos."

You need to understand how difficult it was to call out Raul Grijalva as a whacko and a "Man of color" earlier this month - it doesn't set well with me because he has done so much for southern Arizona and the Latino community during his tenure. Grijalva is not a Black man. He was born of Mexican parents in Tucson. I find it hard to believe that he has gone along with everything the Democrat Party has thrown at him. The guy's got grit! But, what bugs me most is that the Democrats used to stand for American unity and now they stand for the weirdest of the weird. How Grijalva puts up with his party's nonsense is beyond me. He climbed to the pinnacle of southern Arizona's *causa* long before he first took office as a Tucson Unified School District Board member in 1974. In his formative years he was a member of the radical Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán (MEChA) and a leader of the Raza Unida Party. He was elected to the US House of Representatives in November of 2012 and to this day continues to represent Arizona's 3rd Congressional District. *La Causa* is well represented by his presence.

Both my Republican and Democrat parties have left town. Neither party represents me and my political views anymore. That's why I'm NPD (No Party Declared). I'm up for sanity and civility, common sense and love of America's traditions, loyalty to our families, friends and country, respect for others' beliefs and - at all cost - holding on to one's personal integrity. I can't believe that anyone could take issue with any of those attributes. Yet, they do ...

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

Democrats used to represent the salt of the earth ... now they're trying to put together a coalition of America's cast-offs. Faggots and queers are not what America is about. Neither are herds of women in knitted pink hats led by females who want to blow up the White House. It goes without saying that any group that would embrace Antifa and other violent thugs deserves no loyalty from mainstream American voters! For some reason, I feel concerned Latinos and Blacks as well as many women are beginning to feel uncomfortable being swept up in this off-the-wall approach to *La Causa*. Still, mainstream Democrats appear to be enamored with the likes of Maxine Waters, Robert Menendez, Kyrsten Sinema, Barney Frank, Frederica Wilson, Jesse Jackson, Elizabeth Warren, Al Sharpton and Nancy Pelosi.

The Republicans are no longer the party of Barry Goldwater or Ronald Reagan. Jamming on Arizona Senator John McCain is so distasteful, yet there are folks in the GOP who would trash this conservative American hero, even during his last days on earth. McCain has always stood for The United States of America. Why any God-fearing American would stoop to trash this Arizona icon is beyond me. I wish we had more like him. People like Bob Dole, Chesty Puller, Marcus Luttrell, Tammy Duckworth, Brian Mast and Steve Scalise - each a Hero in their own rite.

All I really want to see is a return to civil sanity - a place where I can shake hands and embrace any person, no matter his or her social or political stripe, and feel comfortable that I'm not going to be held up as some kind of a traitor to *La Causa*.

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Thursday, June 21, 2018

## No Breaking Up Families

Yesterday, President **Trump** caved in to pressure from all over the world to stop taking illegal aliens' children away from their families. Liberal activists, backed by the Mainstream Media, have been raising Cain with a propaganda campaign designed to outrage all Americans. So, the President did what the current public pressure dictates - he signed an Executive Order that temporarily overrides the requirement that children in the custody of criminals be removed to a safe facility for up to twenty days. For the time being, children will stay with their families.

Anyone who crosses the Border at any place other than a Port of Entry is detained in accordance with the law passed by the Congress during the **Clinton** Administration. That was in response to thousands of un-accompanied minors flooding the Border, as well as Ports of Entry at the time. Now, wherever they cross the border is out of the picture ... illegal Border-crossing is a crime that subjects the perpetrators to prosecution ... only now, the kids get to go along for the ride!

What the activist Left didn't count on was that the President recognized the issue as political Kryptonite! So, he did what they were clamoring for ... made it necessary that kids stay with their families. ***They all go to Jail*** until their case is adjudicated!

The **ACLU** and the Trump Justice Department will doubtless petition the Court that imposed the twenty-day limit. According to **The Hill**, "... a 1997 **Ninth Circuit** case, **Flores v. Reno**, ... was settled with a consent decree that set limits on the detention of minors apprehended at the U.S. border. In 2016, in **Flores v. Lynch**, the consent decree was clarified to

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

indicate that the policy applied equally to accompanied and unaccompanied minors; neither group could be held for more than 20 days. The ruling meant that unless a suitable placement could be found for a minor who came across, either alone or with an adult seeking asylum, both adult and child had to be either released or returned to their country of origin."

Actually, the Executive Order makes military facilities available for family housing instead of Jail. This is what the Left asked for, and I quote: "The President has the power of the pen - he needs to use it!" But, I guarantee that the Democrat leadership in the Congress (that would be **Schumer** and **Pelosi**), Liberal activists, the ACLU and the Mainstream Media will be having a cow for at least the next two weeks!

It appears that today's activists need to re-evaluate their leadership. Demanding things from government without considering all of the possible outcomes is just plain juvenile. It looks to me like those "snowflake" kids in need of "safe spaces" have finally hit mainstreet. They still don't know how to evaluate possible repercussions tomorrow created by today's actions.

Today, the Left loons are demanding that *nobody* be detained over immigration issues!

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Monday, June 25, 2018

## Secret of Success

Today, we have a pearl of wisdom to cast before the great unwashed masses. Any truly successful individual knows this one - the Secret of Success.

*The Secret* is cleverly hidden in plain view. Few actually see it, though. It's obvious to those who know it and completely obfuscated to the rest by the chatter of those who don't. It's the closed-mindedness of the ignorant who fail to see the forest for the trees. Let me elucidate.

When the 2017 tax bill passed and was signed into law last December it was hailed as the greatest tax reduction since the days of **Ronald Reagan**, relieving business and industry of onerous burdens that stifled expansion in both sales and payrolls. Across the country big businesses began giving employees bonuses and pay increases because of the projected tax breaks. Now, new factories are being built and existing ones expanded as a result of the huge amounts of capital being freed up for investment. And as a result, consumer confidence has soared along with the stock market. So much expansion has happened in the commercial market that federal tax revenues are exceeding projections and, in fact, represent the largest in US history. The truth is that estimates of revenue losses failed to take into account the fact that a faster growing economy would at least offset the lost revenue. In 1962, President **John F Kennedy** postulated that, "It is a paradoxical truth that tax rates are too high today and tax revenues are too low - and the soundest way to raise revenues in the long run is to cut rates now." Most of the states have realized similar commercial and payroll tax revenue expansions. On top of that, the GDP expanded from a predicted 2% to an unexpected 2.3% in the first quarter ... to

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

what the experts are predicting today - some 4.6% in the second quarter of 2018.

Meanwhile, back at Rancho **Pelosi** in the Nation's Capitol, the House Minority Leader clings to her 2017 claim that the bulk of the tax breaks go to the one percent while working folks get nothing but "crumbs." This is the clearest Forest-for-the-trees example I could ever conjure up! If one compares the millions in tax reductions realized by business to the hundreds in extra cash in pay envelopes across the country, one could certainly see where Pelosi would be correct in her assessment. However, without the millions in reduced business costs created by the 2017 tax reduction bill there would be nothing available to provide the payroll increases, both in the form of increased employment as well as take-home pay. Working folks appear to be appreciating Pelosi's "crumbs" because consumer confidence is way up - the highest in 17 years - and, for the most part, so are sales of just about everything! The icing on the cake is that jobs outnumber the workforce for the first time in decades and the unemployment rate has dropped to just 3.8%.

Now, the *Secret of Life* according to Faith Hill is a little different than the *Secret of Success*:

<https://youtu.be/bNnlcqf00YU>

*The secret of life is gettin' up early  
The secret of life is stayin' up late  
The secret of life is try not to hurry  
But don't wait - Don't wait*

*The secret of life is a good cup of coffee  
The secret of life is keep your eye on the ball  
The secret of life is to find the right woman  
The secret of life is nothin' at all*

### **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

So, let's go back and see if we can find *The Secret* in all this. As I stated, "It's the closed-mindedness of the ignorant who fail to see the forest for the trees." Just as the majority of the Congress and the President understood *The Secret*, so was Pelosi unabashedly ignorant of it.

The *Secret of Success* is no more than *a positive attitude* - the thing that drives all good works.

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.



Thursday, June 28, 2018

## One Korea?

NY Times April 18, 2018: "**South Korea** said it had been in talks with both **American** and **North Korean** officials about replacing the 1953 armistice with a full peace."

The Historic Armistice brought an end to the Korean conflict on July 27, 1953 by recognizing North and South Korea as separate entities on the same Peninsula and establishing a demilitarized zone between the two.

Less than two months after the April 2018 meeting, US President Donald Trump sat with North Korea's Chairman Kim Jong Un at a Summit meeting June 12th in Singapore. North and South Korean dignitaries attended both the April and June meetings.

Kim Jong Un and South Korean President Moon Jae-in expressed delight at the prospect of re-uniting the Korean Peninsula into one internationally recognized country finally at peace after some 65 years.

Here is an excerpt listing the majority of the Singapore Declaration:

*"Convinced that the establishment of new U.S.–DPRK relations will contribute to the peace and prosperity of the Korean Peninsula and of the world, and recognizing that mutual confidence building can promote the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, President Trump and Chairman Kim Jong Un state the following:*

1. *The United States and the DPRK commit to establish new U.S.–DPRK relations in accordance with the*

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

- desire of the peoples of the two countries for peace and prosperity.*
2. *The United States and the DPRK will join their efforts to build a lasting and stable peace regime on the Korean Peninsula.*
  3. *Reaffirming the April 27, 2018 Panmunjom Declaration, the DPRK commits to work toward complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.*
  4. *The United States and the DPRK commit to recovering POW/MIA remains, including the immediate repatriation of those already identified.*

*"Having acknowledged that the U.S.–DPRK summit—the first in history—was an epochal event of great significance in overcoming decades of tensions and hostilities between the two countries and for the opening up of a new future, President Trump and Chairman Kim Jong Un commit to implement the stipulations in this joint statement fully and expeditiously. The United States and the DPRK commit to hold follow-on negotiations, led by the U.S. Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, and a relevant high-level DPRK official, at the earliest possible date, to implement the outcomes of the U.S.–DPRK summit.*

*"President Donald J. Trump of the United States of America and Chairman Kim Jong Un of the State Affairs Commission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea have committed to cooperate for the development of new U.S.–DPRK relations and for the promotion of peace, prosperity, and security of the Korean Peninsula and of the world."*

Letting Kim Jong Un get the kudos for the positive outcome of the Summit is a plus for the North Koreans - they are seeing how the rest of the world lives as a result, and they want to join them. That both Koreas are having serious talks about re-unification is a hugely positive development. That it

## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

will take time goes without saying. And who knows how much?

And now, it turns out the President is going to have a Summit with Russia's Vladimir Putin! What we have seen so far is just a start - like a featherbed, over-stuffed with opportunities!

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Monday, July 2, 2018

## Stupid Drivers

With Independence Day just around the corner, here's a little something for 4th of July drivers.

I'm not an aggravated driver. Far from it. I'm an educated, trained, experienced, once-upon-a-time professional driver. I know stuff about moving vehicles large and small through traffic most people could hardly imagine!

In the **Marine Corps** I was trained to drive everything from a Jeep to a deuce-and-a-half and a five-ton to a 25-ton pulling a flatbed with a gazillion tires on it. I've driven government-owned 12-passenger vans, high-end **Prevost** commercial tour buses and the classic 97 passenger **Crown Supercoach** school bus. In the winter of 1958 I drove an **ADOT** Dump truck equipped with a volcanic pumice spreader to make Interstate 40 in Flagstaff AZ less slippery. I've been certified to teach both classroom and behind-the-wheel school bus driver students. What's more, my early training in the Marines qualified me to repair and maintain everything from motor-scooters to tour buses.

All of the above said, I just want some time to rant about untrained drivers. Stupid (untrained) drivers are the main cause of road rage. However, anyone who would go into a rage because of the actions of another driver probably also needs some training! What are the things that cause road rage? As **Elizabeth Barrett Browning** wrote, "*Let me count the ways.*"

1. Changing Lanes without adequate signaling
2. Headlamps on Bright behind other vehicles
3. Following too close

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

4. Changing Lanes too close ahead or behind
  5. Slow driving in Left (HOV) Lane (10mph or less than limit)
  6. Erratic speed or failing to keep pace with traffic
  7. Slow driving in Right Lane without 4-way flashers
  8. Criminal Speeding (more than 20mph over limit or 85mph)
  9. Weaving in and out of traffic at high speed (see also #4)
- Any of those turn your screws, troops?

**Number One** is the most common violation of the rules of the road. You've all seen the idiot who gives one blink as the lane change starts, a second blink as the wheel crosses the lane stripe followed by a third blink. Hardly any warning start or finish. Good drivers know to turn on their turn signals before starting to change lanes as a means of warning others that a lane change is coming. A good driver turns the signals off after the lane change is done. Failure to turn them off is also a road rage aggravant.

**Number two** is more common than you know. Bright lights behind you are just as dangerous in the daytime as at night. And if you want road rage, it's one way to get another driver to go crazy! Even though the dashboard in most vehicles displays a "bright" indicator day and night, many drivers ignore it. There are a large number of vehicles out there with headlights on when the engine is running, so paying attention - day and night - is necessary to keep you out of trouble.

Following too close is probably the cause of **the third** greatest outbreaks of road rage. The rule of thumb is don't follow any closer than one second behind per ten miles an hour of speed *plus* another second if going faster than 45mph. ie: 40mph = 4 seconds; 70mph = 8 seconds (7+1)

Perhaps nothing is more scary than **#4** - a speeding car bearing down on you, changing lanes to pass mere feet away

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

and then veering back in front of you just three or four feet away. 'Nuf said.

In heavy traffic, especially during peak hours, driving slower than the speed limit in the far left or HOV lane makes other drivers crazy. After all, they're in a hurry to get home! They'll follow too close, blink high-beam headlights, lean on their horn, shake their fist out the window, flip you the bird, and even brandish a firearm. **#5** - Best speed up and change lanes ASAP.

**Number six** - erratic driving will get you stopped for suspicion of drunk driving. If you get lucky and that doesn't happen, some crazy with a 9mm pistol could fly by popping rounds into your vehicle (or even you!) Try to maintain a steady speed, not impeding the flow of traffic.

There are any number of reasons to avoid slow driving in the outside lane (**#7**), but if you have to, at least turn on the warning blinkers (four-ways) to tell others you're going just as fast as you think is safe. Trucks, buses and moving vans make a lot of use of the right-most lane. School buses and trucks carrying hazardous materials are required to turn on their four-ways before, stop at railroad crossings, and extinguish the four-ways after getting back up to speed. Driving in the center or left lanes with the four-ways blinking is a bad idea.

The ones who cause the most problems are habitual speeders (**#8**). They are a danger to themselves and to others. When driving much faster than the flow of traffic, danger increases exponentially. Debris in the road, a flat tire, engine trouble and the like can turn deadly in a flash. A vehicle careening out of control will kill the people in it and anyone who happens to be in the way. Few drivers can safely negotiate a highway at speeds over 75 or 80mph. That's why more than

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

20 miles per hour over the speed limit (or 85mph) can be considered criminal speeding, a 30 day jailable \$500 offense. Speed limits are based on what is safe for all.

Finally, **number nine** - weaving in and out of traffic at high speed is no better than number eight. Criminal speeding is dangerous, but weaving at excessive speed is very close to suicide! One wrong move and everybody dies! Stay away from speed-weavers - give them all the room they want because they are most likely in a rage and packin' heat.

And above all ...

Keep your mind on your driving,  
keep your hands on the wheel,  
keep your shifty eyes on the road ahead.  
We're havin' fun,  
sittin' in the back seat,  
kissin' and a-huggin' with Fred!

<https://youtu.be/DDYpr99FgEk>

Avons - 1959 - Seven Little Girls Sitting in the Back Seat

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Thursday, July 5, 2018

## An Illegal Entry Law

A little over a week-and-a-half ago, on his hit **Fox News** talk show, **Tucker Carlson** said of the Democrats, "Even enforcing our own existing laws -- ones that they voted for and passed in Congress -- is now tantamount to a hate crime."

I believe it was 1996 when the Democrat-controlled Congress passed and sent to President **Bill Clinton** the immigration law that is on the books to this day. The law President **Donald Trump** demanded that **DHS, ICE** and the **Border Patrol** enforce with zero tolerance is the very same one the Democrats touted, but with two recent changes:

- (1) Minor children must be released within 20 days of their detention - part of a consent decree approved by the Ninth Circuit Federal Court in 1997 and modified in 2016 ...
- (2) Minor children will not be separated from their family members - by Executive Order from the President. Both exceptions pose their own very prickly difficulties.

What's puzzling is why the mainstream media insists on referring to the 1996 law and its humane modifications by the Courts and by Executive Orders "Trump's Law." The media is complicit in reporting - and in many instances creating - misleading information as real news.

One of the greatest examples of art/news for the purpose of outrage is TIME magazine's cover the week of July 2nd - It's a photo-shopped paste-up of little two-year-old **Yanela Sanchez** of Honduras and the President on a red background with the words *Welcome to America*.



## Thayer's Wild Bunch V



The original photo (inset), taken by **John Moore** of **Getty Images**, shows the child and her mother **Sandra** with a Border Patrol Agent at McAllen Texas. A second photo shows the officer frisking Ms Sanchez (below), which is a customary safety precaution for Law Enforcement when taking anyone into custody.



## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

According a June 2nd **New York Post** article, Honduran deputy foreign minister **Nelly Jerez** confirmed that the mom and daughter were kept together. The Border Patrol told **The Daily Wire's Ben Shapiro** that the little girl was crying because she was "tired and thirsty." An Immigration and Customs Enforcement spokesman [told] the Post that Sanchez and a family member were arrested in Texas on June 12. They are currently housed at the South Texas Family Residential Center in Dilley, Texas.

The original reason for the 1996 immigration law was to deal with hordes of minor children pouring over the border from all over South and Central America. Some years later, President **George W Bush** issued the "Catch & Release" policy, an aggregation of legislation created by the Congress. In August 2006, Secretary of Homeland Security **Michael Chertoff** said that the catch-and-release practice, that for years helped many illegal immigrants stay in the United States unhindered, had ended and that DHS detained 99% of apprehended non-Mexican border-crossers - Mexican and Canadian border-crossers could be subject to expedited removal. Early in 2016 President **Barack Obama** reinstated the policy. After Trump effectively took the Obama Executive Order out of service and instituted "Zero Tolerance" for alien law-breakers, liberals went into a tizzy!

Only a few days ago the President floated a trial balloon that blew my mind! Immigrants seeking asylum who come through ports of entry will be processed in accordance with US law. Those who do not cross lawfully will be processed for immediate repatriation to their home country.

The Left's specious claims and loud public clamor, coupled with staged and photo-shopped pictures of young children, convinced the President to issue his EO barring separation of minor children from their families and assuring appropriate

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

housing while detained. DHS, ICE and the Border Patrol are limited on what they can do to completely institute the Trump EO because funding is limited without Congressional approval. But, that ain't all! Last week, a Federal Court Judge in San Diego ordered ICE and the Border Patrol to reunite all children and families detained at the border. The fact that there are some 12,000 of them (not 2,300 but some 12,000 scattered across the country!) doesn't seem to matter. All that's really happening - and American citizens are beginning to see through it - is the Left is desperately trying to find (or create) a Mid-term issue that will help Democrats regain the balance of power in the Congress. I stopped calling it fake news a while back. Now it's just good, old-fashioned, all-American propaganda!

I've been working on this thing for a few weeks and came up with the following:

*"Any individual or family who enters the US illegally shall be detained and adjudicated within 20 days of detention. If found guilty, an individual shall be incarcerated for an appropriate amount of time, transported to their home country's Capitol and turned over to its government. Family members or other individuals, who have not been adjudicated within 20 days shall be transported to their home country's Capitol and turned over to its government. If found not guilty, an individual shall be transported to its home country's Capitol and turned over to its government.*

*"Nolo contendere shall be considered a valid plea.*

*"Individuals and/or families seeking asylum shall be detained and are required to be vetted within 20 days. If asylum is not granted or vetting not completed, detained individuals and/or families shall be transported to their home country's Capitol and turned over to its government.*

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

*"This legislation, upon being signed into law by the President, shall supersede affected parts of relevant laws, rules and regulations involving immigration into these United States of America."*

One of the things that prompted this submission is the cost of detention. We can house suspected law-breakers and their children together or not - depending on the outcome of pending litigation. If we limit detention to just shy of three weeks in a humane environment we will be saving buckets of cash every day - money that could better be used to transport alien "visitors" to their home countries. Convicted felons, gang members and violent suspects can be incarcerated without bail - as a danger to society - while they await their time before a court. Those awaiting trial have been guaranteed certain rights by the courts over the years. Those simply being detained have no such rights. However, that same legal system has guaranteed minor alien children their release after 20 days. It is very clear that detention of non-felons and their children has to be tightly controlled. Forcing that very issue will also mandate some urgency in the adjudication process. But, that will take a while.

I sent copies of this proposal to our Congress on June 21st, hoping they finally do something positive. Your email opinion is solicited here. What do you think?

[ted@tedthayer.com](mailto:ted@tedthayer.com)

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Monday, July 9, 2018

## Create a Crowd

Hysterical comments from Democrat Rep. **Maxine Waters** do no good. Waters is the one who called for the public to "create a crowd" to "push back on" **Trump** administration officials.

According to a **CNN** report on June 25th, *the California Democrat and vehement critic of President Donald Trump made the comments on Saturday [June 23rd], first at a rally in Los Angeles and later in a television interview. The comments, which come after several Trump administration officials have been recently protested at restaurants, have raised fresh questions about the state of American political discourse and were seized on by Trump for political gain.*

During her rally at the Wilshire Federal Building in LA Waters exclaimed, *"Let's make sure we show up wherever we have to show up. And if you see anybody from that Cabinet in a restaurant, in a department store, at a gasoline station, you get out and you create a crowd. And you push back on them. And you tell them they're not welcome anymore, anywhere ..."*

House Minority Leader **Nancy Pelosi**, another one noted for off-the-wall statements, cautioned that Waters' comments were "unacceptable."

And, Senate Minority Leader **Chuck Schumer** announced from the Senate floor that harassment of political opponents was "not right" and "not American."

**Meghan McCain**, the daughter of Arizona Republican Sen. **John McCain**, called Waters' comments "absolutely insane" and "extremely dangerous."

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

During the week of June 20th, conservative commentator **Rush Limbaugh** fussed about the danger being ginned up by the mainstream media. *"Okay, folks, I'm just gonna say it here. If the media keeps this up - if they keep up generating this hysteria - somebody's gonna get killed."*

Free speech is one thing, but inciting violence is a crime. If, as a result of a speaker's urgings, another person commits a misdemeanor, the speaker may be charged with the same crime. If urgings result in a felony committed by another, the speaker is equally liable.

Activities of folks who have responded to Waters' overtures and those from the mainstream media - at least the ones that have been reported so far - have not resulted in damages or injury. The question remains: If harassment becomes the result of inciting, is it a crime?

I've gotta go with Pelosi for a change. Waters appears to be treading on very thin ice.

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Thursday, July 12, 2018

## Dems & Roe v. Wade

**Roe v. Wade** was a 1973 landmark decision by the **United States Supreme Court** relating to the constitutionality of laws that restricted access to abortions or made them criminal activity. The Court declared that a woman has every right to decide how to care for her body and that right cannot be restricted in any way. In effect, the decision made abortion clinics legal and paved the way for expansion of **Planned Parenthood**. Democrats and Liberals at the time were beside themselves and vowed to fight to get the ruling overturned. Republicans and Conservatives were delighted with the decision.

Since that time there have been a few changes. It's all bass akwards anymore! The chameleon Left has become pro-choice and the Right has adopted a pro-life stance ... just opposite of their political postures in 1973. However ... today the Democrats are gearing up to fight confirmation of a Conservative Supreme Court Justice. They're claiming that confirming a conservative Justice will guarantee the repeal of the Roe v. Wade decision and lead to a mishmash of state abortion laws across the country.

The Judge in question is **Brett Kavanaugh**, who has been a conservative originalist on the Washington D.C. Federal Circuit Court of Appeals since 2006. In his confirmation hearing to become a Federal Judge, Kavanaugh declared, "I would follow Roe v. Wade faithfully and fully" because it is a "binding precedent" that's been "reaffirmed many times."

How today's Democrats came to endorse Roe v. Wade after vowing to fight it 45 years ago is beyond me. **Catholicism** was one of the dominant religions of Democrats back in

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

1973. The Church's doctrine at the time held that all life is precious. To this day **The Catechism** reads, "*Human life must be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of conception. From the first moment of his existence, a human being must be recognized as having the rights of a person - among which is the inviolable right of every innocent being to life.*" At that very place in the Catechism, **God** is quoted - speaking of the unborn: "*Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you.*"

So, what happened to the Democrats to make them turn away from their quest to kill Roe v. Wade - a quest lasting almost half a century? Somehow, I don't believe true Democrats have turned away from that basic tenet of a major segment of their Party. Democrat leadership has become more Left-leaning and ever more radical over the last four-and-a-half decades. Reversing the Party's stance on Roe v. Wade to defeat confirmation of a new Supreme Court Justice is way more radical than almost anything they've done since the '60s.

It's difficult to understand how Senate Minority Leader **Chuck Schumer** (elected to the New York State Assembly 1975) and House Minority Leader **Nancy Pelosi** (elected Chair of the California Democrat Party in 1981) can go back on a solemn vow that has been a staple of Democrat dogma since before either appeared on the national political scene. That Democrat Leadership would suddenly embrace the pro-life stance of the GOP is just plain mind-boggling political malpractice!

Oh, excuse me. This should be no surprise. After all, it's Schumer, Pelosi & Co. at work.

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Monday, July 16, 2018

## Not in 92 Years!

I was shopping for bananas for Claudette the other day. I found just the right thing at Fry's – they were sorta greenish, a sure sign that they would last at least four days – four bananas, four days – that's how it works in the Summer.

As I walked out of the supermarket I spied an old guy that I last laid eyes on about eight or ten years ago. He looked great! He was on his way in and I was on my way out so I walked right up to him, extended my right hand in fellowship and asked how the dickens he was doing.

Well, the usual small talk followed. He's been doing fine. So I told him I throw myself out of bed every morning and if it hurts when I hit the floor I know I'm still alive!

I am 77 these days - and said as much ... and continued with the key question, "How old are you now, my friend?" He said, "I haven't missed a meal in 92 years!"

"Oh, my God," I thought, "Is that the answer to longevity?"

WOW! This ol' guy was upright, a little thin but walking tall and strong, with no assistance, unlike many of his peers still alive. No walker, mind you. No wheelchair. No thumb-stick or cane. No dottering, either. As Chicago Cubbies announcer Harry Carey used to shout, "Holy cow!"

*Haven't missed a meal in 92 years.* Maybe the secret of life?

(This is new, from my second book-in-progress **¿Quién Sabe?** just because it's fun!)

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Thursday, July 19, 2018

## Recall?

I was shopping at the grocery store the other day. There had been a problem a few days earlier: There was no **Mexican Coca Cola** and no **Iceberg Lettuce**. I complained bitterly. Somehow, upon my return, the Cokes had showed up again on their end cap and the lettuce miraculously showed up at 99¢ a head.

I got four Cokes. This is quite a thing, in my estimation. Cokes in cans and Cokes in plastic bottles have never tasted like "**The Real Thing**" since the change some decades ago. The first time I ran into Mexican Cokes, the price didn't seem too bad ... and they were in glass bottles, something I hadn't seen since the **Christmas '97 Classic Coke** special promotion. Something I noticed with the glass bottles - they tasted different from the usual stuff. The new Mexican-bottled Cokes taste like "The Real Thing" because they are made with sugar, not corn syrup, and they're distributed in glass bottles. So the reason I prefer them is because they are manufactured the way they were decades ago, back when they tasted like "The Real Thing!"

I hit the produce section next, seeking a nice solid head of Iceberg Lettuce for sandwiches later in the week. (We were going to have PB&J and Bologna sandwiches. Bologna needs a big leaf of Iceberg Lettuce!) I always feel the head lettuce to make sure it will last a while. One can always peel a few leaves away from a solid head and have the real goods for a sandwich. At any rate, there was an Oriental lady standing pensively next to the Iceberg display, and I asked her if everything was all right. She said she was afraid to buy the lettuce because there had been a recall of some of the product grown in Yuma, AZ. I said, yes there was. But it was

### **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

Romaine Lettuce. (5 people died and over 200 were sickened by e-coli-tainted Romaine from Yuma in April, May and June, 2018 - prompting multiple recalls of the product.) But, I reassured her, the first to respond to recalls are the retailers ... so you can be assured that this is the good stuff. Besides, it's Iceberg ... great for salads and sandwiches!

I always have a good experience grocery shopping because even if everything I want isn't in stock, there are always friends around and new friends to meet.

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Monday, July 23, 2018

## Democratic or Republic?

The United States of America is widely known as a **Democratic Republic** in which two words - *control* and *liberty* - form the basis of our country's opposing political forces.

**Democratic** - because the country's laws, rules and regulations are created in democratic institutions where the majority rules. A simple majority of one more than the minority is enough to make or break a proposal before federal, state, county, city and town elected government bodies. Democratic bodies seek to *control* the lives of the electorate.

**Republic** - because the country is considered a *public matter*, not the private concern or property of rulers. The primary positions of power within a republic are not inherited. Power is held by the people and their elected representatives, and the country elects or nominates a president rather than a monarch. The people of a Republic seek the largest degree of *liberty* consistent with common-sense law and order.

The electoral process for President described in the Twelfth Amendment to the United States Constitution (formerly Article II, Section 1, Clause 3) provides the clearest definition of the American Democratic Republic.

Selection of representatives to the Electoral College is done by the Democratic process - even if by one vote. Each state is thereby represented by a democratically elected number equal to the sum of its Senators and Representatives. None of the members of the Electoral College are legally bound to vote

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

for their Party's Popular Vote choice, but over the country's history it has been a custom rarely violated.

The Republic is represented in an Electoral college where each state is *equally* represented by the number of its Senators (100) and *proportionately* represented by its membership in the House of Representatives (435) plus three electors representing the District of Columbia. The Electoral College, therefore, is composed of 538 electors and requires a simple majority of 270 votes to select the President.

Both equality and proportionality make the Electoral College completely representative of our American Democratic Republic and between them comprise the most effective means of promoting liberty while preventing tyranny.

By tyranny, we allege that the majority vote represents certain death to liberty. A stark reminder of this is the story of the Homeowners Association, which by a one vote majority required one of its members to pay vastly increased fees because his home was slightly larger than the others in the HOA. The homeowner's objections fell on deaf ears and when he refused to pay the increase, the HOA sued. By one vote, a Jury found for the HOA. His Appeal failed also - by one vote. The HOA finally placed a lien on his home, again by a one vote majority. He had to sell to get out from under the debt accrued from legal fees and the lien. One vote - all the way up the ladder - was the tyrannical difference that took this guy's liberty - not to mention his home.

The popular vote in the 2016 Presidential Election constituted a majority in the most populous areas of the country (ie: along the coasts) by some 3.5 million votes. That was offset by the representatives of the states making up the majority in the Electoral College. There were enough in the Electoral College majority to prevent the tyrannical quest of electing a

### Thayer's Wild Bunch V

candidate by a one vote majority in the coastal states. The minority garnered 227 votes, the majority 304, selecting Donald Trump and surprising election experts and pundits across the world!

While the Dems were betting on a national voter majority made up of Liberals from the coasts, the GOP also remembered to tap the rest of the union comprised of middle America's "fly-over" country. What the Democrats forgot was that the *states* are represented in the Senate and the *people* are represented in the House. Our Democratic Republic has its own very unique way of leveling the playing field so that *everybody* in the country has a say!

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Thursday, July 26, 2018

## Democratic Socialists?

How much of an effect are America's young Democratic Socialists going to have on the 2018 mid-term elections? Are they going to be able to take over the Democrat Party base? Or will the older, more experienced among them settle for an election-winning coalition? The answers to those questions remain to be seen. Meanwhile, the DNC is feeling how difficult it is to raise funds from young people who have little to offer other than time and energy. And the base is beginning to rebel against the constantly growing leftward movement of their party's policies.

Super-young voters tend to be idealistic ... bullet-proof, if you will. Young people make for large, energized crowds - especially if they have a champion to carry their causes.

The question is, What are the causes for wet-behind-the-ears left-wing first-time voters? A living wage, fifteen dollars an hour or whatever the market will bear? Mandated single-payer medical care, employer-subsidized policies or free-market choices? A free college education, pay-as-you-go or on-the-job training? Is it open borders for all comers, a tightly-controlled immigration system or something in between? Is it mob-enforced "safe spaces", "occupied" public places or government-regulated law-and-order? Voting rights for all, those with "proper" ID or strictly limited to people who can document American citizenship?

The thing about young people is they are easily influenced - not having the wisdom of experience in that dog-eat-dog world out there. A good number of those under twenty-one can't appreciate the meaning of "don't" or "stop" or "no" or "bad idea." The old axiom from the sixties still plays: *If it*

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

*feels good, do it!* Many young folks find it easier to *go along to get along*, so-to-speak, rather than express an informed opinion before a group with mixed ideas.

A funny thing happened in New York the other day - the Democrats chose a Democratic Socialist for the 14th Congressional District seat. Community Organizer **Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez** came out of nowhere to beat ten-term incumbent Democratic Caucus Chair **Joe Crowley**. The 28-year-old girl from the Bronx won because she knew how to turn out the vote and how to motivate young people.

Ocasio-Cortez worked as an organizer for Bernie Sanders' 2016 Presidential campaign. Her 2018 campaign video began with the words, "Women like me aren't supposed to run for office." The **American Spectator** tells us "Her progressive policy agenda includes: 1) Medicare for all 2) abolition of the Immigrant and Customs Enforcement agency, 3) tuition-free public college, and, a little incongruously, 4) abolition of those privately owned prisons few voters have probably ever heard of." What's the saying? "Socialists always run out of other people's money."

The Ocasio-Cortez campaign spent \$194,000 compared to the Crowley camp's \$3.4 million. She won the Primary because she knew that banging on doors and asking folks, especially the young ones, to vote for her - would get results. If that knowledge-base spreads to those bullet-proof young-'uns, the Democrat Party will be in deep kimchi.

None of the above is being lost on the Millennials. Word on the street is that large numbers of them plan on staying home the first Tuesday in November.

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**Monday, July 30, 2018**

## **Presidential Summits**

The flap over President **Donald Trump's** Summit with Russia's **Vladimir Putin** hogged the news cycle for over a week. The mainstream media, political pundits, Democrats and Republicans alike were all on board - going so far to accuse him of treason. Complaints raged around the fact that there was no solid information relative to the contents of the private **Helsinki** one-on-one.

Senate Minority Leader **Chuck Schumer** exclaimed bitterly, "It is utterly amazing, utterly amazing, that no one knows what was said."

Catching many by surprise, Trump replied that he looked forward to a second meeting with Putin in the Fall "so that we can start implementing some of the many things discussed, including stopping terrorism, security for Israel, nuclear proliferation, cyber attacks, trade, Ukraine, Middle East peace, North Korea and more."

The fact is that private Summit meetings between the top leaders of The United States and Russia (USSR) are not at all unusual. Detailed information about the subjects discussed has rarely been made public, although many of the meetings were starting points of historic agreements..

In December of 1943 President **Franklin D Roosevelt** met in Summit at Tehran, Iran with Soviet Premier **Joseph Stalin** and UK Prime Minister **Winston Churchill**. The three met again in February of 1945 at Yalta in the USSR.

## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

In July and August of 1945 **Harry S Truman** met with Stalin and UK Prime Ministers Churchill and Attlee at Potsdam in Germany.

In July of 1955 President **Dwight Eisenhower** met with **Nikita Krushchev** and **Nikolai Bulganin** in Geneva, Switzerland. Eisenhower and Krushchev met in September of 1959 at Washington DC and Camp David - the first visit to the United States from a Soviet leader. In May of 1960 the two met again in Paris, France.

June, 1961 saw Krushchev and President **John F Kennedy** meeting at Vienna, Austria. The Cold War between the US and USSR began in 1962 over the downing of a US Spy Plane in Russia.

There were continuing talks during the Cold War between June 1962 and October 1991. United States Presidents and Soviet leaders involved in both private and public talks included Presidents **Lyndon Johnson**, **Richard Nixon**, **Gerald Ford**, **Jimmy Carter**, **Ronald Reagan** and **George H W Bush**, as well as Soviet leaders **Alexei Kosygin**, **Leonid Brezhnev** and **Mikhail Gorbachev**. Meetings, Conferences and Summits ranged all over the globe from Moscow to Helsinki, Vladivostok, Vienna, New York, Washington, Valletta, Paris, London and Madrid.

The meetings of the minds over that thirty-years created the historic ABM Treaty, the first Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty, the Threshold Test Ban Treaty, the Helsinki Accords and a second Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty. There were a total of 26 US-Soviet meetings held between 1943 and 1991.

Although the talks created volumes of information, little of it became headline news until the agreements had signatures on them affixed by an assortment of official forces at play.

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

According to the US State Department Archive, since the breakup of the Soviet Union on December 25, 1991, Presidents Clinton or Bush met 23 times with Russian Presidents **Boris Yeltsin** or Putin. They discussed such issues as arms reductions; economic aid and reform; democracy and human rights; European security; peacekeeping in Bosnia, Kosovo, and the Middle East; and the conflict in Chechnya. In addition to meetings with Russian Presidents, President Clinton met twice in 1999 with then-Prime Minister Putin.

President **George W Bush** met President Putin in Slovenia in June 2001. The two discussed increased bilateral cooperation on economic, commercial, regional, and security issues. They met again at the G-8 Summit in Genoa and continued dialogue in the USA in November. And they had a number of conferences throughout the period up to 2006 including Putin's last visit to the White House at the invitation of President George W Bush in 2005.

Former Russian president **Dmitry Medvedev**, now prime minister, visited President **Barack Obama** in back in 2010.

**USA Today** shared the following on July 6th, 2017:

"Obama and Putin had a tense relationship throughout Obama's time in the White House. Their first meeting happened a few months into Obama's presidency, when Putin was once again prime minister of Russia. Obama came out of the meeting saying, 'We think there's an excellent opportunity to put U.S.-Russian relations on a much stronger footing,' according to **Politico**. Less than a year later, the two countries signed the New START nuclear arms reduction treaty.

"However, tensions climbed over the years because of a confluence of issues, from Russia banning U.S.

### **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

adoptions to Moscow granting asylum to National Security Agency contractor-turned-leaker **Edward Snowden** who revealed U.S. surveillance programs.

"A particularly notable moment between leaders of the two countries happened in 2012, when Obama was caught on a hot mic telling outgoing Russian president Dmitry Medvedev he would have more 'flexibility' to negotiate with incoming President Putin on controversial issues such as missile defense after his own presidential election. But by 2016, when Putin and Obama met at the G-20 summit, Obama said that 'gaps of trust' prevented the countries from brokering a ceasefire in the Syrian civil war."

The great difference between 2016 and today appears to be the hateful relations between the President and the opposition's leadership, political pundits and the mainstream media.

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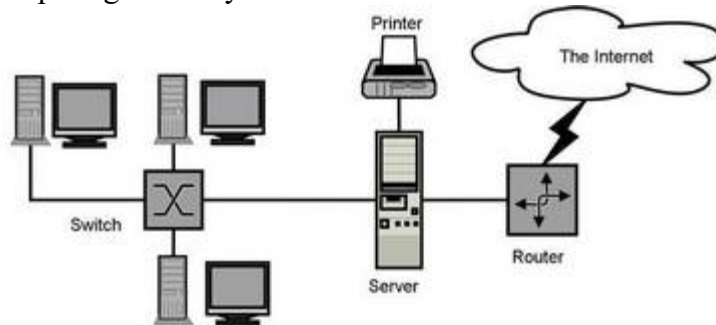
Thursday, August 2, 2018

## The Cloud

Not that long ago I read that the **NSA** was uploading all of its data to "**The Cloud**." That made me very uneasy. The most secretive of all US Government spy outfits, the one that claims to have all the dirt there is ... on every US citizen ... is sharing its stuff in the Cloud? What the Hell is that all about? Fake news? Like anyone possessing a Classification ... ***You have a need to know.***

**PC Magazine** wrote the following about The Cloud on May 3rd, 2016:

"What is the cloud? Where is the cloud? Are we in the cloud now? These are all questions you've probably heard or even asked yourself. The term "cloud computing" is everywhere.



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"In the simplest terms, cloud computing means storing and accessing data and programs over the Internet instead of your computer's hard drive. The cloud is just a metaphor for the Internet. It goes back to the days of flowcharts and presentations that would represent the gigantic server-farm infrastructure of the Internet as nothing but a puffy, white cumulus cloud,

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

accepting connections and doling out information as it floats.

"What cloud computing is not about is your hard drive. When you store data on or run programs from the hard drive, that's called *local storage* and computing. Everything you need is physically close to you, which means accessing your data is fast and easy, for that one computer, or others on the local network. Working off your hard drive is how the computer industry functioned for decades; some would argue it's still superior to cloud computing ...

"The cloud is also not about having a dedicated network attached storage (NAS) hardware or server in residence. Storing data on a home or office network does not count as utilizing the cloud. (However, some NAS will let you remotely access things over the Internet, and there's at least one brand from Western Digital named 'My Cloud,' just to keep things confusing.)

"For it to be considered 'cloud computing,' you need to access your data or your programs over the Internet, or at the very least, have that data synced with other information over the Web. In a big business, you may know all there is to know about what's on the other side of the connection; as an individual user, you may never have any idea what kind of massive data processing is happening on the other end. The end result is the same: with an online connection, *cloud computing* can be done anywhere, anytime.

"The ISPs, telcos, and media companies control your access. Putting all your faith in the cloud means you're also putting all your faith in continued, unfettered

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

access. You might get this level of access, but it'll cost you. And it will continue to cost more and more as companies find ways to make you pay by doing things like metering your service: the more bandwidth you use, the more it costs.

"Cloud computing—like so much about the Internet—is a little bit like the Wild West, where the rules are made up as you go, and you hope for the best."

According to **RealClearPolitics**:

“Within weeks of a May 2013 speech on the subject by President **Barack Obama** at Fort McNair - the National Defense University in Washington DC - an unprecedented breach" occurred at the **National Security Agency**. It was an inside job, and its scope was stunning: an avalanche of top secret documents stolen from NSA computers, and some of the material was released to the media. The culprit was a 29-year-old technology officer not even employed directly by the U.S. government. His name, as the whole world would soon know, was **Edward J. Snowden**, a computer whiz and libertarian who once described the Internet in his online chat group as 'the most important invention in all human history.'”

My experience over the years says that the government is the absolute worst at keeping up with the science of anything, much less computing! For many decades, government computers and IT Systems have been clunky at best. In relation to **Microsoft, Apple, Amazon, Google** and the like, even cutting-edge government programs pale in comparison.

While it is true that the Military, Universities and other contributors to Information Technology research have created

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

massive strides forward in the IT sciences, the government has never really been able to keep up.

When was the last time you visited your Department of Motor Vehicles? How about Department of Economic Security? The local Social Security office? Don't even breath a word about the VA! Why is it that America's government entities are still driving computer Model-T technology instead of the bestest, fastest, most reliable Ferraris of the IT world?

Why does the government underwrite development for military use as well as research at centers of higher education while leaving other state, federal and local government entities to wallow in outdated languages like COBOL, FORTRAN, Pascal and such? Few programmers can write system-level code anymore, preferring to use a compiler-based language such as C++ or Java.

So, they want me to trust the NSA, **FBI**, **CIA**, **IRS** and the like to keep my information safe in The Cloud? Pray tell, what have these folks been smoking? For Heaven's sake, people have been saying this very thing on **Facebook** for decades: "WTF?" I don't know about you, but storing data about us on government files in The Cloud just scares the crap outa me!

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.



Monday, August 6, 2018

## What Happened to Lou?

**Walter Isaacson** took over as chairman and CEO of the CNN News Group in the Summer of 2001 after an extensive career in print, including the top slot at **TIME** magazine. He made it clear that he was moving CNN coverage to "opinion journalism." **Lou Waters** (one of the original anchors at CNN when it first aired in the summer of 1980) resented the news outlet's growing slant to the right. As I understand it, Waters wanted no part of it. To paraphrase, *"I may be just a newsreader, but I will not read propaganda."* Or something to that extent.

Shortly after his appointment at CNN, Isaacson attracted attention for seeking the views of Republican Party leaders on Capitol Hill regarding criticisms that CNN broadcast content that was unfair to Republicans or conservatives. Historians have noted that Isaacson's pandering behavior was endowing conservative politicians with power over CNN. Perhaps another reason Waters was good to go?

How many remember when CNN was reporting from Iraq as US Stealth Bombers delivered the goods to the outskirts of Baghdad? Remember the intrepid **Wolf Blitzer**? There he was on one of the upper floors of a Baghdad hotel describing the scene - the smart bombs going off willie-nillie and the Iraqi anti-aircraft batteries spraying the skies, trying to bring down just one of those invisible invaders. Lou Waters was there. He, too, anchored parts of the network's 24-hour-a-day coverage of the Persian Gulf War. CNN racked up all-time record audiences during its 1991 coverage.

Waters anchored seven hours of continuous coverage after the explosion of space shuttle Challenger in 1986. Lou was in the

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

anchor chair in 1989 when a powerful earthquake struck San Francisco and he reported live from Macedonia during NATO's air campaign against Yugoslavia in 1999. On September 11, 2001 the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York were leveled by two commercial aircraft commandeered by radical Islamic terrorists. But Waters and his on-air partner were conspicuously absent.

According to a September 17, 2001 article in the **Tucson Citizen**, *"Waters and Natalie Allen anchored 'CNN Live Today,' a weekday afternoon newscast. The program [had] disappeared ... along with much of CNN's regular programming to make way for coverage of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks."*

An old acquaintance, Lou wrote at my request earlier this year,

*"I left CNN because Issacson, who admitted he knew little about broadcast news and was out of his depth, wanted to get rid of any 'original' talent. He had no idea how to compete with Fox and began bending right, not left, to do so. And in so doing ruined the brand and reputation of a News network where NEWS was the STAR."*

*"Ted Turner told me in his office the day I left, that Issacson wanted him home too. He said, 'I wish I'd never sold the damn thing.'"*

Meanwhile, Wolf Blitzer kept his head down and successfully weathered the shift from opinion journalism to the left and the likes of liberal journalists such as **Jim Ocosta**. Today, Blitzer is the host of *The Situation Room*. He's been at CNN since May of 1990.

### **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

In January 2003, Issacson announced he'd be stepping down as president at CNN to become president of the **Aspen Institute**.

And Lou Waters? He's the **Vice-Mayor** of **Oro Valley**, just north of Tucson.

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Thursday, August 9, 2018

## JJinCO Wrote This!

In response to a scathing article by **Carl M Cannon** in the **Orange County Register**, urging the President and the Press to ease up some, [JJinCO](#) wrote the following on **DISQUS**:

"BEN RHODES (fiction writer who became Obama's Deputy National Security Advisor for Strategic Communications, brother of David Rhodes, President of CBS News): 'We created an echo chamber. They were saying things that validated what we had given them to say. The average reporter we talk to is 27 years old, and their only reporting experience consists of being around political campaigns. ... They literally know nothing.'

"Trump says 'enemy of the people' because 'young, partisan, progressive, gullible reporters who know very little, and lack experience and wisdom, and who are more anxious to attain fame than report the news' loses something in translation.

"Nixon's greatest sin was abolishing the Bretton-Woods agreement, not Watergate. Ben Rhodes is talking about how the Obama administration lied to sell the dangerous Iran deal, not to mention that 'if you like your doctor and insurance' nonsense. Now, the press has joined the Deep State in full blown coverup of Spygate because, in comparison to Nixon, Obama is Democrat and black.

"I think 'enemy of the people' is accurate. Trump needs simply to add that journalists aren't to be threatened nor touched lest we make martyrs out of them ... making them even more worthless ... and annoying ... like Jim Acosta."

## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

Funny thing ... I had never thought of today's journalists in that way. Twenty-seven-year-old know-nothings, with little reporting experience except around political campaigns. And, that premise was planted by the President of CBS News' brother, Obama's Deputy National Security Advisor for Strategic Communications, of all things! So Obama's Communications group planted the foundation of today's Fake News in the minds of young liberal reporters years ago!

Voilà! The solution to Fake News may be at hand! All we gotta do is un-plant the pap they were told to say in that vast journalistic echo chamber. Certainly young, partisan, progressive, gullible reporters who know very little, and lack experience and wisdom, and who are more anxious to attain fame than report the news should be able to un-learn years-old propaganda. Especially now that they are Millennials.

Sure. And I have title to that British bridge over there on the Colorado river! Any takers?

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Monday, August 13, 2018  
**OH Dems Triumph!**

Frank Bruni 's New York Times headline last Wednesday was *A Nail-Biter in Ohio Race Is a Democratic Triumph*. It was another one of those "We are triumphant! We lost again! Yay!" claims that liberal Democrats have been trumpeting each time they've come close to winning, but haven't even won a cigar! Bruni wrote, "The party wildly outperformed expectations ..."

In futile attempts to make lemonade, Bruni continued, "Two of the left's brightest current stars, Bernie Sanders and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, campaigned in Michigan with Abdul El-Sayed, who aimed to be the first Muslim governor in America. They failed as he was soundly defeated by the choice of the party's establishment, Gretchen Whitmer.

"Cori Bush, competing in a [Missouri] Democratic congressional primary, also staged a challenge from the left, trying to usurp a Democratic incumbent in a St. Louis-based district. She too didn't prevail.

"... [Kansas'] Kris Kobach ... joined [Trump] in his wild, unsubstantiated claims of widespread voter fraud. On Wednesday morning ... Kobach held a tiny lead over Governor Jeff Colyer.

Bruni's musings concluded with, "Trump's tweet late Tuesday night, exulting in 'a great victory' for Balderson and claiming it as a validation of his own political superpowers? Like so many of the president's expectorations, it's delusional. It's self-infatuated hooey."

## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

The Ohio Congressional District 12 Dems were triumphant because they were able to motivate not quite enough liberal people to go to the polls and vote for their Democrat candidate. On the other hand, the GOP was demonstrably unsuccessful in convincing their base to turn out in droves, even though they knew in their hearts that too much confidence is a sure way to lose.

Declaring victory upon defeat is the same ol' same that the left has been pulling for decades. It's what they do. They like stunning victories, so they claim even losses as such. Blatant falsehoods are perfectly fine because voters are sheeple and don't remember silly little things like the truth. For instance: "if you like your insurance you can keep your insurance."

Liberal trickery is easy to discover: Find the absolute worst possible in something good, leak it to the mainstream media and they will blare it from the roof-tops as gospel. Remember, "The Tax Bill gives breaks to the one per-cent and crumbs to the middle class." How about: "A private meeting between Trump and Putin is an outrage!" Depending on one's perspective, both of those statements are true! But then, misleading the sheeple is the means and not the end. Stay tuned.

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Thursday, August 16, 2018

## Big Deals for Dems

The mainstream media has been reporting all year on the Liberal issues that made up the main points of **Bernie Sanders'** pre-presidential campaign: Free universal healthcare, free education and a \$15 minimum wage. As a spin-off, Sanders' Socialist agenda has spread and been endorsed by the so-called Democratic Socialists. Now they're talking about minimum income for everyone and a guaranteed job. The political thinking, of course, is that if it's free people will vote for it.

According to an August 6th article in **Forbes** magazine, "Within the past year, polls have found majority support for the federal government ensuring health care for all, for free college tuition at public universities, and for the proposition that upper-income people and corporations pay too little in taxes. Even a federal jobs guarantee received 46% approval in an April poll."

One would think that educated and experienced journalists would know that over-stated reports about Socialist activities can create a dead-end - for their country and for their livelihood.

Socialism doesn't work. Wherever it's been tried, it has failed. Even with **Castro** gone, Cuba is still a mess. Venezuela has gone from a capitalist powerhouse to abject poverty in much less than a decade under Socialism. Those are just two recent examples of **Marx**, **Lenin**, **Stalin** and **Mao's** influences on world events.

But, now it appears that the Left Wing of the Democrat Party is seriously looking to Socialism as a major part of its



## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

political strategy. The operative word is "appears" because Democratic Socialists are an infinitesimally tiny splinter of the Left, promoted by young journalists who, like moths to a flame, continue to be duped by the magnetic call of "free stuff."

Hate to tell ya this, troops, but there is no such thing as free stuff - just as there is no such thing as a free lunch. Somewhere along the line someone will pay - probably you - in wildly distorted proportion to your "fair share".

In practice, Socialism takes over profitable enterprises and uses the profits to pay for the free stuff, thus forcing the rich to pay their fair share. With no profit to be made, entrepreneurs have no incentive to work and, seeking "income equality", opt to go on the dole, like everyone else. After all, it's free stuff. But with no income the government can't keep its obligation to provide for everyone, so everything except violence becomes scarce. Rampant inflation, joblessness, disease and, eventually, anarchy are the inevitable result.

The reason American Democratic Socialism can't work is amply demonstrated by the ignorant blather from its most visible representative, New York's 28-year-old 14th Congressional District nominee **Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez**, who beat 10-term incumbent Representative **Joe Crowley** in the New York Democratic primary.

Bronx-born Ocasio-Cortez fits the mold completely - a fast-talking know-nothing, spouting ignorance at every turn. She embarrassed herself badly in a **CNN** interview when asked if she recognized **Nancy Pelosi** as the Party Leader. "I think absolutely right now...she is, she is the leader of, of...no, no, she, I mean, um, um, speaker or rather leader Pelosi hopefully, y'know, we'll see...she's uh...she's the current

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

leader of the party and I think that the party absolutely does have its leadership in the House and Senate, we have our leadership in the Senate as well."

According to **The Daily Wire**, "Ocasio-Cortez has displayed her erudition before, claiming 'Unemployment Is Low Because Everyone Has Two Jobs,' asserting that 'the upper middle class does not exist anymore in America,' and [...] stating, 'One of the biggest problems that we have is 200 million Americans make less than \$20,000 a year. That's 40 percent of this country.'"

Sorry, kid - but 40% of 328 million is 131.2 million, not 200 million - but hey ... 200 million is 60% of the population! Actually, the real median individual income in the US is \$31,099.

Recently Ocasio-Cortez proclaimed that Medicare for all would reduce the cost of funerals because fewer people would be dying.

The Left Wing of the Democrat Party, led by Bernie Sanders, has taken this "community organizer" under its wing. All they have to do now is convince everybody that free stuff promoted by ignorant Democratic Socialists will fix all the ills of this country. Sure.

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Monday, August 20, 2018

## Natural Power

I've been thinking about renewable energy for quite some time. And I've decided that Wind and Solar are really stupid ideas. They are not renewable ... they are intermittent at best. And what is that renewable blather anyway? How do you put the wind back in the sky? How do you put the sunshine back where it came from? Are those **Al Gore** ideas? Those questions got me going.

Note: I Googled everything but the kitchen sink to get the data together for this thing!

So, here's the deal: How about finding some real, reliable energy? Hey - they've been doing it in California, Alaska and Hawaii for decades! Mining steam! They do it to run generators and create electricity. However, I contend that production methods in practice today are way too expensive (even at \$0.01 to \$0.03 per kWh), and too inefficient - selling from \$0.03 to \$0.05 per kWh.

The whole idea about energy conversion is to utilize the most efficient method possible - something like the old water wheels ... but then there has to be a stream that runs all the time. Well, good luck with that! Hydro-electric power has been providing significant amounts of America's power for many decades, but lakes fill with silt, droughts happen and the government can't keep up. So what are we to do?

We were talking above about geothermal energy - taking advantage of the earth's crust, heated by its magma just underneath. Volcanic magma runs some 1300 to 2400 degrees F, plenty of heat to boil water and even super-heat it. But you can't just put some water down a hole and expect to

## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

contain what comes back out! What goes in must be pure and what comes out must also be pure, devoid of all contaminants that can clog up the works in a steam-driven electric turbine.

Should be pretty simple - run the water through a stainless-steel pipe positioned closely-enough to the actual magma that the water will become super-heated steam and return to the surface with enough pressure to drive the turbine ... without exploding, melting or otherwise degrading the pipe. The system works when there aren't any earthquakes or volcanoes around.

Earthquakes in southern California have made operating its geo-thermal projects a little iffy at times, but there are a total of 43 operating geothermal power plants in California, most north of San Francisco, with an installed capacity of 2,694 megawatts. Hawaii's geothermal field run by Puna Geothermal Ventures was ruined recently by Kilauea volcanic activity. Be that as it may, geothermal energy production has been demonstrated at the Lardarello field in Italy since 1913, at the Wairakei field in New Zealand since 1958, and at The Geysers field in northern California since 1960.

Geothermal energy takes up to a third of its gross revenues for maintenance alone. Although its \$0.05 per kWh delivered aint bad!

Whatever. Geothermal works.

Pond or tidal stream energy is another proven, yet very inefficient method of extracting power from the earth. Actually, not the earth ... the Moon! The Earth's satellite creates the tides that ebb and flow as the Moon rotates around it.

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

The Netherlands has created a system that uses the rush of seawater coming in and going out of one of its ports to create the power to drive bi-directional electric turbines. According to developer Tocardo Tidal Turbines, its five-turbine array is the Netherlands' largest tidal energy project and the world's largest commercial tidal installation. There are also tidal stream projects in Scotland and future plans for more in Japan. Still, this form of energy production is expensive to construct and maintain.

Saline (salt) solutions create real nightmares when it comes to equipment maintenance. It clogs up systems just the same way suspended solids do in your water system at home. Without ways and means of softening the water, things can get backed up! Whatever the maintenance costs, it still costs the customer between \$0.042 and \$0.065 per kWh.

The American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE) notes that in **2008** coal cost between 7 and 14 cents per kWh; natural gas cost between 7 and 10 cents per kWh; and wind between 4 and 9 cents per kWh. In terms of new nuclear, some estimates put its price at 15 cents per kWh, or more. I don't know where ACEEE got their numbers, but they don't appear to match the ones I found. Perhaps energy costs have dropped in the last ten years because of greater generation efficiency as well as new oil and gas production, enough to make the United States a net exporter of energy.

The price of a kWh of electricity is relatively stable, but things have changed some in the last decade or so when it comes to the power bill. Nowadays, folks get an assortment of charges and fees including transmission fees, "demand" charges and meter-reader fees not to mention an assortment of local, state and federal taxes, adjustments and assessments. By the time everything gets added up, the electricity is dirt cheap compared to the add-ons. Where I live, a \$200 power

### **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

bill (for around 1000 kWh) will show about \$62 for actual electricity - only 31% of the total! That would be a very reasonable \$0.062 per kWh. But, when you stop and think about it, 69% of that \$200 bill is for something other than electricity.

An average kWh of American electrical energy today costs consumers just \$0.1028. That's the national average. Think what we could do if we produced more efficient geothermal and tidal-stream energy and got the government and corporate greed out of the picture.

Now, if we could just figure out how to harness gravity ... still workin' on that one.

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Thursday, August 23, 2018

## Hotter'n the Dickens!

This is from my book-in-progress **¿Quién Sabe?** which you can read at [www.jettedthayer.com](http://www.jettedthayer.com)

Back in the mid-70s Claudette and I had occasion to visit a hole-in-the-wall family-operated Mexican food restaurant on South Twelfth Avenue in South Tucson.

There was nothing special about the place other than it looked more like a converted old adobe house with white stucco and red trim. Inside the front door was a room about the same size as most Tucson adobe living rooms and it contained four tables for four. Off to the right was a larger room, what one might expect as a family room for dining and visiting. It had a half-dozen tables that could seat four to eight each. It wasn't crowded but rather, compact and comfortable. The interior walls were white stucco decorated with pictures and trinkets. It was charming and welcoming.

The menu was Spartan with the usual Mexican fare. We were there because it was recommended by a local newsmagazine. I ordered Machitos, a dish made with tripe such as is used in Menudo, the traditional hangover cure. Claudette and the kids had ordered burros. There was the usual mild and hot salsas and flour tortilla chips for appetizers. Claudette and I ordered Margaritas. The kids had Cokes over ice.

As we waited for our orders we picked away at the chips and salsa. While the rest dipped their chips in the mild salsa, I tackled the hot stuff. It was fantastic! Absolutely delicious! Truly, the best I ever had.

## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

I was munching out, savoring the chips and salsa, when I started to flush. Claudette mentioned that I looked sorta sun-burned. I was starting to sweat. She looked worried. The sweat began pouring off my forehead into my eyes, off my cheeks and chin. That salsa was hot. It toasted the corners of my lips but didn't burn my mouth or tongue. Hot enough, though, to make the pores on my head open like a thunder-storm and flow like a southwest gully-washer!

The staff peered around the corner of the kitchen door, wide-eyed, as the red flush moved slowly up my neck. They (and my wife) snickered as the sweat - pouring off my forehead, running down my face, dripping off my chin - became too much. "May I have a towel?" I asked. They brought three, one of which I draped over my head, a second around my neck. Wow! That salsa was hot stuff – hotter'n anything I'd ever eaten before. But God, it was good!

The Machitos was delicious ... especially with the salsa slathered all over it, pushed on my fork with a buttered tortilla. Sumptuous is the word.

I'll never forget that Mexican dinner. I wish I could remember the name of that little hole-in-the-wall restaurant so very long ago. Haven't had anything quite that good since.

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Monday, August 27, 2018

### 3 Good 'uns

Last Friday two significant stories appeared first in the **Drudge Report** on the internet - **TMZ** broke a third yesterday at 8:23 Pacific Time. American War Hero **Senator John McCain** discontinued medical treatment for an aggressive form of brain cancer that he'd been fighting for over a year. Yesterday the **Los Angeles Times** reported that legendary playwright **Niel Simon** had passed. And **Robin Leach**, known for his hit TV show *Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous*, passed away in Las Vegas a little before two o'clock Friday morning at age 76.

■ McCain, according to a **New York Times** report, was not doing interviews, but rather, delighted in sitting out on his deck where he once handled slabs of ribs on the grill. He and his wife listened to the hummingbirds and the burbling stream that runs through their 15-acre ranch, enjoyed the verdant scenery in an otherwise arid region and divided their loyalties when the hawks pestered Peanut, their Chihuahua mix. (Cindy McCain sided with the dog, John with the hawks.)

Navy pilot Captain John McCain spent five-and-a-half years as a prisoner of war in North Viet Nam's infamous **Hanoi Hilton** after having been shot down on October 26, 1967. He was flying his 23rd bombing mission over North Vietnam when his A-4E Skyhawk was downed by a missile over Hanoi. Part of what kept the Senator going was always his great sense of humor. He delighted in messing with friends with jokes like the one about the difference between a lawyer and a catfish. (One is a bottom-feeding scum-sucker ... the other is a fish!)

## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

John McCain began Hospice care, sometimes called "comfort care", late last week and passed away Saturday at 4:28 pm Mountain Standard time at age 81. He died of the same disease, on the same day as Teddy Kennedy, exactly nine years later.

The New York Times reported early yesterday that Mr. McCain will lie in state in the Capitol Rotunda and receive a full dress funeral service at the Washington National Cathedral. The man who represented Arizona in Congress for 35 years will also lie in state at the Arizona State Capitol before his burial September 2nd in Annapolis, Md.

■ Neil Simon, whose comic touch in "The Odd Couple," "Barefoot in the Park" and many other hits on stage and screen made him the most commercially successfully playwright of the 20th century - and perhaps of all time - died at 1:00 yesterday morning, according to his family. He was 91 and died of complications from pneumonia at a Manhattan hospital. In recent years, he suffered from Alzheimer's disease. Simon won a Pulitzer Prize in 1991 for "Lost in Yonkers."

■ Leach, who would have turned 77 this Wednesday, had been hospitalized since November when he suffered a stroke in Cabo San Lucas. The famed journalist moved to Las Vegas in the late '90s and spent two decades there covering celebrity events for a number of media outfits. He was under Hospice care when he suffered a second stroke on Monday. Leach signed off each episode of his famous show with his signature catchphrase, "Champagne wishes and caviar dreams." Former Las Vegas Mayor Oscar Goodman and current Mayor Carolyn Goodman issued a joint statement Friday declaring, "We have lost a dear, dear friend and wonderful man. His kindness and decency will be missed. He was so very

### **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

charitable, and he really loved Las Vegas. An eternity of Champagne and Caviar for him.”

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Thursday, August 30, 2018

## Lemon Snow

Tuesday I sent my relatives the recipe to a desert that an old friend of the (Ruth & Duke) Thayer family had given my mother. It was a hit from the get-go! My mother, being a happy soul and prankster, told my little brother it was **Ivory Snow** and he bought into it hook, line and sinker.

This quick article got its start when I sent another recipe to my daughter which had been provided by another Thayer friend many decades ago. **Claire's Pudding** is another delicious desert made with two types of milk products, orange juice, pineapple juice, lemon juice, lemon (or lime) Jello, sugar and vanilla wafers. It's at

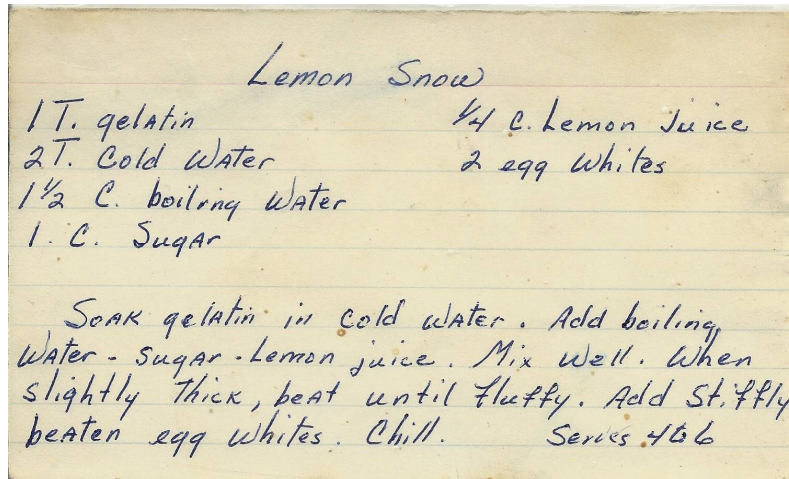
<http://www.tedthayer.com/recipes/recipes1.html>

About **Ivory Snow** - from today's [www.IvorySnow.ca](http://www.IvorySnow.ca) website: "Whether you're a first timer or the greatest, grandest mother of them all, there's one thing moms have agreed on for over 80 years – Ivory Snow baby laundry detergent makes your little one's fabrics feel as clean and gentle as can be. Now, Ivory Snow has a product for every stage of babyhood. Formulated to be gentle on baby's skin and tough on stains, Ivory Snow's new family of products has you covered every step of the way on the big, messy, beautiful journey of #Amazinghood."



## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

Being the stickler for truth that I claim to be ... I thought I'd include a copy of the original recipe for *Ivory Snow* for my brother's benefit. You can enjoy it also, if you wish.



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Monday, September 3, 2018

## Labor Day

Short column today. Celebrating labor.

Wikipedia tells us that **Labor Day** in the United States is a public holiday celebrated on the first Monday in September. It honors the American labor movement and the contributions that workers have made to the strength, prosperity, laws and well-being of the country. It is the Monday of the long weekend known as **Labor Day Weekend** and it is considered the unofficial end of summer in the United States. It is recognized as a federal holiday.

Back four-hundred years ago when I was a kid, Labor Day was the day before school, just as Memorial Day was the day before Summer Vacation. It was great. Too bad today's kids (and teachers) don't have the delight of three full months of Summer. Now school cranks back up almost a month before Labor Day in most school districts across the country ... not quite two-thirds the way through Summer. Back in the day teachers had time to take college courses that pretty much guaranteed pay increases and still had time for a full two weeks of vacation with their families before going back to work. Too bad the teachers' labor movement hasn't succeeded in keeping June, July and all of August Summer Vacation.

More than twenty years ago, I worked at a Union Shop - Hughes Aircraft in Tucson. Teamsters represented the line workers. The Union was not for Engineers, of which I was one, but we did work very closely with the lines and their Stewards. As a consequence, there were few labor issues. The dedication of the Union members struck me from my first day at work. They worked at ideal speed and efficiency when they

### **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

were supposed to - and relaxed when it was time. And they shared their Pizza!

My time at Hughes gave me an appreciation of work - labor, if you will - and the enormous value of teamwork. People who don't or can't work are missing out on one of the things that makes one's life rich and worth living. We celebrate Labor Day because of the hard work the labor movement put in to make it possible for anyone who wants a job to have a shot at it.

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Thursday, September 6, 2018

## Is There News in Kansas?

According to my daughter, most of her news in Kansas originates out of Tulsa, Oklahoma. She claims that with a higher antenna she might be able to get Wichita. She lives in this redest of the red states. Don't bother registering as a Democrat - there aren't any! But, they say, 16 year olds have been running for office recently in Kansas! Well, maybe they make the news there, but it took a New York paper to share it nationwide.

Here's an article about it from **the Washington Post** by **Avi Selk** dated February 10:

In a state where the youth voting rate is even worse than the dismal national average, more than half a dozen Kansas teens are running for statewide office in 2018 - a sort of viral movement against apathy that could, in theory, make a high school student governor.

Naturally, adults are trying to stop it.

A state legislative committee moved a bill forward this week that would bar people under age 18 from running for statewide office, after a 16-year-old discovered a loophole in the state's electoral laws and inspired his peers to flood the race.

"Oh, I could do that," **Jack Bergeson** thought to himself when he realized Kansas law, while it restricts voting ages, says nothing about who can run for governor, the **Kansas City Star** reported last August.



## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

So the Wichita high school junior filed to run in the Democratic primary, campaigning for health-care reform, medical marijuana and open-carry gun laws. One of his classmates, a year older than Bergeson at 17, became his running mate for lieutenant governor.

Neither of them is old enough to vote.

Some political analysts liked the idea of teens running for public office, the Star wrote, noting widespread apathy among young voters in the country. In the last nonpresidential election, census data show a mere 13 percent of Kansans ages 18 to 24 bothered to vote. The national average was just a few points higher.

*[American voter turnout is still lower than most other wealthy nations]*

Other adults mocked Bergeson's campaign.

"People want something different," the teen told **Fox News** host **Jesse Watters** in September. "They don't necessarily want an experienced politician."

Watters interrupted him with a sneering laugh. "Yeah, so they want an inexperienced politician, and you're going to be the most inexperienced politician ever."

"Yes," Bergeson said, straight-faced.

"Have you thought about a jacket and tie?" Watters asked, noting the candidate's polo shirt.

"If you dress more like everyday people, I think it shows a common relation between the candidates and the people who elect them," Bergeson replied.

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

The host cracked more jokes, but the teen was not deterred. On the contrary, he talked his friend, **Tyler Ruzich**, into joining the governor's race on the Republican side, where a huge slate of candidates was vying to replace former governor **Sam Brownback**, who stepped down to become a U.S. ambassador.

Fox News invited Ruzich to appear too - but this time respectfully, with the hosts noting his honor roll status and political experience in student government.

From there, running for governor became something of a high school trend. Four candidates, all 16 or 17, held a forum inside the Lawrence Free State high school gym in October — long before any of their adult counterparts held a debate, the **Wichita Eagle** wrote.

The forum looked not much different from any other, the newspaper reported. Teens in the audience murmured when a 17-year-old libertarian candidate got a jab in at Ruzich during a debate about toll roads. "You don't drive yet," he quipped.

In November, 17-year-old **Lucy Steyer** launched her run for secretary of state. "All of us teenagers running agreed we wanted to bring attention to all the elections," she told the **Hutchinson News**, which noted that regardless of her age, she was one of the only female candidates in the statewide races.

More and more joined the movement. By January, **NPR** wrote, six teens had entered the governor's race alone — making up about a third of the candidates.

That's when the adults began to fight back.

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

State Rep. **Blake Carpenter** (R) introduced a bill in the Kansas legislature in January that would bar anyone too young to vote from running for the governor's office and other top state offices.

The bill, which passed out of a committee on Tuesday, wouldn't affect the 2018 election if it becomes law. But going forward, Carpenter said, rules had to be laid down.

"If you are an adult in the eyes of government at age 18, you can serve in the military, you can do just about anything you want," the Republican legislator told the Star. "As of right now, inmates can run. I also saw reports of people saying that cats and dogs could run."

However, some in the state capitol are trying to keep teen candidacies legal. "We have all the requirements we need right now and that is, that you don't get elected unless the people decide to elect you," Democratic Rep. **Vic Miller** said, according to the Star.

Bergeson, the teen who started the movement, doesn't sound like he especially needs adult help.

"Allow me to clear up a misconception: I am not running for governor as a stunt, or a gag," he told the legislature in written testimony opposing the bill, according to the **Topeka Capital-Journal**.

"I am running for governor because of the minimum wage worker that has to work three jobs just to get by. I am running because our education system has been

### **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

lagging behind other states. I am running to get money out of politics," Bergeson wrote.

"But most importantly, I am running to get as many people involved in politics as possible."

Is a change in the wind, driven by youngsters who observed Millennials' foolishness?

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Monday, September 10, 2018

## Gutless

Anonymous sources are one thing ... but anonymous Op-ed writers are something else! Did you see the Op-ed in the **New York Times** last week? Did you watch the reports on the TV news? It was supposedly from an anonymous insider - a senior administration official. The piece rattled out the supposed inner workings of the **Trump** White House in a poorly-framed patriotic piece designed to make the President out as a lunatic.

The New York Times has been caught before, wrongly naming its sources as "senior officials." Senior where? The Agriculture Department? State? Senior to whom? The President's Junior Assistant Press Secretary? The Assistant Postmaster in Podunk Flats? Why is it the New York Times - the "paper of record" - can't print the news these days with its sources vetted in print?

Without the byline of the author and his (or her) function in the Trump Administration, the NYT Op-ed is, as the President rightly called it, "gutless."

What the NYT published is a Cowan-generated, speculative, innuendo- and rumor-based piece of creative writing - certainly not good, old-fashioned fact-based journalism. As the Captain [Strother Martin] said in **Cool Hand Luke**, "*What we've got here is failure to communicate.*"

Unlike the Los Angeles Times, the NYT has never been known as the the Flagship of America's newspapers. Today's paper of record is no longer trustworthy. The highest orders of professional print journalism now exist only in the memories of folks with roots in yesteryear.

## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

With that ... Claudette and I are heading out this week for my 60-year high school class reunion at Monterey, California. The majority of my Toreador classmates are 77 or 78 years old, having graduated at age 17 or 18 in May of 1958. The guys are still as handsome as they ever were and the gals are still babes, just like they were when they wore those poodle skirts and bobby sox!

The next column will probably appear on September 24th.

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Monday, September 24, 2018

## AZ Voter Registration

**Independents** no longer comprise the majority of Arizona's registered voters. Since March of this year their numbers have declined by 4,611 according to the **Secretary of State's Elections Office**. But they are still a powerful influence on Arizona politics with 34.59% of voters.

As of **March 1st**, 2018 these were Arizona's voter registration numbers:

Independents/others: 34.93% 1,223,219 + 31,072 + 6,782 = 1,261,073

Republicans: 34.87% 1,258,994

Democrats: 30.20% 1,090,310

Total March 1st Registered Voters 3,610,377

Even with the decline in Independents, Arizona's overall voter registration is up by 6%.

Here are the **August 28th**, 2018 numbers:

Independents/others: 34.59% 1,218,716 + 31,177 + 6,569 = 1,256,462 (Down 4,611)

Republicans: 34.81% 1,264,295 (Up 5,301)

Democrats: 30.60% 1,111,580 (Up 21,270)

Total August 28th Registered Voters 3,632,337 (Up 21,960)

Does this mean that the Arizona Congressional Delegation is in jeopardy? ¿Quien sabe?

Republicans remain Arizona's main political party, growing by 5,301 since March. The GOP remains dominant with 34.81% of registered voters - like the Independents, a tad over a third.

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

The state's Democrats have successfully mounted a gargantuan voter registration drive, increasing their numbers by some 21,270 since March. Still, they comprise just shy of 31% of the electorate in Arizona. Assuming that both parties turn out decent numbers, that's not enough to win a head-to-head election with the GOP - they would need something like 152,716 to score a win.

So far, if Independents split their votes, giving an unlikely half to the Democrats, the GOP would still end up on the winning end of the stick by 150 some-odd thousand votes.

Of course, there is only one high-visibility state-wide vote for Federal office - **Jeff Flake's** Senate seat. True to form, the polls show Democrat **Krysten Sinema** leading Republican **Martha McSally** by anywhere from 2 to 7 points and vice-versa by 1 to 3 points. The **Real Clear Politics** average has it Sinema by 1.5 points. After doing the math, it seems to me that the 2018 polls are no better than those in 2016. But, that remains to be seen, doesn't it?

Arizona's Mid-term turnout during the last dozen years has been in the high 20s% to low 30s%. As I read it, Arizona Democrats are going to have to re-register another 100,000 voters, pulling mostly from the Independents, turning out more than 35% if they expect to turn the state Blue. That's one Hellofa task, troops!

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Thursday, September 27, 2018

## Optimism

A few weeks ago, I read an article about **Elon Musk**, the controversial owner of the privately-held rocket company **Space-X** and head of **Tesla Motors**, manufacturer of America's high-end electric car. At its end, the article quotes the pot-smoking, whiskey-swilling Musk as saying, *"You kind of have to be optimistic about the future. There's no point in being pessimistic. I'd rather be optimistic and wrong than pessimistic and right."*

Pot smoking and whiskey swilling aside, there is certainly something to be said about a positive attitude. It seems like optimistic folks have an easier time of it than pessimists. Most of the really successful people I have known have been optimists. Conversely, all of the pessimists I have known, without exception, were not very good at making things work.

World-famous children's books writer **Dr. Seuss** wrote, "Don't cry because it's over, smile because it happened." That's the height of optimism.

While hiding in an attic from German Nazis during the run-up to World War Two, thirteen-year-old **Anne Frank** wrote, "How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world."

The renowned philosopher and leader of the Indian independence movement against British rule, **Mahatma Gandhi** penned the following: "Man often becomes what he believes himself to be. If I keep on saying to myself that I cannot do a certain thing, it is possible that I may end by really becoming incapable of doing it. On the contrary, if I

### **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

have the belief that I can do it, I shall surely acquire the capacity to do it even if I may not have it at the beginning."

And famed American poet **Ralph Waldo Emerson** advised, "Write it on your heart that every day is the best day in the year."

The most amazing optimist, in my mind, is our President, **Donald J Trump**. This man literally came from nowhere to capture the top job in the world with his unbridled optimistic saying, "Make America Great Again."

In short, real success gets down to an unencumbered mental attitude called optimism.

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Monday, October 1, 2018

## Socialism v. Federalism

This subject keeps coming up whenever Democrats, Socialists or Left-wingers get up to speak. They only do it because **Hillary Clinton** lost the Presidential Election in 2016 by failing to campaign in the "flyover" states while building a winning a Popular Vote in California by some 4,269,978 votes and in New York by 1,503,304. As a result of the crushing come-from-behind last-minute loss in the **Electoral College**, they want to do away with it.

The Lib drumbeat is "Get rid of the Electoral College. It's out of date and should be eliminated." No problem. All it takes is an amendment to the U.S. Constitution. And that's a piece o' cake!

How do you amend the Constitution? Get two-thirds of the states' legislatures to call for a Convention of the States to propose the amendment - or the Congress can propose it with an affirmative vote of two-thirds of both Houses. **Wikipedia** says that "an amendment must be ratified by either - as determined by Congress - the legislatures of three-quarters of the states or state ratifying conventions in three-quarters of the states."

But, instead of concentrating on doing the hard work needed to amend the Constitution, brainwashing the electorate is the thing, whipping them into a pro right- and left-coast frenzy. The thing is ... brainwashing the electorate is Socialism. Educating the population, however, is Federalism.

The difference between Socialism and Federalism is the difference between the Popular Vote and the Electoral College. Under Socialism a simple majority by ONE vote

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

rules - absolutely. Under Federalism a majority of representatives from across the country determines the outcome.

The term "sheeple" comes from the concept of the Popular Vote. A tiny minority can prevail in a popular vote if they can convince the sheeple (mostly ill-informed followers of faux leaders) to throw in with their side. The sheeple can even be bought - as evidenced by the numbers of paid protesters and trouble-makers attending or gathering outside conservative rallies and chasing politicians and employees from restaurants and other public accommodations. If the ballot can be bought, that is reason enough to maintain a healthy Electoral College.

But it's not just the ballot that can be bought. A number of lawmakers - Republicans and Democrats alike - are openly in it to plunder the riches of their country. That becomes obvious when one discovers the number of members of Congress who became millionaires after being seated. The fact is two-fifths of the Congress are millionaires. Socialism will help increase the number of *uber*-rich in the Congress. Looking for evidence? Just check the legislators and political leaders in today's Socialist countries like Cuba and Venezuela.

Fair is fair, but rule by a simple minority is Socialism. History shows us that no form of Socialism has ever worked to the betterment of its population, whereas Federalism has always worked to encourage *liberty and justice for all*.

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Thursday, October 4, 2018

## Brand Over Flavor

It occurred to me the other day that brand names mean more now than product quality.

Some years ago, the **Kentucky Fried Chicken** franchise in Globe, Arizona closed up shop. I have no idea, but I suspect a lousy location, less-than-stellar service and poor quality control contributed to its demise.

I've become a food fan in the last few years. I like to find great food - even fast food. And I have a penchant for finding the good stuff and the not-so-good. So it is with **KFC**. It stinks! Please, friends ... let me enumerate.

A couple of weeks ago I took my bride of some 56 years and drove to Monterey, California for my 60th High School class reunion. We stopped and saw the Rich Little comedy show in Vegas on the way and we played Texas Hold-em during our overnighter in Bakersfield.

The reunion was wonderful. You cannot imagine how much fun old farts in their 70s (and their spouses) can have with a good meal and a few drinks! It was visiting and sipping and dancing like there was no tomorrow. For many of us, tomorrow may never come, but a bunch of us pledged to gather again in five years. It was a great experience.

On the way back to Globe we stayed at the **La Quinta** in Paso Robles. Nice outfit. After talking about it on the road and since we hadn't had any for some time, I was dispatched to the local **KFC-A&W** for a six-pac of regular drumsticks and thighs. We were both looking forward to that familiar taste of the Colonel's Finger Lickin' Good delight. Well,

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

apparently, since the old man isn't around to ride herd any more, they've "improved" the recipe. There was something different about it. It didn't taste like the Colonel's old familiar Kentucky Fried Chicken. It tasted like KFC - sort of abbreviated. We saved a thigh for later - cold chicken can be delicious. Later on was not how-you-call "lip-smackin' good." It was bad news. The juice that once made it great had migrated into the crust, making the once tidy morsel at once mushy and dry as a result. And it still had that odd flavor. Too bad. No more KFC for this bunch. But, to be fair, I complained to KFC and they responded positively.

Subtle changes have been creeping into fast foods. Have you noticed that almost all hamburgers use the same beef patty? It's uniformly round, fitting most buns and about 3/8 inch thick. Once it's cooked, it dries out and tastes sorta like cardboard.

I first noticed this phenomenon after buying a **McDonald's** regular hamburger. Even while still warm (not hot) it didn't taste like the famous burger we used to buy for 15 cents back in the day. It still has the same ingredients: An all-beef patty, ketchup, mustard, minced white onion and a dill pickle slice. But it wasn't right because the meat was dry and tasted vaguely like cardboard.

It had been a while since I had a hamburger so I decided to sample the fare around town. First stop was the local **Jack-in-the-Box**. The **Jumbo Jack®** used to be a fat, juicy burger on a "bakery" bun with lettuce, chopped onion, tomato, pickle slices and mayo. Sorry, folks. Not today. The burger was dry and - yes - tasted much like cardboard.

The square shape of **Dave's Single®** at **Wendy's** didn't change its flavor. The burger was composed of a "premium" bun, square beef patty, lettuce, tomato, red onion, crinkle-cut

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

pickle slices and ketchup. Guess what? The beef must have come from the same place McDonald's and Jack-in-the-Box got theirs. Again, the thing was dry and tasted of cardboard! Three for three.

So, I placed a call to one of the best burger joints in the Globe-Miami area. It's **La Cocina de Casillas - The Burger House** on Live Oak street (Highway 60) in Miami, AZ. I asked the girl that answered the 'phone if they made a nice greasy hamburger instead of that dry stuff everybody else was turning out. "Yeah," she said. We'll make one special just for you!" So away we went like the *down from a thistle* to the place that makes the best Regular Burro on the planet! Just kidding, I ordered a Burger House Burger, the famed greaseburger. I was so looking forward to chomping into a nice greasy all-American hamburger when I noticed the wrapper on it had a few spots that looked like grease. Oh, wow! Finally! But, like the Mighty Casey, this one, too, struck out. Just like the others, the patty was dry and tasted a little like cardboard.

I was heart-broken. How is it that all the beef in these fast-food outfits was apparently tainted with the flavor of cardboard? Were they all manufactured, packaged and shipped from the same processing facility? Has there been a change to the individual packaging material that would cause it to out-gas at higher altitudes? Are they even shipped by air? I don't know.

It appears that customers are buying the Brand Name and not so much the products themselves. If you grew up eating a certain brand that tasted a certain way, when something changes, you notice it. Take the "New" **Coke** - remember that? The original sugar-sweetened Mexican-manufactured **Coca Cola** recipe puts the US-made high fructose corn syrup version to shame! Remember when the taste and texture of a

### **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

loaf of bread changed? How 'bout the battle over the "balloon" loaf? It's just like **Roseanne Roseanna Danna** said, *"If it's not one thing, it's another."*

Somehow, it's comforting to know that all I really have to do for a nice, tasty, nasty greaseburger any day I want is just roll out the barbeque! Same goes for chicken ...

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Monday, October 8, 2018

## McSally v. Sinema

I would rather see Arizona Representative **Martha McSally** (CD 2) elected the replacement for Sen. **Jeff Flake**. She is definitely Senator material. But she is also a loser. Let me tell you why.

Col. McSally has allowed Super-PACs - in particular, **Defend Arizona** - to broadcast ads and mailings that cast Representative **Kyrsten Sinema** (CD 9) in a very negative light. She has failed to demand that the PACs quit putting Sinema's name out there.

Anyone who knows the least bit about political psychology understands that name identification is the key to winning. When the opposition keeps using your name for whatever reason, it's free advertising! So, why would McSally allow such ads in print or on-screen? Because she doesn't know how to get PACs to back off without violating federal election rules. The target of her rage should be the bone-heads who promote her opponent in the Arizona Senate race. If Defend Arizona wants McSally as its Senator, it needs to back off Sinema and put their money behind a pro-McSally campaign. If not, Sinema, who Sunday **CBS News** had at **+3** (47/44), will win.

I write this because I sent the Colonel an email detailing what she can do to lock up the Senate race ... but there wasn't even a courtesy "Thank you" note in reply. That says to me that, even with her leadership credentials, she doesn't have the chops to represent Arizona in the US Senate.

It's just under one month - twenty-nine days - until the mid-term elections. My favorite Female Fighter Pilot is going to lose to a Mormon go-along-to-get-along Democrat because she's not putting up the monster fight she must to win the only election that can keep Arizona Red.

I don't bring up Sinema's Mormon roots in spite or jest. It's serious business. The most brutal politicians I've ever known were Mormons. Perhaps the most ruthless of all time was former Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid. What's more, the most loyal partisans anywhere are members of the Church of the Latter Day Saints. Sinema has only to snap her fingers and church members across the state will turn out in droves. 6.1% of Arizona's population, some 426,069 folks, are members of the LDS church - representing 11.7% of registered voters. That, friends, is clout!

## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

Suffice it only to say that three weeks ago, I emailed Colonel McSally the following, "Get with the program, missy, or you will go down in flames!" I hope I was wrong.

Pass it on ...

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Thursday, October 11, 2018

## An Oppressed Majority

New York Times Opinion columnist **Charles Blow** penned the following last Sunday in a piece titled "*Liberals, This Is War: What's at stake is much more than a single Supreme Court seat.*"

Blow wrote, "Many of the founders owned slaves; in the Constitution they viewed black people as less than fully human; they didn't want women or poor white men to vote. The founders, a bunch of rich, powerful white men, didn't want true democracy in this country, and in fact were dreadfully afraid of it.

"Now, a bunch of rich, powerful white men want to return us to this sensibility, wrapped in a populist 'follow the Constitution' rallying cry and disguised as the ultimate form of patriotism."

Putting this piece in context, Charles Blow is a black man employed at the NYT since 1994, a commentator who writes about politics, social justice and vulnerable communities. What he says, in view of his standing as a member of the black community, makes perfect sense. Most especially considering the liberal bent of the Times.

Consider this: The mainstream media has been harping since long before the 2016 elections that rich, powerful white men were pulling the strings of this democracy. Lately, however, blacks and latinos have been joining conservatives, moving away from the constant whining of *oppressed* minorities and their supporters in the media.

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

The **Kavanaugh** battle in the US Senate set the stage for broad revision of the *silent majority*, now composed of poor and middle-income rural and suburban white men and women, blacks and latinos. The likes of the white, rich and powerful **George Soros** have moved to the left in support of a *war* to deprive conservatives of their mounting power. As a result, women have become an *oppressed majority* ... at least if you've been paying attention to the rude screeching of protest organizers across the country.

The cold hard fact is that liberal organizers and the mainstream media are going to press the *oppressed* button continuously, right up until the November 6th election results are published and more than likely, well into next year.

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Monday, October 15, 2018

## Agree to Disagree

The mainstream media - including **Fox News Channel** - has gone completely off the rails! If the news is nasty, it goes on the air. If there are unruly people demonstrating about anything, no matter how trivial, it's today's news. If it reeks of mayhem and craziness, it's newsworthy.

To make the news these days, all it takes is a mob excited by organizers with bull-horns. The more dangerous the language the more newsworthy it is. I was just watching Fox News and the subject at hand was "*Democrats Strategy of Sustained Chaos*." Sustained *what*?

**Fox News First** (the email subscription service) reported the following last Wednesday:

**HILLARY'S DONE BEING CIVIL: [Hillary Clinton, in a television interview Tuesday, rejected the idea that Democrats should be "civil" with Republicans in the age of Donald Trump, embracing a more confrontational and aggressive political approach ...](#)** "You cannot be civil with a political party that wants to destroy what you stand for, what you care about," Clinton said. Speaking to CNN's Christiane Amanpour, the 2016 Democratic presidential nominee said, "That's why I believe, if we are fortunate enough to win back the House and/or the Senate, that's when civility can start again. But until then, the only thing Republicans seem to recognize and respect is strength." Clinton's comments come amid escalating attacks against Republican lawmakers and Trump administration officials by left-wing activists.

When the leaders of the Democrat Party are encouraging mob violence, we've got some kinda trouble. As a former Vice-Chairman of the Gila County, Arizona Democrat Party, I

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

have a lot of trouble wrapping my mind around the idea that mob behavior is just fine. Encouraging mob violence - inciting, if you will - isn't just wrong, and it's unlawful. How does Congresswoman **Maxine Waters** get away with urging young people to create mobs to chase down and harass conservative members of the Trump Administration, the Congress and their families.

How can they justify the almost fatal shooting of House member **Steve Scalise** at a baseball practice game, the chasing of Senator **Ted Cruz** out of a restaurant, Senator **Susan Collins** accosted at her own office, in-your-face confrontations of **Orrin Hatch** in the halls and **Jeff Flake** in the elevators of the US Senate building and the physical attack on a Senator **Rand Paul** in his own front yard? His wife **Kelley Paul** has gotten so upset with the continuing threats against her husband and her family that she now keeps a loaded gun by her bed.

Reporter **Andrew O'Reilly** wrote last week that "Homeland Security Secretary **Kirstjen Nielsen** had to cut short a working dinner at a Mexican restaurant in Washington after protesters shouted, '*Shame!*' until she left. And on Friday - the same day [**Sarah**] **Sanders** was asked to leave the Red Hen restaurant in Lexington, Va. - protesters gathered outside Nielsen's Virginia townhouse, chanting '*no justice, no sleep*' and playing recordings of immigrant children crying."

I can't believe that mainstream Democrats actually accept **Antifa's** mob attacks on innocents and mob violence and intimidation in public places like parks, airports and restaurants, much less at the homes of high-visibility conservatives. Is there any justification for demonstrators to interrupt a critical voice vote in the Senate by yelling obscenities from the gallery? This is not the Democrat Party I was proud to lead back in the day. This is just nuts!

### Thayer's Wild Bunch V

While I have always admired her, I believe that former US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton was dead wrong to encourage incivility by Democrats. Just as wrong as Maxine Waters encouraging threats and mobbing of high-visibility members of the Congress and the Administration. And equally wrong as former US Attorney General **Eric Holder** encouraging Democrats to "*kick them*" in response to Republicans "*going low*." Democrat Party leaders would do much better by their candidates and fellow Dems by setting substantially more civil examples for their peers.

Whether you're liberal, middle-of-the-road or conservative, I hope you'll do everything in your power to restore civility and bring this craziness to a screeching halt. Please, agree to disagree.

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Tuesday, October 16, 2018

## Women!!! (Extra)

**It was like the Kennedy-Nixon debates.** Kyrsten Sinema and Martha McSally faced off on the Phoenix, AZ PBS station last night in an ill-fated attempt to impress Arizona voters. I'm sorry, but they both lost to liberal camera work and amateur preparation for the debate.

McSally was solid as a rock and spoke well, bristling at Sinema's sometimes broad-brush swipes at her veracity. Sinema, on the other hand, was like that person who walks into a room whose presence immediately takes command.

I think McSally won the verbal debate, but the cameras gave it to Sinema. The camera work was all over her, flattering her natural beauty and catching the occasional little nuances in her posture. McSally, on the other hand, never looked at the cameras (which seemed to return the favor) instead, staring straight ahead at the moderators. The television audience was completely left out of McSally's presentation. If I was a staunch conservative, I'd give the debate to the show's director for the camera work.

Liberals in the audience had to be delighted with Sinema's performance. Conservatives were no doubt equally impressed with McSally's presentation. But I'd give the nod to Sinema because of the wonderful camera work done by the PBS station's technical staff.

**On another front ...** the Elizabeth Warren debacle! She claimed that an independent DNA test proved her Native American heritage. But, *Breitbart* reported that "The actual numbers could be anywhere from 1/64 to 1/1024. Regardless, all this DNA test proved is that Warren has no more claim to



## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

Indian heritage than the average white American. ... After a reporter suggested Trump owed her an apology, an incredulous president responded, 'I owe her? She owes the country an apology. What's her percentage [of Indian ancestry]? 1/1,000th?'"

During a rally, President Trump had pledged a \$1,000,000 dollar donation to Warren's favorite charity if she actually became a candidate for President and proved her Cherokee blood line.

Breitbart continued, "The actual numbers could be anywhere from 1/64 to 1/1024. Regardless, all this DNA test proved is that Warren has no more claim to Indian heritage than the average white American ... Buried in [a] ***Boston Globe*** story is this bombshell: 'To make up for the dearth of Native American DNA, [**Prof. Carlos D.**] Bustamante used samples from Mexico, Peru, and Colombia to stand in for Native American.' So all the test proved is that Warren might be 1/64 to 1/1024 Mexican, Peruvian, or Colombian - which again makes her no different than the average white American."

Democrat Party leadership was not happy, claiming that Warren's escapade was misdirecting attention away from the battle for the mid-term elections.

Sigh ...

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Thursday, October 18, 2018

## Rachel Maddow v. Paul Harvey

I've been watching **Rachel Maddow** (MSNBC) lately instead of **Sean Hannity** (FNC) because I need all the angles I can find when it comes to news and commentary. After a few views it came to me that this woman could very well be the Paul Harvey of our day. Please, my friends, allow me to elaborate.

**Paul Harvey** used to broadcast twice daily on the **ABC** Radio Network after a five-minute newscast - local or network - nobody cared ... it was all about who wanted to sponsor the local broadcast. Between the local and national commercials and the entro/outro chatter, the Harvey show went ten or fifteen minutes. The closing for the newscast was always "Paul Harvey - good day!" and the other was always "And now you know The Rest of the Story."

The Maddow show on MSNBC uses much the same format. She starts with a fifteen minute segment telling one of those Harvey-esque "Rest-of-the-Story" tales. It's always packed with verifiable facts and not-so-verifiable color and inuendo. It's always very entertaining. She's one Hellofa story-teller! You could easily conclude her first segment with "And now you know the rest of the story. We'll be back with a special guest to explore a little deeper into the subject."

The real difference between Maddow and Harvey has always been the difference between liberal and conservative. But they both have presented the facts as a storyline, followed by commentary based on their own personal political views. Maddow takes the format into the venue that is MSNBC by following the storyline with guests that support the liberal bent of the network and its watchers. Harvey was always the Libertarian conservative on ABC Network radio.

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

ABC remains slightly conservative in its approach while MSNBC is still the news source for more liberal viewers. On the less-than-mainstream news edge is the **Fox News Network**. Fox takes a right-of-center approach on most of its presentations. The exception might be the other most entertaining and informative newsreader - **Shepherd Smith**, who leans a little left as a means of sticking up for his LGBTQ lifestyle. Shep's presentations are always just shy of brilliant! Funny ... Maddow is further to the left than Shep, for what may be the same reasons.

After **Tucker Carlson**, Fox' number two hitter goes off the air, Maddow goes head-to-head with the mighty Sean Hannity. Maddow is the number two best-seller on cable TV. Solidly at number three is Tucker Carlson Tonight followed by the Laura Ingraham Angle. I wonder if Paul Harvey could beat them all!

For all you ratings fans, the week of October 8th Neilson Prime Time ratings found TBS in front as a result of its baseball playoffs coverage with some 3,575,000 viewers. Fox news was in the number two slot with 2,612,000 viewers; ESPN came in third with 2,602,000; MSNBC was number four with 2,770,000; 5th was The Hallmark Channel with 1,140,000 total viewers and Home & Garden TV was 6th, chalking up some 1,124,000 pairs of eyeballs. Fake News CNN had dropped completely out of sight, showing 14th!

Whatever your political stripe ... take some time; set aside a few nights to watch the other guys; get a handle on how the folks at MSNBC and CNN and FNC think. Armed with these different views of the day's news and commentary, you'll likely be on your way toward obtaining the knowledge that can help create the civility our country so much yearns for of late.

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Monday, October 22, 2018

## Do It Different

We all know how the news cycle goes. Monday afternoon through Friday it's full coverage of everything off-the-wall, ear-catching or just plain crazy. Then on Saturday and Sunday the skeleton crew steps in and repeats Fridays's top six or eight stories all weekend. And there are extra people out there just in case something cool comes up. Come Monday morning, barring some kind of God-awful disaster, the week-end leads are repeated. It's a formula that works.

I ran into a show the other day - I think it was on CNN (God forbid!) - something like "*What Really Happened?*" or "*Did You See That*" or some such. I think it was a one-hour presentation of in-depth coverage of stories that either had not been covered or were glossed-over earlier in the week. It's amazing how creative today's news crews can be - interesting, informative, even entertaining - given some time and their head. But, this is a weekend only show so it gets low, if any, ratings because nobody really knows when it's on or where!

I'd like to see one of the networks go full-time with coverage like that "Did you see" show. Sure it would cost a little more, but I'll bet sponsors would flock to get on because more people would be watching. All it would take is a little better organization of priorities ... say the top twenty instead of top ten stories every day. No skeleton crews ... full-time, in depth writing, reporting and editing. No limit to length. Sixty seconds to twelve minutes - doesn't matter - as long as it's the real deal, the truth, not made-up, not fake news. And definitely not what the mainstream is covering. I'm talking truly independent of mainstream ideals and politics.

### **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

Every journalist - no matter his or her experience - knows what news is. Do you? Do you know why is it spelled N-E-W-S? It has always stood for North - East - West - South. NEWS - where information is gathered and broadcast on paper, by wire, the airways, the internet and, Heaven forbid, word-of-mouth. Has our news media been lead so far astray by sensationalism and politics that we no longer get the NEWS - but rather ... propaganda?

So, the question is - or should be: How hard would it be for the mainstream media to compete for the best presentation of the day's stories from all over the world? You know ... the NEWS!

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Thursday, October 25, 2018

## Why Polls Don't Work

It's my contention that that election polls are a waste of efforts crafted to ferret out how the voting public feels about candidates and issues. The best evidence of that goes back to the 2016 election. Accurate polls should have picked up that **Hillary Clinton** wasn't working "flyover country" while **Donald Trump** was all over key states including the breadbasket of America. The Trump Campaign realized early-on that the winning candidate needed to take the **Electoral College**, not the **Popular Vote**. Pollsters missed that basic part of American political strategy - so did the mainstream media.

Personal visits from poll workers work best. Unfortunately, most polls rely on data collected in the major metro areas of the country. Rural areas are rarely confronted by door-knocking poll workers at their doors. Metro areas tend to lean left, which throws a bias into polls that rely on population concentrations. Rural areas tend to have more conservative populations, even most rural Democrats lean conservative. The difference in political philosophies between rural and urban populations is measurable, yet most polls have lost sight of that fact.

Robo-calls are a waste of time and resources when it comes to polling. After an interminable wait, most people hang up when a recorded conversation comes over the earpiece. They also hang up when there is a real human on the line because most of the time they're reading a script. That doesn't make for a very good sampling any way you slice it.

And polls are missing the fact that the Democrats are sorely lacking for issues that can galvanize voter loyalty. The Party

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

hasn't identified but a few talking points. Republicans, on the other hand, have issues from all over the place - their list of taking points is Yuge!

According to an article by **Alex Shephard** in the **New Republic** last week, "The top three issues this year are health care, health care, health care,' **J.B. Poersch**, the head of the Democratic Senate Majority PAC told **CNN** last week. Candidates across the country, from **Cindy Axne** in Iowa to **Claire McCaskill** in Missouri to **Josh Harder** in California are talking about their own struggles dealing with the high cost of medical care. West Virginia's **Joe Manchin**, the lone Democratic senator to vote to confirm **Kavanaugh**, is leading in the polls in his state, thanks in large part to his embrace of **Obamacare**, which he even made an issue during the most recent Supreme Court confirmation.

"Republicans are following suit, even those who voted to repeal the Affordable Care Act in 2017. Republican **Martha McSally**, who is running to fill **Jeff Flake**'s Arizona Senate seat, has campaigned on protecting coverage for pre-existing conditions, despite voting for the AHCA, which would have repealed the ACA, last year. In a debate [a week ago last] Monday, she told voters, 'We can't go back to where we were before Obamacare.'"

The problem is that polls are not picking up on the healthcare issue. Maybe it's because the mainstream media hasn't focused on it yet, either. Talk to a member of the GOP and you'll get a fusilade of issues - enough to glaze over the senses of all but the most ardent Republican. But, Democrats seem to have a chip on their collective shoulders. Dems are almost universally surly when someone tries to strike up a conversation about issues.

### **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

There is an angry, defensive attitude out there in metro America when it comes to discussing political issues, most of which are based in negative premises. The #MeToo movement, originally conceived decades ago to raise awareness of sexual harassment in the work place, has been used to divide feminism into three camps - activists, paid activists and victims. Add Antifa to the mix and the door is closed to constructive intercourse.

Polls can't deliver a clear picture of the day-to-day political landscape because so many people want no part of political discourse. And the ones that do are not being sampled adequately.

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Monday, October 29, 2018

## Jobs, Jobs, Jobs

We quote here from an article in the **Washington Times** by **Tammy Bruce**:

"Let's start with something the media takes little heed of: The record job openings for the summer. **CNBC's** headline says it all: *'Another great sign for the economy: Job openings hit an all-time high in August.'* **CNBC** also noted, the *'survey also found a near-record amount of quits for the month, indicating workers' confidence in finding new positions.'*

"That's right. Not only do Americans have a job, but **Mr. Trump** has created an environment where we have more control over what we're doing, and know we can find something better for ourselves and our families. Americans are in charge of their lives again.

"One of the reasons you don't hear about the president's legislative, policy and leadership success touted in the media is because they're covering the mobs and chaos brought to you by the Democrats. While many are wondering what the Democrats could be thinking by encouraging 'incivility' and violence, it is beginning to make sense: They want to give the media something to cover other than the continued blossoming of the country, while distracting their own base from the fact that everyone is better off now than they've been in 17 years.

"The Democrats, however, are following the **Obama** rule book - they're obsessed only with themselves. The remarks by former Secretary of State **Hillary Clinton** and former Attorney General **Eric H. Holder Jr.** encouraging chaos and 'kicking' people with whom you disagree were deliberate

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

comments that will ruin people's lives. No one is going to save the poor sap who thinks he's following the orders of his heroes. Mrs. Clinton isn't going to bail anyone out of jail, and former President Barack Obama isn't going to be anyone's lead defense attorney."

Bruce concludes her article with, "The bottom line is this: Liberals who care about their and the country's future must put the current incarnation of the Democratic Party out of its misery and join everyone else who is voting in the midterm for peace, prosperity and civility."

**Jeffrey Bartash**, reporting mid-month in **MarketWatch** said, "The number of Americans losing their jobs and applying for unemployment benefits each week remained near a 49-year low in mid-October ... It can't get a whole lot better in the U.S. job market. Openings just hit a record high, the U.S. unemployment rate has fallen to a 48-year low of 3.7% and hiring remains robust ... The Strong demand for American labor is pushing up wages and benefits, as well, fueling the longest economic expansion in history."

You want a job? There are over seven million of them waiting and only six million people looking. Never before have there been so many job openings. Did you get that? American workers are so confident about the job market, they're actually quitting to go look for better ones ... Job-shoppers and head-hunters must be having a heyday!

Of course, you could always sign up as a paid demonstrator or community organizer ... I'll bet that pays really well. Especially if you're unemployed and not out there after one of those seven million real jobs.

They say the Dems have coalesced around Medicare, Medicaid and Obamacare as their main election issues. Well,

### **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

folks, it's payroll taxes that are keeping the ACA afloat. Jobs equal tax revenues. Jobs equal a better standard of living. Jobs equal opportunities for growth and prosperity.

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**Thursday, November 1, 2018**

**Murphy's Law**

It's true that Murphy's Law is the source of aggravation for many a po' boy. (**If something can go wrong, you can count on it ...** or some such thing.) That's why Mondays Broadcast didn't show up 'til last night!

It's a long, involved story of which you don't need the greasy details. Suffice it to say that my **Windows 10** drive decided it didn't want to work about the same time my **Win Xp** decided it couldn't make it all the way through the Boot Sector without re-booting. That took all of the data and software on my seven-drive computer out of play while I worked on "the fix."

My gut told me "Start from scratch", so I did by Formatting my **250 Gig Solid State Drive** and loading a new, clean copy of Win 10 on it. From there it was one at a time installing the software that makes my world operate. A customized, light install of **Microsoft Office 98** (from a CD) was the baseline because it had my **Word** processor and that assortment of routines including **Excel** and **Powerpoint**. Then **Publisher 98**, that I use on my websites. Then **msimn (Outlook Express)** my favored email software.

From there it was trudging through the muck, re-installing other support software and creating the shortcuts that make the Desktop work. Tedious and time-consuming, the job also involved replacing the Xp **250G "black" HD** with an older **2TB "green" HD**. When I can figure out how to repair the Boot Sector of the XP Drive, it can be put back into service.

Then there was Murphy's Law ... Win 10 downloads/updates used up every penny of my 10G metered **Viasat/Excede** internet allocation and I had to buy more to speed it up. You'd

## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

think that professional software engineers wouldn't put out a product that hadn't been debugged to the max. Instead, Microsoft puts Murphy's Law squarely in play for us consumers. That's one of the reasons I'm using a lot of '98 software. It works! I'll say this for Win 10: My computer's never booted up so fast.

Thursday's email Broadcast went out last night - better late than never - and the three-day adventure with the insides of my computer helped me finish this submission. Now, with Murphy ensconced in that dark corner over there, we can get back to the "new normal."

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Monday, November 5, 2018

## Happy Mid-terms!

Well, here it is the day before the 2018 mid-term elections. It looks very much like voter turn-out is what will determine whether there is a **Blue** wave, a **Red** one or **Status Quo**.

A Blue wave means that the **U.S. House of Representatives** will pick up enough **Democrats** to give them a majority and it's possible that the **Senate** could pick up one or two seats.

A Red wave means that **Republicans** will hold their majority in the **House** and pick up one or two seats in the **Senate**, strengthening their majority.

Status Quo means we get pretty much the **same ol' same** for another two years.

They say over 30% of America's registered voters have already cast early ballots. They also say that only 5% can make the difference in any of the "critical" elections across the country. That means nobody has a clue - not **CNN**, not **Fox**, not **Rasmussen**, not **Dick Morris**, not **RCP**!

The pundits are doing the same thing they did two years ago when they had **Hillary Clinton** walking away with the election. The mainstream media is so far out there with commitment(s) to the east and left coasts that they're likely missing the boat - again! The only saving grace is that fly-over America still holds the keys to the Kingdom. You can take that to the bank!

Now, the thing is ... the **Democrat Party** has put a lot of capital in the way of money and manpower into campaigning in the South and West as well as the country's bread-basket.

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

But the key to this election may rest in Arizona's Senate race between **Kyrsten Sinema** and **Martha McSally**. If the Democrats pulled it off and got enough folks to vote early, Sinema will replace **Senator Jeff Flake** and become the face of that Blue wave. On the other hand, if McSally wins the seat, odds are there will be a Red wave or at least Status Quo. And I think you can take that to the bank, also! (Just a different bank ...)

Alright, you number-crunchers out there in the ether, here's where the rubber meets the road!

As of **March** 1st, 2018 these were Arizona's voter registration numbers:

Independents/others:	34.93%	1,261,073
Republicans:	34.87%	1,258,994
Democrats:	30.20%	1,090,310
Total Registered Voters		3,610,377

As of **August** 28th, 2018 these were the numbers:

Independents/others:	34.59%	1,256,462	(Down 4,611)
Republicans:	34.81%	1,264,295	(Up 5,301)
Democrats:	30.60%	1,111,580	(Up 21,270)
Total Registered Voters		3,632,337	(Up 21,960)

As of **November** 1st, 2018 these are the numbers:

Independents/others:	34.34%	1,276,084	(Up 19,622)
Republicans:	34.67%	1,288,332	(Up 24,027)
Democrats:	30.99%	1,151,745	(Up 40,165)
Total Registered Voters		3,716,161	(Up 83,814)

It goes without saying that the Democrats have done a yeoman's job registering new voters. It appears to me, though, that *everybody* outnumbers Arizona Democrats. Independents by some 124,339 and Republicans by 136,587.

### **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

Political analyst Karl Rove noted Sunday that the turnout across America will probably be the largest since 1966 when a record 49% voted in the mid-term elections. He predicted that turnout in Arizona could climb as high as 58%.

Ok, let's say you crunched the numbers. You should be able to predict the Sinema/McSally election, right? Hold on. Here we go. Let's say turnout is 50% and the split with the Independents is an even 55% pro Sinema and 100% of the rest of them go for their own party. Fair enough?

Democrats (1,151,745) plus 55% of Independents (701,846) is 1,853,591. Republicans (1,288,332) plus 45% of Independents (574,238) is 1,862,570. McSally wins by 8,979 but with 50% turn-out it's a nail-biting 4,490 votes! As the Cubby's Harry Carrey used to say, "Holy Cow!"

If you already voted, thank you. If you haven't yet voted, please do it today ... or tomorrow at the very latest. It's your right ... something people in many other countries would kill for!

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Thursday, November 8, 2018

## What's Next?

I was going to expectorate about the elections in today's column - but then thought better of it. I mean, there is not enough definitive information out there to make it interesting. How do I round up the words to tell - with a few races still hangin' fire - who will be the newsmakers as we slog through the next two years of political balderdash? And are we really going to continue to be bombarded with that clap-trap for another twenty-four months?

I ran into an old friend at the grocery store the other day. He, too, was fed up with politics for a while. He proposed gathering together all those mailings we've gotten over the last six months and having a big bonfire with friends and neighbors to celebrate the end of that interminable 2018 election cycle. Sorry, folks, but the fat lady hasn't sung yet. I'm sure if she did today, she'd sound very much like **Roseanne Barr!**

So let's be on to other stuff like ... *"The time has come," the Walrus said, "To talk of many things: Of shoes - and ships - and sealing-wax - Of cabbages - and kings - And why the sea is boiling hot - And whether pigs have wings."* [Credit **Lewis Carroll** - 1872]

I'm betting the next big thing is going to be a hotly-contested debate about several thousands of folks, claiming to be refugees, trekking through Central America in a quest to better their station in life by coming to the United States, only to be met by the U.S. Military.

A good friend of mine was chiding me the other day - via email - for not bringing up the issue of the so-called pending

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

"brown" invasion. To quote him verbatim: "*We are facing an invasion of 'BROWN' and not one word from you?*" Now, that's pretty heady stuff, you've gotta admit! My man is a talented construction contractor, prominent Latino and local activist.

I don't believe he was being facetious when he wrote, "*The invasion of Brown are armed with plastic water bottles.*" [Yet] "*We need to send 15,000 Marines to protect our border[?]*"

I countered with, "*I have absolutely no problem with a 'Brown' invasion. Those who meet the criteria are welcome ... You and I both also know that the American military will never open fire on civilians ... Up to 15,000 American troops are being deployed to secure the southern border, [and] as you know ... they have no authority to shoot anybody. They do have the authority, according to ... Presidential remarks to the Press in front of Marine One, to arrest and forcibly detain anyone who attacks American personnel ... We have nothing to fear from third-world people trying to gain entry to a better life. I contend, as does the President, that they just have to do it 'the right way.' (Whatever that is ...)*"

My friend will object to my using punctuation to better shape what he and I were saying when we wrote our original thoughts. That would be brackets for clarifying words [ ] and periods ... to tie thoughts together rather than using all the verbiage. These are old journalistic tools.

Now, will the Lame Duck Congress have the will to fix the supposedly "broken" American Immigration System before the issue with semi-organized "caravans" of so-called migrant refugees gets out of hand?

Will there be a pitched battle along our southern border? If so, will it be the "Browns" versus the Border Patrol, ICE and the Military? Will it be teamed-up activists from the United

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

States and Central America versus the will of the U.S. Government? Or perhaps some combination of the two?

What gives one pause ... is the fact that Mexican military and law enforcement officers were engaged at the Mexican border with Guatemala by rock- and bottle-throwing thugs. At one point, the police and migrants exchanged Molotov cocktails and rounds of tear gas, according to migrants and journalists at the scene. At least a hundred were injured and one man from Tegucigalpa, the Honduran capital, was hit in the head by a rubber bullet and later died at the hospital in Ciudad Hidalgo, Mexico. Authorities said 10 police officers were injured, two of them seriously. Scores of the "*Caminata del Migrante*" were arrested by the authorities.

It's clear in reports from Central America that in at least three different "caravans" a certain element is intent on intimidating both the military and law enforcement to make way for others carrying illicit cargo bound for the United States. One report claimed that migrants were being used as shields to protect a criminal element embedded in the groups.

There is a bright spot on the horizon, actually. **TIME** Magazine reported this week that of the estimated 7,000 souls trekking through Central America, at least 4,000 have opted to remain in Mexico, going through the process of becoming immigrant citizens.

There is no black humor here. This is serious business. The "Browns" problem could easily turn out to be the most significant issue our country has faced since the Japanese forced us into the Second World War by bombing Pearl Harbor on December 7th, 1941. There's one thing we can count on for certain: We're gonna find out pretty soon.

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Monday, November 12, 2018

## One Great Day

It was a hundred years ago yesterday. The eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month - 11 AM on November 11, 1918 ... **Armistice Day**; the day they decided to call a halt to the **First World War**. It was supposed to be the *War To End All Wars*.

Well, they blew it ... they didn't finish the job so we had to fight **World War Two** only twenty years later. And then **Korea**. And **Viet Nam** and ... I'm sorry; I lost count. So many brave Americans have died in war over the years that Armistice Day was renamed **Veterans Day** as a way to honor all American Veterans.

Sadly, we haven't learned. History repeats itself. We still have Military Units stationed all over the world, some actively fighting in places like **Afghanistan**, others on patrol like those sailing the **South China Sea**, and still others standing guard like the men and women in **Germany**.

My dad served in the **Navy** and worked his way up to Lieutenant Commander during WWII in the Pacific. He came under fire but managed to survive. That was some crazy stuff - Japanese loony-tunes high on Sake trying to crash their airplanes into American warships. Scary. Many sailors died during the War in the Pacific. But my ol' man got lucky - he made it. I'm proud he served and thankful he survived unscathed.

I guess I got lucky, too, in a way. I joined the **Marine Corps** in September of 1958. The **Platoon Leader's Course** had me going to **Arizona State College** (now **Northern Arizona University**), committed to spend two Summers in Basic

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

Training at **Quantico**, Virginia and one Summer in Flight School at **Pensacola**, Florida - becoming a Marine Officer and Pilot. I would have been one of the guys flying over Viet Nam with **John McCain**.

But, I bailed. While flying jets was right up my alley, I had no use at all for Civil Engineering. I would rather drive trains. Instead, I quit college and the USMC's prestigious PLC program to become a radio broadcaster and engineer. Eventually, I became a multidisciplinary engineer rebuilding radio stations in Salinas, California, **Tucson** and **Globe**, Arizona ... and overseeing the manufacture of **Phoenix** and **TOW** missiles at **Hughes Aircraft** in Tucson.

I say I got lucky partly because I got called up during the **Cuban Missile Crisis**. We were told to be ready to catch a plane at the Portland, Oregon airport - a ride that would take a cadre of USMC Reservists to Pensacola, Florida to join our brothers in an invasion of Cuba. But, **President Kennedy** was successful at making the Russians back down, averting what could have been a nuclear war. Instead, we got the word to stand down and go home. Whew!

Later, still a Marine Corps Reservist, Hawk Missile Technician and Motorpool Management Specialist, I was passed over for duty in **Viet Nam**. Somehow, I was never called to duty except for training at **MCRD** in **San Diego**, **Twentynine Palms** and **Camp Pendleton**, CA.

The six years I spent in the Corps provided an experience every kid should have. I learned to defend and care for myself and how to become one with my Platoon, in the process becoming what the Navy calls a "Self-contained Unit." I learned how to drive, repair and maintain motor vehicles as small as the "Mule" and as large as a 25-ton Semi truck and trailer. I learned how a **Hawk** Missile works and how to aim

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

it so accurately it could shoot a drone out of the sky at twenty-five miles. And of course, I learned how to use and care for my **M1 Garand** rifle - the gas-operated, clip-fed, semi-automatic shoulder weapon used all over the world during WWII and the Korean Conflict. It remained in service until replaced by the **M14**, **M16** and **AR15**.

In retrospect, I'm convinced that the Corps never called me for duty in 'Nam because of my name - John Edward "Ted" Thayer. I never came under fire and remained stateside because of **Sylvanus P. Thayer**, a distant relative from **Braintree**, Massachusetts - the man known as the "*Father of West Point*."

**Wikipedia** tells us that in 1817, **President James Monroe** ordered Colonel Thayer to West Point to become the superintendent of the Military Academy. Under his stewardship, the Academy became the nation's first college of engineering. While at West Point Thayer established numerous traditions and policies which are still in use at West Point. These include the values of honor and responsibility, strict mental and physical discipline, the demerit system, summer encampment, high academic standards and the requirement that cadets maintain outstanding military bearing and appearance at all times.

On May 31, 1863, the day before Thayer retired, **President Abraham Lincoln** nominated him for the honorary grade of Brevet Brigadier General, United States Army, a grade confirmed in mid-June by the **U.S. Senate**.

Although he died in Braintree, Thayer was so revered that he was interred at West Point. I'm satisfied that if it wasn't for that distant kinship with Sylvanus P. Thayer, yours truly could have easily been in line to join John McCain in the Hanoi Hilton!

### **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

Friend, please remember to pause and reflect in reverent respect for one minute at 11:00am on Armistice (Veteran's) Day every November 11th. For those of you who have served our United States of America in the Military or are serving her now, thank you for your service. And to my Jarhead comrades:

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Thursday, November 15, 2018

## What Burns Next?

*An Investor's Business Daily editorial November 12th reads in part as follows:*

### **California's Gov. Brown Again Blames Fires On Global Warming - He Couldn't Be More Wrong ...**

U.S. Geological Survey research scientist **Jon Keeley** has studied the origin of western fires since 1910. He says that 95% of all fires originate with humans. "This is a people problem," Keeley told **The Mercury News**. "What's changing is not the fires themselves but the fact that we have more and more people at risk."

### **More People, More Fire Threat**

Keeley notes, for instance, that the number of homes threatened by wildfire in the Western U.S. surged from about 607,000 in 1940 to 6.7 million in 2010. That's a more than 1,000% rise. It's a basic matter of population impinging on wilderness areas.

Moreover, a 2017 study found that, since 1970 the number of fires burning 300 acres or more has actually declined. How can that be? Fires once raged across pristine forests and grasslands. But they had far fewer people or small towns in the way, as Keeley notes.



## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

"The story can't be simply that warming is increasing the numbers of wildfires in California because the number of fires is declining. And area burned has not been increasing either," **University of Washington** climatologist **Cliff Mass** wrote last August, in response to that month's fires.

So, if not climate, what is the cause? The mismanagement of both state and federal forest lands. It's the triumph of "green" ideology over common sense.

Beginning in 1994, with the best of intentions, **President Clinton** put in place a plan to limit logging of old-growth trees to protect the endangered **Spotted Owl** in Western forests. Those moves pretty much ended what had been a policy of active management of fire threats in our national forests. Logging halted, the burnable fuel on the forest floor built up, and fires, while not more frequent, became more intense and threatening to nearby towns and homes.

"(Before 1994) mostly fuels were removed through logging, active management - which they stopped - and grazing," **Bob Zybach**, a reforestation consultant who has a Ph.D. in environmental science told the **Daily Caller Foundation** in an interview. "You take away logging, grazing and maintenance, and you get firebombs."

## Mismanagement Is Nothing New

The **Western Governors Association** even warned about the mismanagement of our forest resources as far back as 2005 in a report:

"Over time the fire-prone forests that were not thinned, burn in uncharacteristically destructive wildfires, and the resulting loss of forest carbon is much greater than would occur if the forest had been thinned before fire moved through," the report warned. "In the long term, leaving forests overgrown and

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

prone to unnaturally destructive wildfires means there will be significantly less biomass on the ground, and more greenhouse gases in the atmosphere."

We hate to say it, but **[President Donald] Trump** seems to know more about the causes of the California conflagration than **[Governor Jerry] Brown**. What's truly a shame is that Brown is the one in denial. And his policies will lead to bigger fires and more damage to homes than ever before in the future.

*The remarks above are from a November 12th **Investor's Business Daily** editorial. Since the Camp Fire in Northern California broke out the morning of November 8th at least 56 people, mostly elderly, have perished, 130 are missing and the entire town of Paradise has burnt to the ground. Another wildfire in Southern California, the Woolsey Fire, has killed three, and destroyed most of the high-end town of Malibu. Late yesterday the Camp Fire, 35% contained, at 135,000 acres had destroyed some 10,000 structures. The Woolsey Fire, 52% contained, had destroyed at least 504 structures and consumed over 98,000 acres.*

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Monday, November 19, 2018

## Great To Be Alive!

I've been on this Earth since January 11, 1941. My wife Claudette got here almost four years before me on April 14th, 1937. Both of us are showing signs of advanced age. I'm nowhere close to as strong as I used to be, live with chronic back problems and lack full vision in my right eye due to a detached retina some years back. My dear lady suffers from COPD, stage four kidney disease and exhibits clear signs of dementia, the result of a fall some 45 years ago in a Tucson parking lot.

A paraphrase of the Masonic admonition of the Second Degree **Staircase Lecture** speaks well to our respective conditions. *"The morning of your youth is gone with the departed years; the meridian of your [life] is passing with the flying hours; and old age is coming to you, my [friend], dark-shadowed on the swift wings of time. But to the Mason there is no night. The setting splendors of a virtuous and well-spent life gild [the] departing moments with gentle tints of hope and [our friend] sinks to rest in peace, harmony and brotherly love."*

Such are the consequences of living an eventful life. For her, there are two beautiful children, who themselves have been living more than full lives, a gorgeous and intelligent grandchild who has bloomed into adulthood and a loving and doting husband. For me, an incredible couple of children, a strikingly lovely and smart grand-daughter, and a wife of some 56 years who still is as beautiful and loving as she was back in January of 1962.

Those are the basics of a successful life, but there are other things that make life worth living. I call them footprints. It's

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

the leaving of one's mark on the world. I think I've done a pretty darned good job in the footprint department.

Over my lifetime I've been a member of **Junior Assemblies** and **Cotillion**, earned the rank of **Eagle Scout**, been a member of the Flagstaff Chapter of **Sigma Pi** ( $\Sigma\Pi$ ) fraternity, a **DeMolay** brother as well as Chapter Advisor, a recipient of the DeMolay **Chevalier** and **Legion of Honor** and attained both the 3rd and 32nd Degrees of Masonry.

In three of the fourteen markets I worked as Disc Jockey **Ted Behr**, another Ted Behr replaced me when I left for greener pastures. That's because I was the number one drive time, mid- morning or early morning personality in five of those fourteen markets.

As Chief Engineer at three radio stations I created a number of unique devices that made technical operations easier. At least three articles about them were published in **Broadcast Engineering** magazine back in the day. I was one of very few Broadcast Chief Engineers in the West who also served as radio personalities.

As a the owner of a home entertainment systems repair and maintenance business owner and on-the-air TV advertiser I became a **Saturday Night Live** feature that viewers looked forward to seeing each week. Only newscaster **Lou Waters**, weathercaster **Michael Goodrich**, famed furniture store lamp-breaker **Austin Egrin** and late-night movie host **Jack Jacobson**, the **Kindly, Lovable Doctor Scar**, were better known Tucson TV broadcasters.

Through a fifteen year early broadcast career, I was an excellent news-reader. Rip and Read, they called it. In an eight year redeux of my broadcasting career in years, I became a competent news gatherer and well-known journalist

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

by the name of **Terrible Ted Thayer**, or Tee-Cubed, as many elected officials still call me. Terrible Ted was the moniker I picked up at Hughes Aircraft just before I was named **Worst Golfer in Tucson**.

I served on the **Pima County (Arizona) Republican Central Committee** and was the **Gila County (Arizona) Democrat Party Vice-Chairman**. I was also a **member of Tucson Optimist Club**, serves as the **Globe Rotary Club's President** and sat on the Boards of the **Cobre Valley Regional Medical Center** and **Gila Community College Foundations**. In addition, I served for nine years on the **Miami Boomtown Spree Committee** and participated on the **Gila County Census 2000 Commission**.

Now, I write two commentaries per week that are emailed to hundreds of loyal fans, published on **Facebook** for well over two-thousand readers and uploaded to my hosting website ([www.jettedthayer.com](http://www.jettedthayer.com)) as another chapter in **Thayer's Wild Bunch**, of which there are five volumes. There is also a memoir called **Caca Pasa Historias de un Hombre Viejo (Old Man's Stories)** featuring painful and sometimes comical observations of my life. In addition, there's a work-in-progress named **¿Quién Sabe? Mas Historias de un Hombre Viejo (More Old Man's Stories)**. And I'm the Webmaster for nine sites!

That's a lot of stuff to load on one plate ... many footprints. You must know that I've also stepped in it on more than a few occasions! I'm especially grateful for my family and the many friends made over the years. My wish for you, friend, is that you have the good fortune to have as full a plate as mine and the footprints that come with it. It certainly is great to be alive!

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Thursday, November 22, 2018

## Happy Eagle Day?

Anymore, there aren't many folks who know our National Emblem was almost the turkey, today's symbol of Thanksgiving. Instead, we have the majestic Bald Eagle. I can't imagine cooking and eating an Eagle, can you? With stuffing, sweet potatoes, a salad of some sort, cranberry sauce, pumpkin pie & ice cream? I guess I could handle it with a bunch of **Bailey's Irish Creme** shooters. Lotsa shooters! Instead, we got turkey!

**History.com** tells us that "After the Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, it next tasked **Benjamin Franklin** - along with **John Adams** and **Thomas Jefferson** - with designing a seal to represent the new country. Given the opportunity to choose a national symbol, the Founding Father never suggested a turkey.

"The story that Franklin proposed the turkey as the national symbol began to circulate in American newspapers around the time of the country's centennial and are based on a January 26, 1784, letter in which he panned the eagle and extolled the virtues of the gobbler to his daughter, Sarah. In doing so, though, he was not delivering a critique of the **Great Seal** but a new medal issued by the **Society of the Cincinnati**, an association of **Continental Army** veterans. *'For my own part I wish the bald eagle had not been chosen as the representative of our country,'* he wrote. The Founding Father argued that the eagle was *'a bird of bad moral character'* that *'does not get his living honestly'* because it steals food from the fishing hawk and is *'too lazy to fish for himself.'*

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

"In contrast, Franklin called the turkey '*a much more respectable bird*' and '*a true original native of America*.' While he considered the eagle '*a rank coward*,' Franklin believed the turkey to be '*a bird of courage*' that '*would not hesitate to attack a grenadier of the **British Guards** who should presume to invade his farm yard with a red coat on*.' While the private letter was a spirited promotion of the turkey over the eagle, Franklin never made his views public, and when the chance had been given to him to officially propose a symbol for the **United States** eight years earlier, his idea was biblical, not avian.

"Back in 1776, Franklin proposed an image of '**Moses** *standing on the shore, and extending his hand over the sea, thereby causing the same to overwhelm pharaoh who is sitting in an open chariot*' along with the motto '*Rebellion to Tyrants is Obedience to God*.' While the committee selected the scene from the **Book of Exodus** for the reverse of the seal, the **Continental Congress** was not impressed and tabled the concept. Not until 1782 was the **Great Seal of the United States**, with a bald eagle as its centerpiece, approved."

I didn't know that! Did you?

Whatever... More shooters!

And Happy Thanksgiving troops.

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Monday, November 26, 2018

## Wildfire!

Back in the mid 1800s - after the **Western Territories** were acquired from **Mexico** - it wasn't uncommon to see a cowboy throwing stick matches onto the forest floor in the Fall as he and his cohort of wranglers herded their cattle out of the mountains and foothills to the flatlands of the West for the Winter. The object was to ready the forest for Winter and keep it habitable for wildlife and cattle.

Causing forest fires was a way to keep upper elevation animals and trees healthy. It was a custom practiced by **North American Natives** as far back as the 1600s. The fire burnt the drying grasses on the forest floor, trimmed the brush back and scorched the tree tunics close to the ground, keeping pests like the **Bark Beetle** in check. Singeing the forest floor also readied the fertile ground for fresh cover that would come in the Spring.

As Spring turned to Summer the cattle were herded from the lowlands back into the foothills and mountains where they would graze with any number of tiny creatures and an abundance of deer and elk. Crown fires were un-heard-of in those days because the fire never got that high. Even lightning from Summer thunderstorms didn't phase the forests because they were protected from overgrowth and brush that sustain wildfire if not held in check.

The health of the forests was also sustained by the logging industry. Clear-cutting was frowned upon because pine trees rely on fire to scorch the pine cones on the forest floor, popping them open and flinging their seeds to repopulate open areas. Conifer seeds are tough and have adapted to survive fire. Taking the old-growth trees allowed the smaller



## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

conifers sprouting from the forest floor to compete for space in the open skies above. It's a myth propagated by over-zealous environmentalists that raptors like the **Bald Eagle** and the **Spotted Owl** cannot survive properly managed Western forests. As a matter of fact, even the tiny **Southwest Willow Flycatcher** is tough as nails and makes the best of whatever its situation.

California can emulate old-time ranchers and cattlemen by reinvigorating its lumber and cattle industries and creating a new industry in the process. Clearing the underbrush that sustains forest fires, and the taking of old-growth trees encourages cleansing forest floor fires while preventing dangerous crown fires. A cooperative effort between forest managers, cattlemen and loggers can go a long way to protect the population while creating a new industry, a public-private enterprise committed to commercial forest management.

Here in **Gila County**, Arizona, we've been lucky to have two County Supervisors back-to-back that have worked with the feds and the state to implement policies, practices and procedures that thin the forests, battle the bark beetle and return logging, ranching and grazing to the high country. We have not had any major fires in the Ponderosa forests and Chaparral pastures since our government took an active interest in forest and range maintenance and management which includes controlled burns. In the process, we figured out how to make endangered Bald Eagles, Spotted Owls and the Southwestern Willow Flycatcher snug as bugs in a rug.

The **Camp** fire in northern California has claimed as many as 85 lives, 153,336 acres of land, at least 14,500 structures and the unaccounted for includes some 296 people as of this writing. A **Cal Fire** spokesman told **ABC News** the

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

blaze was finally 100% contained yesterday (Sunday) morning.

According to **Betsy McCaughy** writing for **RealClearPolitics**, "[California's] **Little Hoover Commission** predicts 'proactive forest management practices' can create healthier forests that will 'check the speed and intensity of wildfires.' These practices will return forests to the natural conditions of previous centuries, when forests had 40 trees per acre instead of hundreds.

"Even California's own legislature recognizes that forest mismanagement is the tragedy's major cause. The legislature passed a law two months ago to implement many of the same changes **[President] Trump** [is] now being mocked for proposing - controlled burning, underbrush removal and forest thinning."

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## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

Thursday, November 29, 2018

### **Levin, Hanson & Buckley Jr.**

Mark Levin's guest the other night (Saturday - FNC) was Victor Davis Hanson, a very widely recognized historian, educator and famed conservative who was created from the same fabric as the late William F Buckley Jr.

I was impressed with Hanson's easy view of what, on the face of it, appears terribly complicated to the lay person.

On the value of a college education, Hanson noted that Colleges and Universities should be held to account for baiting and switching prospective students. Too many young people sign up for tens of thousands in tuition and fees without understanding that the major they have chosen will not result in a good job after graduation. He said the government guarantees behind many college loans allow educational institutions to raise their tuition and fees because, after all, they're guaranteed ... no matter if the kid can pay the money back or not!

He grouched that students are not being properly counseled when seeking entrance to an institute of higher learning. Why aren't they being asked if they understand the value of a liberal arts degree compared to an Engineering Degree. Why aren't they being asked how they expect to pay back their student loans? A degree in Animal Husbandry will hardly rake in a tidy salary compared to that of a degree in computer science. So, with the quantities of money involved over a lifetime, why - he asked - aren't these kids being guided by college counselors in a more profitable direction? It's because colleges have become so liberal they don't care!

## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

Hanson spoke highly of trade schools. He claimed that too many young people are missing the boat when it comes to creating income. Some trades pay as much as Higher College Degrees. Plenty of high-paying jobs are going wanting, he said, because there aren't enough trained workers. Further, trade schools prepare students to enter the work force in short order - and at substantially less costs - compared to the years of increasing debt it takes to obtain a College Degree.

Which reminds me ... just for fun ... how many of you good folks remember Fred and Fanny Farkel and their children, Mark and Sparkle Farkel (Hi!)?

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**Monday, December 3, 2018**

## **Mt Lemmon Cafe Chili**

My daughter Janet worked at the Mount Lemmon Cafe many moons ago. That's the outfit famous for their pies! OMG! Great pies! But their Chili was also to die for!

Mt Lemmon Cafe Style Chili...

- \*2-3 lbs diced beef
- \*2 Tbsp oil
- \*1 Lg onion, diced
- \*2-3 cloves garlic, minced
- \*2 (28oz) cans diced tomatoes (56oz total)
- \*1 can pinto beans (28oz)
- \*1 can "Ranch Style Beans" (14oz)
- \*1 tiny can diced green chilies

Heat the oil in a large pot. Add diced beef and fry the meat until browned. Add onions and garlic and continue cooking, stirring occasionally, until the onions go clear, then start to turn golden brown.

Stir in the tomatoes, green chilies, pinto beans and Ranch Style Beans and bring to a boil, then turn heat to low. Stir in all spices, and simmer on low overnight, or at least until the meat is tender (At least 3 hours). The mixture can alternatively be placed into a crock pot to simmer on low for an extended period. Serve with shredded cheddar and minced onion.

Chili Spices:

- 2 cubes Knorr beef bullion
- Salt to taste
- Pepper to taste
- 2 Tbsp Paprika
- 3-4 Tbsp Chili powder

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## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

**Thursday, December 6, 2018**

### **Seven Dollars a Gallon!**

**[Bradford Betz, Lucia I. Suarez Sang, Fox News and the AP contributed to this article.]**

After days of unrest that included widespread rioting in Paris, the French government relented Tuesday and agreed to suspend utility hikes and a controversial fuel tax, the country's prime minister announced.

**Edouard Philippe** made the announcement in a live televised address, backpedaling on the planned increase, which was set to be introduced in January and is now postponed until the summer.

“No tax is worth putting the nation’s unity in danger,” he said, just three weeks after insisting the government would not be changing course and remained determined to help wean French consumers off fossil fuels.

[The taxes were implemented as a way to get France off fossil fuels, thought by many experts to contribute to Global Warming/Cooling/Climate Change. Unfortunately, the increases were incremental and came as a massive shock to the French populace.]

[Little news of the uprising was published or broadcast in the United States until last weekend, when there were a number of deaths and scores injured in a series of violent demonstrations throughout the country.]

At least four people have been killed and more than 100 people injured after the violent large-scale protests broke out in mid-November. More than 400 people have been arrested in what officials have called the worst unrest on the streets of Paris in decades.

“The violence must end,” Philippe said.

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

Dozens of cars were torched and shops were looted in the plush neighborhoods around the famed **Champs-Elysees** Avenue. The **Arc de Triomphe**, which only last month was visited by world leaders to mark the centenary of the end of World War I, was sprayed with graffiti and vandalized.

In his address Tuesday, Philippe also announced electricity and natural gas prices will be frozen until May 2019, a move aimed at improving spending power.

But the announcement is unlikely to put an end to the road blockades and demonstrations, with more protests possible in Paris this weekend.

"If another day of protests takes place on Saturday, it should be authorized and should take place in calm," Philippe said. "The interior minister will use all means to ensure order is respected."

On Tuesday, protesters repeatedly blocked several fuel depots and insisted their battle was only beginning.

"It's a first step, but we will not settle for a crumb," said **Benjamin Cauchy**, a protest leader.

Prominent Socialist figure **Segolene Royal**, a former candidate for president, lauded Philippe's decision but said the course correction on the climate change tax came too late.

"This decision should have been taken from the start, as soon as the conflict emerged," she said. "We felt it was going to be very, very hard because we saw the rage, the exasperation, especially from retirees. They should have withdrawn [the tax hikes] right away. The more you let a conflict fester, the more you eventually have to concede."

Right-wing leader **Marine Le Pen** lashed out at the decision as too little, tweeting it was "obviously not up to the expectations of the French people struggling with precarity."

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

[The price for French diesel fuel rose from 85 Euro Cents in 2000 to 1.23 Euros *per liter* by 2017. One gallon is equal to 3.785 liters. That made the 2017 average price of diesel fuel in France roughly equivalent to \$4.65 US Dollars per gallon.]

[A tax increase jacked the price of a liter of diesel to 1.48 Euros early this year, some \$5.60 USD per gallon. The November 2018 increase was to 1.52 Euros per liter or \$5.75 USD per gallon. That's a 20% increase *in one year* - almost half the increase *over the last 18 years*.]

[Most of the increases between 2000 and 2017 had to do with inflation until this year, when Global Warming taxes overwhelmed the rising cost of fossil fuels, precipitating violent demonstrations in the streets of Paris and other major French cities. There were recent reports of fuel prices as high as \$7.00 per gallon USD elsewhere.]

[Monday, **The DailyWire** reported, "The American media ... has a vested interest in maintaining audience concern over global warming, which is why **CNN** and **CBS** left out key details about France's exorbitant fuel prices. **Reuters** and other, more global news organizations fared better in their coverage, accepting that (**French President Emmanuel Macron**)'s efforts to curb fuel consumption may have gone a step too far."]

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**Monday, December 10, 2018**

## **The Fed is Eating Your Lunch**

I heard a deal the other day on the radio. These guys were talking about the Federal Reserve, better known as The Fed, the folks who supposedly set United States' monetary policy. It seems that lately they've been doing a lousy job of it. And, I'll tell you why.

The American economy depends on supply and demand to make its economic engine work properly. Lately, however, progressive ideals have been pressing economic boundaries all over the world.

Here at home, The Fed has failed to keep up with reality and begun putting the brakes on the USA's economic engine. The bad guy, according to the Fed is inflation, a concept whose time has come and gone in past decades!

Fed policy used to be to raise interest rates to contain inflation. Too much growth caused higher wages which brought along with it personal credit at unhealthy levels. The way to stop inflation was to make it too costly.

Remember the days of 6 percent add-on interest? That used to be the standard for auto loans. But, do you remember when the Fed, the States and the Courts deemed that 29.99% wasn't excessive? Not usury? Before the "Great Recession" in 2008-09 the deepest, longest-lasting recession the United States

### **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

experienced began in 1980, when Jimmy Carter was president. They called it "Stagflation."

If I remember my basic economics, if you increase the interest rate too much it forces prices up, lowering demand for goods and services, causing a recession. Following the 2008 elections and the days of the "Great Recession" the Fed lowered the funds rate (on December 16th) to one-quarter percent, the lowest in US history! They kept it there until December of 2015 when it doubled to .5%. Do you remember what happened? For almost ten years? Nothing!

Today, the unemployment rate is the lowest since 1969 - some 3.7% - and there are more jobs available than ever before, many of which are going unfilled. Wages are up and the economy is growing at a rate of some 3.5%. That scares the folks at the Fed, who over time, have forgotten the basics of American Capitalist Economics. Let me reiterate for those of you who may not have attended educational institutions that taught their students how it works.

It's called the Law of Supply and Demand. And it basically has to do with greed. The more customers want a product, the higher the price will go. If they are not so hot on a product, the price will drop to a level that consumers will accept. In other words: If you've got a hot product, you can charge a lot for it ... as much as the market will bear! On the other hand, if you have a crappy product, the market will force the price down to a point at which it will sell.

### **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

Now ... the Fed seems to have forgotten that basic maxim. There is a short supply of labor now, so wages must go up to compensate for the demand. When wages go up, people have more money to spend, creating new demands for products, forcing prices up. The Fed calls that inflation.

Nonsense! I call it Capitalism at work. It's economic growth, which is measured by increases in the Gross Domestic Product, lately in that 3.5% range. Somehow, the Fed has equated increases in wages, product demand and prices with inflation and has increased the interest rate to a point where it is suppressing growth in the economy and scaring the dickens out of the markets.

Since early 2016, the Fed Funds Rate has increased by an outrageous 450% from .5% to 2.24%. Throw in a modicum of uncertainty about trade relations with China and it's almost like the Fed is trying to precipitate another recession.

Well, while the Fed fiddles with the cost of our money, the most valuable in the world, our country's economy appears to be headed for a massive melt-down. The Fed is slowly eating your lunch. And I have no idea what to do about it!

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Thursday, December 13, 2018

## About NDAs

It's a caution, but I've been trying mightily to keep my mind wrapped around how we walk the straight and narrow. If you pay attention to the mainstream media, there is no way, troops.

Back in the day, our President, **JFK**, dallied with the likes of **Marilyn Monroe**, and nobody thought anything of it because, after all, "He's the President!"

Then there was **Lyndon Johnson** ... OMG. You don't want to know! And still, nobody cared.

Maybe **Bill Clinton** set the standard for Presidential indiscretions! Nobody, I'm reasonably certain, has any idea how many paramours there were with which Wm J Clinton played during his tenure as President.

So, what's the big deal about President **Donald Trump** and his one-night fling with Porn Star **Stormy Daniels**? **MSM** (that would be **NYT**, **WaPo**, **LAT**, **CNBC**, **MSNBC**, **CNN** et al) has been trying its best to show that our President is guilty of felony Campaign Fund violations because he had a dalliance with a gal no guy in his right mind would turn away!

Our boy had an evening a lotta guys would kill for ... and ended up reimbursing his attorney some \$130,000 out of his own pocket for "hushing" Daniels with a paid NDA (Non Disclosure Agreement.) That's supposed to be a no-no, according to our American **MSM**. And Trump's attorney yesterday agreed to three years in the slammer for handling the money, although his actual crime was lying to FBI investigators and the Congress.

## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

But NDAs and hush money are *not* against the law - any law!  
In truth, NDAs are a fact of life in the business world. An executive is let go for whatever reason and there is a large severance package (hush money) along with an NDA to assure that company secrets remain undisclosed. It's a fact of life. And it's not against the law.

The only time payment of hush money is illegal is when there is bribery involved. Taking money as a bribe to remain silent about some act or fact is patently against the law. So, is the President guilty of contributing campaign funds to a bribe perpetrated by a Porn Star? Is there any evidence of a bribe? As John Stossel would say ... Give me a break!

They say that protecting a politician's reputation is a violation of Campaign laws, no matter from where the "hush money" came. Really? So, why is it that our Congress has a "Slush Fund" to quiet sexual complaints from Congressional Staffers? And those guys are seriously talking impeachment?

These people need to work on doing their job for a change. Like ... fully funding the Border Wall, a genuine Infrastructure plan, a workable DACA program, protecting Social Security and Medicare, approving a slew of Federal Judges and a new Attorney General, and passing the last pieces of the 2018-19 budget. Who really gives a hoot about Stormy Daniels, Michael Cohen and a \$130,000 fling when there is real work for the Congress to do.

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**Monday, December 17, 2018**

## **Yellow Jackets**

France's Macron has his hands full with the Gilets Jaunes (Yellow Jackets), the protesters now scattered all over his country - and beginning to infect the rest of the European Union. It's not what he thinks it is. It's why Donald Trump is President of the United States of America.

You see, the "Silent Majority" has been around for a long time. These people are the backbone of every community in the world. They are the reason despots can't last. They make up the societies that control the horizontal and the vertical of our planet. Most of the time they just sit there, taking up space and collecting dust on the assorted coffee tables scattered across our several continents. Sometimes, it takes a while for the remote to kick in, but after a few galactic minutes it seems like it always does!

Emmanuel Macron still hasn't recognized the baseline of his problem. It's the same one Hillary Clinton, to this day, has failed to comprehend. It's the great masses of "little people" who make the world go 'round. Not the movers and shakers so comfortably ensconced in the world's population centers.

Like Clinton, Macron failed to recognize what all despots have missed over the ages. The little people who populate the vast areas that make up the majority of all countries also take up the majority of the space. In so doing, they drive the engines of the economy, the labor force and the tax base. It's the little people housed in fly-over areas of the world that have the power.

Macron is discovering the very same thing Hillary Clinton did on November 8th of 2016.

### **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

If you fail to consider the power of the middle class, you will never obtain the Holy Grail.

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**Thursday, December 20, 2018**

## **CR or The Wall**

**President Donald Trump** laid down the gauntlet the last time he signed a CR (Continuing Resolution), a way of funding government operations when a full budget has not yet been adopted. He said that was the last Continuing Resolution he would ever sign. However, tremendous pressure has been put on the President to accept a CR and let the new **Congress** attack the problem.

Each Fall the Congress is supposed to submit the budget for the coming Fiscal year, which begins October 1st. For decades they have failed to do so - instead, they have presented a series of CRs to fund the government. That's not how it's supposed to work. Funding government operations requires at least a dozen Bills approved by a majority in the **House** and a super-majority in the **Senate**.

Once again the Congress has failed to do its job and the President says he wants \$5 Billion included in the budget to fund a little over 200 miles of The Wall project along the US-Mexico border. He has said he will not sign another CR and he told Senate Minority Leader **Chuck Schumer** and House Majority-Leader-to-be **Nancy Pelosi** in a televised White House meeting last week that if he didn't get his Wall money he'd shut down the government.

Yesterday there was talk of a compromise - a CR, if you will - that would fund the government into next February, but it was being dismissed by insiders in the know. The **AP** reported yesterday that "The White House set the tone when press secretary **Sarah Huckabee Sanders** indicated that Trump doesn't want to shut down the government." Sanders said that "At the end of the day, we don't want to shut down the government we want to shut down the border from illegal immigration." Last night, by voice vote, the Senate passed a



## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

stop-gap Bill that would fund the government but not The Wall. Next move? The House.

How can President Trump shut down the government? First, he can simply veto the Bill. Second, he could pull a pocket veto by doing nothing - which kills the Bill because its spending authorization requires the Chief Executive's signature. Either way, the Congress can only override the President's refusal with two-thirds majorities in both Chambers, a move proven successful over the years only ten percent of the time.

The battle between the Legislative and Executive branches of government may or may not be won by the deadline tomorrow night at midnight. If the Bill presented to the President is not signed by that time, all but "critical" government activities stop. However, **Social Security** checks, **Medicare**, the **VA**, the **Postal Service**, **Defense** and **National Security** are not affected by the shut-down, contrary to what detractors will trumpet all weekend. If there is a shut-down, the ones who get the short end of the stick will be some 800,000 government employees and the folks who depend on them.

Last time this happened, the Senate Leadership blinked - the "Schumer Shut-down" lasted just three-and-a-half days, January 19th through 22nd. Both Schumer and Pelosi have pledged that this time the Democrats will not budge ... or blink!

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Monday, December 24, 2018

## Merry Christmas!

So, there I was, wondering what to write for my Christmas column when it struck me that the holiday is all about celebration of life. The birth of Jesus Christ is the subject of the Christmas story world-wide and an examination of his life is optional, of course. Still, his life and how he conducted it is fodder for all sorts of Christmas (and Easter) stories.

I'm not going to tell you any holiday stories. Instead, I want to let you know how much I value you and the other folks who read this drivel twice a week ... it's not that easy to create!

Also, I need to give thanks for my family. Now that mom and dad have traveled to that *"House not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens"*, I give thanks for my little brother, Bill, who turned 75 this year, and my sister Mandy, who ain't no Spring Chicken herself! Add to them my son John, who is worshipped by his mother, and daughter-fair Janet, worshipped equally by her ol' dad. The Good Lord blessed the Thayer family with granddaughter Krystylynn over two decades ago, but I still think of her as our grand-baby-girl - she is smart and stunningly beautiful! She adds something special to the world around her and to our family.

It goes without saying that my greatest blessing is that of my bride of 56 years, Claudette. She is the mortar that keeps my bricks in line. In short, she is my love, my rock!

When I look around inside my humble abode, I'm thankful for all the blessings God has bestowed on the Thayer family. My wish is, no matter your station in life, that you are at least as blessed as I am ... and that you appreciate those blessings as much as I do!

## **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

Merry Christmas.

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Thursday, December 27, 2018

## Crazy!

The stock market had the biggest gain EVER yesterday after turning down for a week, losing more than it did in any week during the Great Recession. President Trump blames the down-turn on The Fed for raising the interest rates it charges banks too many times and much too high this year. That's crazy!

On December 19th last year the Fed's interest rate doubled from .25% to .50%. After the fourth increases December 19th this year, stands at 2.5%, up an outrageous 500%! The Fed worries that the economy is growing too fast, poised to create inflation. Perhaps they aren't paying attention to the 500% Fed Funds increase in the BASIC price of money. That's crazy!

The Mainstream Media played the Grinch for Christmas this year. The big story in the papers and on Cable TV was that Donald Trump was the first US President since 2002 to not visit the troops at Christmas. Unbeknownst to the MSM - and kept a closely-held secret from the press - the POTUS and his bride Melania were on their way to the mid-east to visit troops in Iraq, landing just as the news was hitting the streets and airways across the USA. **NBC**, **MSNBC** and **Newsweek** ended up with egg on their faces when **Salon** and **TheRoot** broke the real story using **Breitbart** as their sources. Breitbart trumpeted "Fake News: NBC Spreads False Claim President Trup Did Not Visit Troops ..." Now that's really crazy!

Fake News is why people have less faith in the validity of news generated by lazy reporters like Elyse Perlmutter-Gumbiner, the one who generated the false NBC story. Of course, she may have put herself in a box by failing to give the White House the opportunity to deny that The Donald and

### **Thayer's Wild Bunch V**

Melania were in the air on their way to Iraq. 2019 is gonna be a crazy year!

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Monday, December 31, 2018

## Happy New Year!

At this point, I'm beside myself.

On one hand, it would take three of me to be more enthusiastic about our future!

The stock market hasn't lost as much as it did during the Great Recession when stock values plummeted some 54%. According to **Marketwatch** "The **Dow**'s biggest-ever one-day point rise came [December 26th], when it ended with a gain of 1,086.25." That means, even in a Bear Market, there is no way to go but up - optimism is in the air as we head into the new year. Savvy investors are advising keep your 401k holdings - they always go up over time.

The **Fed Funds** rate (the cost of money banks are charged) will rise by one-half of one percent in the coming year to 3.00% from the current 2.50%. The inflationary increases by The Fed between December of 2017 and December of 2018 totalled some 500% from .50 to 2.50. 2019 will see a mere 20% increase in the cost of money if the Fed keeps its pledge to raise its rate to three percent by year's end. That's good news for civilians with credit card debt. And good news for the banking community.

On the other hand, we've got every reason to feel sad about our prospects for 2019.

Congress and the **President** are unable so far to come to a compromise over continued funding of the southern border wall. There is a Bill ready in the **Senate** that the **House** passed by a large margin - it contains \$5.7 billion for Border construction projects. Senate Minority Leader **Chuck Schumer** has said the Democrats will not vote for the Bill,

## Thayer's Wild Bunch V

which needs 60 votes to pass. 50 of them would come from Republicans, the remaining ten would have to come from Democrat Senators. Schumer says that "Ain't gonna happen." Meanwhile, President Trump has eased off a bit, halving his demand from \$5 to \$2.5 billion. Still no dice from the Dems. House Speaker-to-be **Nancy Pelosi** is sequestered in Hawaii and not talking.

Some 800,000 government employees will receive no pay until the government gets back to work with authorization approved by the Congress and the President. They say the **EPA** runs out of money tonight. The sticky wicket is whether President Trump will go back on his word that he would not sign another **Continuing Resolution** ... a CR that will certainly fund the entire government through February without providing funding for The Wall. There has been chatter out there that a separate Bill could be in the wind, funding some 215 miles of Border Wall/Barrier/Fencing with \$2.5 billion this **Fiscal Year** and another \$2.5 next year.

All of the uncertainty around the Government Shut-down has made it difficult for American **Blue Chip** stocks. They've had a rough December ... some say the worst since before the **Great Depression**. The Dow peaked at 26,951.81 before plunging almost 20% to 21,712.53, a loss of 5,239.28 - definitely a Bear Market, off the 4th quarter some 12.83%! Still, the economy remains strong.

What will 2019 have in store for us? Political infighting, poor service from the government until the President and the Congress agree to fund it, and an unstable Bear Stock Market. Meanwhile, Arizona's Governor **Doug Ducey** has appointed **Martha McSally** to the Senate seat being vacated by Jon Kyl, giving the state two female Senators for the first time ever! There are only three things to do ...

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

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By J E Ted Thayer

