

Thayer's

Wild Bunch VIII

By J E Ted Thayer

Thayer's Wild Bunch VIII

Published by J E Ted Thayer

1271 N Wheatfields Rd Lot 22

Globe AZ 85501-2803

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Printed/published in the United States of America

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Thayer, John, 1941-

Thayer's Wild Bunch VIII/ by J E Ted Thayer,

Print Version

Last updated 12-31-2020

Jacket and book design by J E Ted Thayer

Photography and Artwork by various contributors

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PHOTO/GRAPHIC CREDITS

Page	Source	Year
Front Cover	'Hutch' charcoal artist Monterey CA	1957
Back Cover	Thayer Archive – Porterville CA	1946
Preface	www.tedthayer.com	2016
7	William H Thayer Tucson AZ	

Note: Un-credited items J E Ted Thayer *Globe* Various

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PREFACE

January 2, 2020

<http://www.tedthayer.com/default.html>

TedThayer.com



J E Ted Thayer | 01-02-2020

THIS One ...

Is dedicated to the Thayer girls - Ruth, Claudette & Mary-Ellen, pictured left to right here with the Thayer kids ... Amanda, Janet, Courtney, Ruth, Malissa, Mary-Ellen & Claudette.



This work is a compilation of The Wild Bunch commentaries published up until September of this year via email broadcast and on Facebook every Monday and Thursday. In September I started publishing the email and a PodCast reading of it on the www.TedThayer.com website.

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.

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Each pair of chapters represents a week's offering without the website banner shown above. On June 16th 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 2020 will turn out? Stay tuned, kids!.

It's gonna be another great ride!

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Thursday, January 2, 2020

When?

That's the question - when? When does the nonsense stop? When are journalists going to stop playing "what facts?"

What happened to the truth? No, I mean the truth, not just the most titillating enhanced details of news stories.

I read the December 26th **Variety** article "Most-Watched Television Networks: Ranking 2019's Winners and Losers" by **Michael Schneider**. He reported that the number one over-the-air network is CBS; second is NBC; third is ABC. Next comes Fox over-the-air network #4 and its cable sister Fox News Network at #5. The absolute worst treatment of "news" is found on #7 MSNBC - followed by #22 CNN - both competing poorly with FNN last year. CNBC faltered at #70. And Fox Business Network at #102.

Two reasons that CBS is tops begins with everybody's favorites, CBS News Sunday Morning and 60 Minutes, TV favorites for decades. Programming on both shows is interesting, in-depth and entertaining.

Remember the tabloid press? You had to walk by them in the check-out lanes of your favorite supermarket. Most shoppers back in the day new that Inquiring Minds Could Care Less! That didn't stop legitimate newspapers from allowing the decline in the quality of their journalism. The **National Enquirer** and the **Sun** set the bar for hysterical headlines.

USA Today aped those formats for a while, but finally dropped the hystronics. The three papers perfected the art of journalistic cherry-picking. That disease slowly worked its way across broadcast TV, cable and print media.

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Recently, the **New York Times** stooped lower than the National Enquirer, the Sun and USA Today combined with its bogus 1618 Black American History re-education campaign. Its motto since 1896 had been "*All the News That's Fit to Print.*"

According to the **New York Post**, "Because of its plodding thoroughness, the New York Times was dubbed the '*Gray Lady*' and the '*paper of record*' ...the mandate of opinion-free news coverage was tossed overboard during the heated 2016 presidential election, and the paper now displays its bias on every page."

If you pay close attention, you'll find that the NYT is a main source for many of today's establishment journalists who are distrusted almost as much as the Congress!

Make no bones about it - I'm an opinion columnist. However, I do my homework and proudly list the sources of my quotes, unlike the drive-by mainstream media. God, help us all!

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

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Monday, January 6, 2020

Challenge

Welcome to the challenge of 2020!

I have a question for you: Who is in control of your Horizontal and your Vertical?

Not **Rod Serling** - that would take us back to 1959, some 61 years to the *Twilight Zone* !

1963 - just 57 years. *"There is nothing wrong with your television set. Do not attempt to adjust the picture. We are controlling transmission. If we wish to make it louder, we will bring up the volume. If we wish to make it softer, we will tune it to a whisper. We will control the horizontal. We will control the vertical. We can roll the image, make it flutter. We can change the focus to a soft blur, or sharpen it to crystal clarity. For the next hour, sit quietly, and we will control all that you see and hear. We repeat: there is nothing wrong with your television set. You are about to participate in a great adventure. You are about to experience the awe and mystery which reaches from the inner mind to ... **The Outer Limits.**"*

The thing about both of those TV shows was how life can challenge each of us. And ... how we meet those challenges.

For some sick reason, I've taken to looking at the onslaught of 2020 as the Outer Limits of the Twilight Zone. I mean, consider the challenges that confront us just as we enter the first week of the new year - the first week of the new decade - the return of the Roaring Twenties!

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Think of it. We're all supposed to be dead or dying in another decade according to **AOC** and that Swedish schoolgirl who turned seventeen just three days ago, **Greta Thunberg**. In 2004 the US Department of Defense predicted that by 2020 our world would be awash with higher seas, colder Winters, drought and hotter Summers, and that Climate Change was the most pressing danger for America and the whole world. Looney government predictions and raging socialist education systems across the world have created a crop of young men and women who are scared to death that they aren't going to survive for another eleven years unless the ubiquitous "we" do something.

Now, that's some kind of a challenge. What exactly is that *something* we are supposed to do? I mean, we have always been up to a challenge when we've known what "it" is.

We've fought (and won) wars to sustain freedom across the world. We've gone to the moon and back. We've been to the deepest point in the world's oceans. We have placed countless thousands of satellites in orbit around the earth - machines that help us communicate and circumnavigate the globe while providing the sciences with incredible amounts of data about the universe around us. We've even sent a **Voyager** - carrying a recording of human songs, stories and scientific data - out of our planetary system, to seek out other life ... perhaps at the edge of the Universe.

We've virtually eliminated **Polio**, a disease few kids of Greta's age have ever heard of, and nearly eliminated all the childhood diseases including **Mumps**, **Measles** and **Chicken Pox**.

We created the 1919 **Ford Model T Coup** and morphed it into the 2019 **F-100**, the best-selling pick-up truck in history. And we have created an aeronautical industry capable of building, flying and sustaining airplanes capable of carrying over 500 people at close to the speed of sound across vast distances.

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According to Thunberg and others of the **Gen Z** (or iGen) population, we of the **Greatest Generation**, the **Baby-Boomers**, **Generation X** and the **Millennials** have so polluted the air, land and seas of this planet that it's dying - perishing in just over a decade. UNLESS we all get creative and fix it! Sure. But you tell me ... what is **IT**?

I don't know what IT is, but I do know this: There is no challenge so great and no threat so enormous that we cannot tackle and conquer it ... without breaking the bank, displacing millions or billions of people and messing with Mother Nature and her creatures.

I see the largest challenge to humanity as just one thing: Prayer. Yes. It doesn't matter one's religious beliefs; we all believe in a **Supreme Being**, that awesome Power that controls the Horizontal and the Vertical in our lives. Masonic Tradition tells us that "*No man should ever enter into any great or important undertaking without first invoking the Blessing of God.*"

Billy Graham's son **Franklin** and other evangelicals have it right. Take time out to thank **Him** who goes by the name of **God**, the **Great Architect of the Universe**, **Allah** and all the other names the Supreme Being goes by. Give thanks and ask for guidance.

In short, as written in the **King James Bible, Matthew 7:7-8**: *Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.*

In my almost eight decades on this earth, God has never failed to come through. So, our challenge must be to seek the wisdom

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needed to discard the misguided musings of the AOCs and Greta Thunbergs of this world and look for help in making "it" right through thankful prayer, thoughtful contemplation and a willingness to explore the Outer Limits.

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Thursday, January 9, 2020

Willamette Wilderness Areas

*Last Wednesday, in response to a **Western Slope No-Fee Coalition** plea, I wrote the following to the **Deschutes and Willamette Forests Administration** via the **United States Department of Agriculture**, commenting on their proposition to charge fees to hikers who wish to visit a number of their Wilderness Areas.*

Greetings from Arizona!

Oregon has some of the most spectacular wilderness in the West. My broadcasting jobs were the reasons I lived in Klamath Falls, Coos Bay, Salem and Canby. I worked KGON in Oregon City adjacent to the Willamette River. As you know, the K-Falls area is beautiful. So are the cliffs, beaches and forests along the Oregon coast. The land is a lot flatter around Salem and Canby, but the state's lush mountains and wilderness are not far off.

I was born in Red Bluff, California and raised in Monterey. As Boy Scouts in the '50s, my compatriots and I hiked into the Ventana Wilderness from Big Sur and from a Girl Scout Camp south of Salinas. We never paid any fees to hike into Wilderness and we were not charged to pitch camp for a week at Barlow Flats. None of us had fishing licenses, but we caught plenty of trout!

The point I bring to the table is that Wilderness is where people can go to get away from the busy cities of our nation, breathe the fresh air, smell the outdoors, visit with the wildlife, take in the spectacular views and commune with Mother Nature in her purest forms. There is no amount of money that can buy the experience of just being in the Wilderness.

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As a native of the West, I have to object strenuously at the proposal to inflict a fee for the privilege of hiking into any Wilderness. Hiking does not fall under the FLREA as a "*specialized recreation use*." Walking around is something we learn as infants. There is nothing "special" about it! Using the FLREA phrase as a way to get around Congress' intent to allow ALL Americans unfettered access to their public lands, is flat-out wrong. The richest and the poorest among us should never be deprived of their right to walk anywhere they want, including the most remote Wilderness areas of our great country - especially in the West.

Instead, let me suggest that the presence of Park Rangers and volunteers be expanded a little to keep tabs on visitors hiking into Wilderness areas. Littering and vandalism are misdemeanors that can carry heavy penalties if federal citations are issued to visitors observed committing such crimes. Eliminating "*overcrowding and resource damage*" by charging fees removes that free and unfettered access to those who may not have the wherewithall ... and it is clear that is the intent of the proposed fees.

Please don't impose fees intended to keep us away from our Wilderness areas.

Best wishes and thank you for caring for our public lands.

*The comment period on those fee impositions had been extended to Friday, January 10th, but it wouldn't surprise me if they accepted emails until as late as January 14th, when a public hearing will be held at 9:00am at **Keizer Community Center**, Claggett Room, 930 Chemawa Road NE, Keizer, Oregon 97303.*

Direct email, if it pleases you, to:

WillametteRecFeeComments@usda.gov

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Monday, January 13, 2020

Number 58

Fifty-eight years ago Claudette and I were married in front of the fireplace in my folk's home in Pacific Grove, California. Claudette Ann Gordon's sister Karen was there, along with my brother Bill, Sister Mandy, Mom Ruth and Dad Duke Thayer.

It was a nondenominational wedding with a Presbyterian Preacher friend of the family, who had baptized both Claudette and me the day before, presiding over the festivities. What a fantastic thrill!

My mother was not all that happy about it because Claudette was three years and three months and three days my senior and had been married once before. I was aware that her previous marriage was annulled because it was never consummated. Her first was a Catholic marriage so Claudette worked very hard with the Church to assure that the annulment was accepted. It was, by the Holy See - even though she had never been baptized by a Catholic Priest!

Claudette passed away last July 29th at the ripe old age of eighty-two years, three months and fifteen days - fifty-seven years, six months and sixteen days of it as my loving spouse! I can't really celebrate this day as our anniversary because she isn't here to share it with me. That's so sad, but I can thank God for the time we had together.

I've spent enough time mourning her passing and going through the sadness and depression that comes with such things. For me, it's a celebration. I'm jubilant that Claudette was my partner and mother of our children, the grand lady who put up with my nonsense all those years. I thank the Good Lord for keeping us together for over a half-century. Right-on!

Yeah. You know I miss her ...

Thursday, January 16, 2020

Best Christmas Story

The [2019] Christmas Story You Never heard.

One of my very best friends sent this from Carmel, California.

(It's late ... but, hey he's old, too!)

It started last Christmas, when Bennett and Vivian Levin were overwhelmed by sadness while listening to radio reports of injured American troops. "We have to let them know we care," Vivian told Bennett. So they organized a trip to bring soldiers from Walter Reed Army Medical Center and Bethesda Naval Hospital to the annual Army-Navy football game in Philly Dec. 3.

The cool part is, they created their own train line to do it. Yes, there are people in this country who actually own real trains. Bennett Levin - native Philly guy, self-made millionaire and irascible former L&I commish - is one of them.

He has three luxury rail cars. Think mahogany paneling, plush seating and white-linen dining areas. He also has two locomotives, which he stores at his Juniata Park train yard. One car, the elegant Pennsylvania , carried John F. Kennedy to the Army-Navy game in 1961 and '62. Later, it carried his brother Bobby's body to D. C. for burial. "That's a lot of history for one car," says Bennett.

He and Vivian wanted to revive a tradition that endured from 1936 to 1975, during which trains carried Army-Navy spectators from around the country directly to the stadium where the annual game is played. The Levins could think of no better passengers to reinstate the ceremonial ride than the wounded men and women recovering at Walter Reed in D. C. and Bethesda , in Maryland .

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"We wanted to give them a first-class experience," says Bennett. "Gourmet meals on board, private transportation from the train to the stadium, perfect seats - real hero treatment."

Through the Army War College Foundation, of which he is a trustee, Bennett met with Walter Reed's commanding general, who loved the idea. But Bennett had some ground rules first, all designed to keep the focus on the troops alone:

No press on the trip, lest the soldiers' day of pampering devolve into a media circus.

No politicians either, because, says Bennett, "I didn't want some idiot making this trip into a campaign photo op"

And no Pentagon suits on board, otherwise the soldiers would be too busy saluting superiors to relax.

The general agreed to the conditions, and Bennett realized he had a problem on his hands. "I had to actually make this thing happen," he laughs.

Over the next months, he recruited owners of 15 other sumptuous rail cars from around the country - these people tend to know each other - into lending their vehicles for the day. The name of their temporary train? The Liberty Limited.

Amtrak volunteered to transport the cars to D. C. - where they'd be coupled together for the round-trip ride to Philly - then back to their owners later.

Conrail offered to service the Liberty while it was in Philly. And SEPTA drivers would bus the disabled soldiers 200 yards from the train to Lincoln Financial Field, for the game.

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A benefactor from the War College ponied up 100 seats to the game - on the 50-yard line - and lunch in a hospitality suite.

And corporate donors filled, for free and without asking for publicity, goodie bags for attendees:

From Woolrich, stadium blankets. From Wal-Mart, digital cameras. From Nikon, field glasses. From GEAR, down jackets.

There was booty not just for the soldiers, but for their guests, too, since each was allowed to bring a friend or family member.

The Marines, though, declined the offer. "They voted not to take guests with them, so they could take more Marines," says Levin, choking up at the memory.

Bennett's an emotional guy, so he was worried about how he'd react to meeting the 88 troops and guests at D. C.'s Union Station, where the trip originated. Some GIs were missing limbs. Others were wheelchair-bound or accompanied by medical personnel for the day. "They made it easy to be with them," he says. "They were all smiles on the ride to Philly. Not an ounce of self-pity from any of them. They're so full of life and determination."

At the stadium, the troops reveled in the game, recalls Bennett. Not even Army's lopsided loss to Navy could deflate the group's rollicking mood.

Afterward, it was back to the train and yet another gourmet meal - heroes get hungry, says Levin - before returning to Walter Reed and Bethesda. "The day was spectacular," says Levin.

"It was all about these kids. It was awesome to be part of it."

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The most poignant moment for the Levins was when 11 Marines hugged them goodbye, then sang them the Marine Hymn on the platform at Union Station.

"One of the guys was blind, but he said, 'I can't see you, but man, you must be beautiful!' " says Bennett. "I got a lump so big in my throat, I couldn't even answer him."

It's been three weeks, but the Levins and their guests are still feeling the day's love. "My Christmas came early," says Levin, who is Jewish and who loves the Christmas season. "I can't describe the feeling in the air." Maybe it was hope.

As one guest wrote in a thank-you note to Bennett and Vivian, "The fond memories generated last Saturday will sustain us all - whatever the future may bring. "God Bless Bennett and Vivian"

Thanks, Chuck.

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

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Monday, January 20, 2020

HR on Board

I came across this memorial the other day on Facebook. Facebook has gotten a bunch of bad raps lately, so I thought this could take a little bit of the sting off of folks who are Facebookers. This is especially good today, MLK Day. Although his grammar and punctuation are a little rough, this tome speaks well of its author and of the kindness Americans are willing to share.

David Carnevale | 07-14-2019

My lead flight attendant came to me and said, "We have an H.R. on this flight." (H.R. stands for human remains.)

"Are they military?" I asked.

'Yes', she said.

'Is there an escort?' I asked.

'Yes, I've already assigned him a seat'.

'Would you please tell him to come to the Flight Deck. You can board him early,' I said...

A short while later a young army sergeant entered the flight deck. He was the image of the perfectly dressed soldier. He introduced himself and I asked him about his soldier.

The escorts of these fallen soldiers talk about them as if they are still alive and still with us. 'My soldier is on his way back to Virginia ,' he said. He proceeded to answer my questions, but offered no words.

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I asked him if there was anything I could do for him and he said no. I told him that he had the toughest job in the military, and that I appreciated the work that he does for the families of our fallen soldiers. The first officer and I got up out of our seats to shake his hand. He left the Flight Deck to find his seat.

We completed our preflight checks, pushed back and performed an uneventful departure.

About 30 minutes into our flight, I received a call from the lead flight attendant in the cabin. 'I just found out the family of the soldier we are carrying, is also on board', she said. She then proceeded to tell me that the father, mother, wife and 2-year old daughter were escorting their son, husband, and father home. The family was upset because they were unable to see the container that the soldier was in before we left.

We were on our way to a major hub at which the family was going to wait four hours for the connecting flight home to Virginia . The father of the soldier told the flight attendant that knowing his son was below him in the cargo compartment and being unable to see him was too much for him and the family to bear. He had asked the flight attendant if there was anything that could be done to allow them to see him upon our arrival. The family wanted to be outside by the cargo door to watch the soldier being taken off the airplane.

I could hear the desperation in the flight attendants voice when she asked me if there was anything I could do. 'I'm on it', I said. I told her that I would get back to her.

Airborne communication with my company normally occurs in the form of e-mail like messages. I decided to bypass this system and contact my flight dispatcher directly on a secondary radio. There is a radio operator in the operations control center who

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connects you to the telephone of the dispatcher. I was in direct contact with the dispatcher. I explained the situation I had on board with the family and what it was the family wanted. He said he understood and that he would get back to me.

Two hours went by and I had not heard from the dispatcher. We were going to get busy soon and I needed to know what to tell the family. I sent a text message asking for an update. I saved the return message from the dispatcher and the following is the text:

"Captain, sorry it has taken so long to get back to you. There is policy on this now, and I had to check on a few things. Upon your arrival a dedicated escort team will meet the aircraft. The team will escort the family to the ramp and plane side. A van will be used to load the remains with a secondary van for the family.

"The family will be taken to their departure area and escorted into the terminal, where the remains can be seen on the ramp. It is a private area for the family only. When the connecting aircraft arrives, the family will be escorted onto the ramp and plane side to watch the remains being loaded for the final leg home.

"Captain, most of us here in flight control are veterans. Please pass our condolences on to the family. Thanks."

I sent a message back, telling flight control thanks for a good job. I printed out the message and gave it to the lead flight attendant to pass on to the father. The lead flight attendant was very thankful and told me, "You have no idea how much this will mean to them."

Things started getting busy for the descent, approach and landing. After landing, we cleared the runway and taxied to the ramp area. The ramp is huge with 15 gates on either side of the alleyway. It is always a busy area with aircraft maneuvering every which way to enter and exit. When we entered the ramp and checked in with

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the ramp controller, we were told that all traffic was being held for us.

"There is a team in place to meet the aircraft", we were told. It looked like it was all coming together, then I realized that once we turned the seat belt sign off, everyone would stand up at once and delay the family from getting off the airplane. As we approached our gate, I asked the copilot to tell the ramp controller, we were going to stop short of the gate to make an announcement to the passengers. He did that and the ramp controller said, "Take your time."

I stopped the aircraft and set the parking brake. I pushed the public address button and said: "Ladies and gentleman, this is your Captain speaking: I have stopped short of our gate to make a special announcement. We have a passenger on board who deserves our honor and respect. His Name is Private XXXXXX, a soldier who recently lost his life. Private XXXXXX is under your feet in the cargo hold. Escorting him today is Army Sergeant XXXXXXX. Also, on board are his father, mother, wife, and daughter. Your entire flight crew is asking for all passengers to remain in their seats to allow the family to exit the aircraft first. Thank you."

We continued the turn to the gate, came to a stop and started our shutdown procedures. A couple of minutes later I opened the cockpit door. I found the two forward flight attendants crying, something you just do not see. I was told that after we came to a stop, every passenger on the aircraft stayed in their seats, waiting for the family to exit the aircraft.

When the family got up and gathered their things, a passenger slowly started to clap his hands. Moments later, more passengers joined in and soon the entire aircraft was clapping. Words of God Bless You, I'm sorry, thank you, be proud, and other kind words were uttered to the family as they made their way down the aisle

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and out of the airplane. They were escorted down to the ramp to finally be with their loved one.

Many of the passengers disembarking thanked me for the announcement I had made. They were just words, I told them, I could say them over and over again, but nothing I say will bring back that brave soldier.

I respectfully ask that all of you reflect on this event and the sacrifices that millions of our men and women have made to ensure our freedom and safety in these United States of AMERICA.

Foot note:

I know everyone who reads this will have tears in their eyes, including me. Prayer chain for our Military... PLEASE SHARE THIS! Please send this on after a short prayer for our service men and women. They die for me and mine and you and yours and deserve our honor and respect.

Prayer Request:

When you receive this, please stop for a moment and say a prayer for our troops around the world... There is nothing attached. Just send this to people in your address book. Do not let it stop with you. Of all the gifts you could give a Marine, Soldier, Sailor, Airman, and others deployed in harm's way, prayer is the very best one.

GOD BLESS YOU!!!

Thank you all who have served, or are serving. We Will not forget!!!

Thanks, David, for that uplifting story.

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Thursday, January 23, 2020

Expect the Unexpected

The **Trump Impeachment Trial** got underway the other day, preceded by robust partisan arguments about the "Rules" and potential witnesses testimony that might follow Part One of the trial. In the process, the leadership of both parties bore the brunt of criticism from each other, their constituents and the mainstream media.

President Trump, meanwhile, was at the Davos, Switzerland **World Economic Forum** making headlines with his teenage nemesis, Climate Activist **Greta Thunberg**. Both addressed the DAVOS WEF with Trump touting the progress the United States has made in just three years in economic growth and development and advising those in attendance to ignore "the prophets of doom." Thunberg advised, "Act as though you loved your children."

Trump returned to the Capitol late Tuesday, in time to keep tabs on his Impeachment Trial in the **US Senate**. The Trial continued Tuesday afternoon after more bombast and posturing from Senate Leadership on both sides of the aisle.

Capitol Police were out in force, charged with containing the **Press Corps** to a small area in the hallway outside the Senate to keep from the sorts of interruptions that have happened in the closed-door Upper Chamber in the past.

The incessant accusatory use of adverbs, adjectives and adjunctive phrases in the language used by the House Managers seemed a little over the top to me. This was just part of the debate on the Rules. But, shortly after midnight, **Chief Justice John Roberts** had to scold both Democrat and Republican Managers.

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According to **Fox News First**, "The spat began when [**Jerrold**] **Nadler** spoke in support of the eighth amendment of the day proposed by Senate Minority Leader **Chuck Schumer** to Senate Majority Leader **Mitch McConnell**'s ground rules for the impeachment trial. Schumer's eighth proposed amendment, issued as the clock struck midnight, was to issue a subpoena for former National Security Adviser **John Bolton**, who has reportedly described Trump's conduct as akin to a 'drug deal.' Each of his previous attempted alterations to McConnell's rules had been rejected by a united Republican contingent by a vote of 53-47.

"The outbursts prompted Roberts, who as Chief Justice of the United States is constitutionally required to serve as the presiding judge in the impeachment trial, to admonish the Chief House Manager as well as White House Attorneys ... adding that 'those addressing the Senate should remember where they are.'

"I think it is appropriate at this point for me to admonish both the House managers and the president's counsel in equal terms to remember that they are addressing the world's greatest deliberative body,' Roberts said, after a particularly tense exchange between House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jerrold Nadler and the president's lawyers ... Roberts asked them to 'avoid speaking in a manner and using language that is not conducive to civil discourse,'" **PBS** reported.

Democrat Leadership in both the Senate and the House want witnesses and documents to be first on the agenda with arguments before a final vote. The Republican Leadership insists on imposing the Rules approved by the Senate majority - arguments first, followed by an up-down vote on witnesses and documents

According to **The Washington Examiner**, "If all 47 Senate Democrats vote to convict on conclusion of the trial, a prospect

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far from guaranteed, 20 Republicans would have to join with them for Trump to be removed from office. Since early in the House investigation last fall, it has been apparent the president is not in danger of this sort of large-scale defection."

Fox News reports, "The Russians could attack the U.S. and removing President Trump from office is necessary to preserve the integrity of the 2020 election. Those were the claims Wednesday from Democrat Adam Schiff on Wednesday during Day 2 of Trump's Senate impeachment trial."

According to **PBS**, "The chief justice's 65th birthday is Monday, and the justices generally make time to celebrate birthdays at the court. They get together to sing 'Happy Birthday' and have a toast." It is not clear yet whether the Senate will be singing to Roberts.

The President's Attorneys could present his side and wrap it up as early as Monday. That would open the door for that up-or-down vote on witnesses and documentation. If that goes down in flames, the vote on Conviction or not could happen late Monday or Tuesday. Don't count on it, but as the illustrious Love Goddess Judy Tenuta exclaimed, "It could happen!"

What I've seen and heard of this classic third-in-history Impeachment Trial, so far, has me convinced that the Leadership of our Congress is only interested in grandstanding in a boring, outlandish and uninteresting manner, thus presenting the greatest political yawner of all time!

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Thayer's Wild Bunch VIII

Monday, January 27, 2020

The Money Game

We were sitting in the bar up the street after 18 holes of golf at the Cobre Valle Recreation Center in Globe-Miami, Arizona. It's where we go to settle up the Money Game every Friday.

I asked one of my golf buddies, Bill, for some help: "I have a column to write for Monday and I don't want to write about the President's Impeachment Trial - do you have any suggestions?"

Bill thought for a second, scrunched his face a little and then said, "I don't know, Teddy, let me think about it. I'll let you know." Some time later, Bill suggested, "Why don't you write about our Friday Money Game?" Good idea! Maybe there are some golfers out there who'd like to learn a new kind of regular tournament to play with friends.

The Money Game is an 18 hole tournament that applies each player's full handicap strokes or "pops" to each hole ... except "pops" on par three holes are limited to one each. This doesn't seem fair to high-handicappers, who may be penalized on par three holes. Low handicappers complained a long time ago that those players with high handicaps were inordinately winning the money compared with other players, so this minor adjustment was made to handicapping. The logic makes sense ... almost any player has an equal chance of getting the ball close to or on a par three green. While it is true that high handicappers earn their pops around or on the green by missing perfectly ordinary shots, it is equally true that everybody has a shot at par.

One other exception was made by limiting the number of strokes taken to three over par. No player would take more than six on a par three, seven on a par four and eight on a par five. This is a

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way of "giving back" to high-handicappers, who can easily break for 4 or 5 over!

Groups of three or four gather at a set time to play eighteen holes. Each player is responsible for giving the scorekeeper for his (or her) group, who will mark it on the score card. "Pops" are added to each hole for each player in accordance with the handicap rating on each hole. This can be done by the group scorekeeper or after play is completed.

So with that discussion under our belts, let's get on with the way the game works. It's called a two-person team blind draw, best ball skins game paying twenty-five cents per hole per player. 18 holes at 25 cents each works out to \$4.50 per player, except that birdies earn another quarter from each player! Depending on the number of players, there may be from one to three places paid out of the entry fee (which is five dollars in our game.)

For the un-initiated, after the players finish and gather - wherever - their names are put in a hat and two-person teams are drawn. If there are an odd number of players, the names are put back in the hat and one is drawn to complete the last team. This means that one player will get two shots at being on a winning team! That completes the blind draw that creates the teams.

We use an 8 x 11 sheet made up with as many lines needed to list two players for every team. The columns are laid out as follows:

[illegible]

As you can see, it's the players name followed by how many skins he/she won, followed by the net score for each hole

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including the front and back nine totals and the final score. This leaves room to place the one to three teams in the money.

Score cards are collected and each player's net score (gross score minus the pops) for each hole is recorded. [In games with an odd number of players ONLY the player's names are entered.]

Next each column of scores is scanned from top down to find the lowest score, which earns a skin (and that score is circled). If there is more than one low score on a hole, it becomes a "push" and the skin for that hole carries over to the next. When a skin is won, each pushed hole before is awarded to the player of that hole (by circling each.) If the low score on a hole is the result of a birdie, another hole is awarded a skin. Thus, if there are eighteen skins and one birdie, there would be \$4.75 needed by each player to settle the skins. On the other hand, if the last two holes are a push and there are no birdies, each player would only need \$4.00 to settle skins. Got it? No? Read it again!

After all the skins have been accounted for, the count of each player's total skins are recorded. THEN, the odd player is added to his team mate and his scores copied for the team (this is why the skins are done first!)

Next, the net scores for each team are combined and tabulated to determine which team has the best total net score. Here's the deal: If there are up to six players, the total of the entry fees are awarded to the team with the lowest net total. If there's a tie, the pot is chopped. If there are seven to ten players, the entry pool is paid two-thirds and one-third. Ties chop. Eleven players and up pay three places 50%, 30% and 20% of the entry pool. After the winning teams are determined and paid it's time to do the skins.

There are a gazillion ways to pay the skins. Someone who can do the math in his head can dispatch the skins in no time flat, but there are those of us who prefer to pay them out by the player.

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Let's say player one has three skins - that means that everyone but the recipient must pay him 25 cents per hole (75 cents). Say, player three has eight skins, which means everyone else must cough up \$2.00. That leaves seven skins to go. Say player eight gets all of them - that means everyone else must pay him \$1.75.

I came up with a way to increase turnout for a regularly scheduled two person team, blind draw, best ball skins tournament. Any time there are fewer skins paid out (as in a number of pushes at the end) each player kicks in a quarter for each pushed hole to carry over to the next tournament's entry pot. For instance, ten players with two pushed holes would contribute 50 cents each (\$5.00 total) to the next tournament's entry pot.

So that's how we play The Money Game in Globe-Miami, Arizona. It takes little organization other than someone to record the final results and someone to help divvy up the spoils!

I'd like to give credit to a few friends and golf buddies. Even though my prowess has faded some in the last few years, I still try my best to keep up with Danny, Bill, BillyWag, Dan, Rick, Hose A, Hose B, Joe S, Pete (bless his heart), Terry, Jim, Tony, Larry, Bob, Michael, Dale and Geno, to name just a few! Thanks, boys.

It's a cool game, people! Give it a try. And good luck to ya.

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Thursday, January 30, 2020

Change Your Name?

We have here a story about name-changes. It applies mostly to women who change their names as a result of marriage or divorce. It could apply also to the kids of broken homes who change their moniker to honor one parent or another.

My daughter Janet has been hard at it going through the throes of her third (yeah, 3rd) divorce. She lives next door in a travel trailer I bought for her last year. I wanted to get her on the title for the thing but we agreed that wouldn't happen until she got her new (original) name back.

It was President Ronald Reagan who warned America at a Press Conference about the most terrifying words in the English language: "I'm from the Government, and I'm here to help."

Well, her divorce was finalized a little over two weeks back so we figured on a trip down to the Arizona MVD for four title changes and a drivers license correction. We needed to get Janet's new name on her car title and added to the travel trailer title. In addition, we needed to remove my dear departed wife Claudette's name from the titles to my car, the Park Model and the travel trailer. No sweat, right? Think again, sugar pie!

The gal at MVD said she couldn't change the name on Janet's Drivers License without evidence that she had changed her name with Social Security. She said that would take overnight if it happened that afternoon - the name-change would happen at midnight and the MVD would be able to verify the new name that way. You can't just change the name on your Drivers License because the Judge says so!

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So, we went gallivanting off to the local Social Security office the other side of town.

We walked in and sat down on the Group W bench where we waited until Janet's name - er, number - was called. The woman at the window (behind a sign that said "In training. Please be patient.") perused Janet's new divorce decree and said, "We can't do it, ma'am, because this copy is not certified." The round embossed stamp found on many Government certified legal copies was missing!

So, off to the Courthouse we went to get her decree certified. The clerk had a hard time because she couldn't find Janet's Court Records file. But, she had been involved with Janet's case and finally got out the rubber stamp, filled in the proper information, and affixed the official embossed stamp. After a \$30.00 fee we went back to the Social Security Office. The clerk confirmed that Janet's name would change automatically at midnight.

We headed home, hoping everything would be good at AZMVD. We agreed to get together after three that Friday, when she would be through with her last client for the week.

Murphy's Law states that, "If something can go wrong, it will." The quote originated in the '40s, about the same time "SNAFU" came into being. (Look that one up yourself!) We had been to three different levels of Government and still didn't have a Drivers License corrected and four titles changed.

At the Arizona Department of Motor Vehicles, Janet was able to get the name changed on her Drivers License and, with her Death Certificate, we were able to remove Claudette from the travel trailer title and add Janet to it. Plus, she was able to get the name changed on the title to her car. Yay!

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Murphy was still lurking, though. My sister Amanda was on the remaining two titles (Park Model and Sentra), and she (who lives south of Tucson) had to be present in person to sign any changes to them. Fortunately, the clerk said that Mandy's Power of Attorney would be fine instead of her in-person signature. So, I mailed a POA form to Mandy to sign in front of a Notary and return. It was returned to my mailbox last Friday.

Janet's new Social Security card had arrived last Thursday and her new plastic drivers license arrived Monday, so we hit the Arizona Motor Vehicle Department that afternoon. Claudette was replaced by Janet on the titles. Thank goodness that was done! After finishing that business we headed for the bank.

With her new plastic ID and Social Security Card and Claudette's Death Certificate Janet was added to the bank accounts and Claudette was finally and sadly removed.

By the way, you can't just add someone to your bank account just like that. That has to wait because they require a plastic ID with the correct name on it, a matching Social Security number and current address and contact number. MVD issues a paper Drivers License and mails the plastic one "in about a week." The bank takes "about a week" to verify all the information for new signatures on exiting accounts.

With the one thing to go, yet, I made Janet the beneficiary on my Life Insurance policy. Fortunately, that was just petty paperwork online. And it only took two-and-a-half weeks!

Peering from behind the computer monitor, he asked, "Has Murphy left town yet?"

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Monday, February 3, 2020

2019-nCoV Coronavirus

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) "is closely monitoring an outbreak of respiratory illness caused by a novel (new) coronavirus first identified in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China. Chinese authorities identified the new coronavirus, which has resulted in more than a thousand confirmed cases in China, including cases outside Wuhan City. Additional cases have been identified in a growing number of other [international locations](#), including [the United States](#)."

Everything you ever wanted to know about the [2019 Novel Coronavirus \(2019-nCoV\)](#) you'll find at this [CDC link](#). Believe it or not, it's not such a big deal if you simply follow the same rules you follow to avoid colds and flu. 2019-nCoV is loosely related to SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome - 2003) and MERS (Middle East Respiratory Syndrome - 2014), coronaviruses that had hospitals all over the world learning new ways to contain diseases found inside their facilities. 2019-nCoV is a betacoronavirus, like MERS and SARS, all of which have their origins in bats.

The **CDC** tells us, "It's important to note that how easily a virus spreads person-to-person can vary. Some viruses are highly contagious (like measles), while other viruses are less so. It's important to know this in order to better understand the risk associated with this virus. While CDC considers this is a very serious public health threat, based on current information, the immediate health risk from 2019-nCoV to the general American public is considered low at this time.

"For confirmed 2019-nCoV infections, reported illnesses have ranged from people being mildly sick to people being severely ill and dying. Symptoms can include:

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- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath"

Generally speaking, 2019-nCoV begins with cold-like symptoms after incubating from two to fourteen days. That's followed by fever and cough. Shortness of breath and pneumonia follow quickly. Most adults suffer from the virus as if it was a cold or mild flu. People most at mortal risk are infants, the elderly and infirm.

Current US Cases Under Investigation as of January 31, 2020

Positive	6
Negative	114
Pending	121
Total	241

CDC: "There is currently no vaccine to prevent 2019-nCoV infection. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to this virus. However, as a reminder, CDC always recommends everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, including:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

These are everyday habits that can help prevent the spread of several viruses."

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Thursday, February 6, 2020

What a Week!

Over three years is what it took to impeach and then exonerate the President. Three years!

They were demanding his impeachment just after his election. Was it a hoax, as the President charged? Was it a plot to overthrow America's Executive Branch? Was the Democrat Party united to remove **President Donald John Trump** from office to get even for its loss in the 2016 election?

As an onlooker, I've concluded that **Nancy Pelosi**, the Speaker of the House, lost control of her members and could very well lose her job because of the months-long circus she allowed to continue.

The googly-eyed House Intelligence Committee Chairman **Adam Schiff** was so over-the-top he became the butt of skits and memes on Network and Cable TV as well as Social Media. His counterpart on the House Judiciary Committee, **Jerrold Nadler**, was not much better.

Schiff became known for his ability to create credible fantasies on-the-fly. Nadler was the iron-fisted Chair who repeatedly denied requests for "face time" from Republican members of his Committee.

The final product created from the work of the two Committees became the two **Articles of Impeachment** that Pelosi held for a month before having them delivered to the Senate.

During the House hearings only one witness, **Gordon Sondland**, the U.S. ambassador to the European Union, had actually spoken with the President about an August 25th Ukraine phone

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conversation, asking specifically what he wanted, to which President Trump exclaimed, "I want nothing. I want nothing. I want no quid pro quo!" All of the hours and hours of the remaining testimony were either speculation, historical analysis or hearsay, none of it admissible on its face in a court of law.

When the Articles of Impeachment came under fire in the Senate based on the record created in the House, the **House Managers** demanded that witnesses and documents be admitted as evidence. Experienced observers understood immediately that the proposition was not going to happen because it would comprise another big waste of time beating a dead horse.

So the Senate voted and denied the acceptance of witnesses and documents, crediting the House for failing to do its job in the first place. Both the House Managers and the **White House lawyers** made passionate presentations why the President should and should not be convicted and removed from office.

Late Tuesday everything went on hold so President Trump could present his **2020 State of the Union Address** to the Congress. It was up-beat almost all of its hour-and-a-quarter. Except when House Speaker Nancy Pelosi tore up her copy of the speech, later claiming it was full of lies. Fox host **Sean Hannity** later called Pelosi's antic "one of the most classless things ever done in the history of the State of the Union."

Conservative radio host **Rush Limbaugh** was in the gallery by invitation, sitting next to the **First Lady**. Limbaugh, who announced Monday that he had stage four lung cancer, wept openly when **Melania Trump** presented him with the **Presidential Medal of Freedom**. Watch the surprise: https://hannity.com/media-room/watch-trump-surprises-rush-limbaugh-with-presidential-medal-of-freedom-during-state-of-the-union/?utm_source=socialflow

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13-year-old **Iain Lanphier**, who wants to joint the Space Force, was in the Gallery being encouraged by this 100-year-old great-grandfather, **Charles McGee**, a WWII veteran Tuskegee Airman who also served during the Korean and Viet Nam Wars. And, the reunion of a military mom and her two children with their husband and father, Sgt. 1st Class **Townsend Williams**, who had been in Afghanistan on his fourth deployment to the Middle East, was out-freakin'-standing! The President announced, "I am thrilled to inform you that your husband is back from deployment," as **Amy Williams** held a hand over her face with surprise. "He is here with us tonight, and we couldn't keep him waiting any longer."

Vice President **Mike Pence** led the standing and sitting of the Republicans and Nancy Pelosi did the same with the Democrats and Independents. There was plenty of exercise for all!

Yesterday, President Trump was acquitted by the Senate, becoming the third US president to be initially impeached and eventually acquitted. Relative to **Article One**, there were 48 votes to convict and 52 to acquit. In a move that surely solidified his place in American history, Republican Senator **Mitt Romney** of Utah was the only GOP member to break ranks and vote to convict. On **Article Two**, there was a party-line ballot with 47 votes to convict and 53 to acquit. In neither instance was there the necessary two-thirds vote (67) to convict and remove President Donald John Trump.

It's a Presidential election year with all 435 two-year seats in the House up for grabs and 33 in the Senate good for six years each. Which will out - civility or nastiness? Stay tuned, troops!

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Monday, February 10, 2020

Non-partisan Partisanship

A good friend sent me a YouTube video by email over the weekend. It was inspiring and patriotic. If I had any criticism of the video, it would be to complain that the creators should set the President and politics aside. The voiceover can stay. The rest is as non-partisan and patriotic as any American could want.

Imagine that this presentation was narrated by both Donald J Trump and John F Kennedy and perhaps, Ronald W Reagan and Harry S Truman.

See for yourself. I'm very interested in your thoughts:
<https://youtu.be/aDrtQIN6CkY>

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Thursday, February 13, 2020

Crazy Political Quips

I was watching **Trish Reagan** (she's a peach!) on **Fox Business** the other night. She had just finished interviewing **President Trump** after his Rally in New Hampshire. She and her cohort were talking turnout numbers when one of the Fox reporters mentioned in passing that Trump had noted there were more folks waiting on line for the restroom at the Trump rally than at all the Democrat rallies combined! OMG!

There have been plenty of other goofy political lines in the past. For instance ...

Barack Obama: "Now, I know that he's taken some flak lately but no one is prouder to put this birth certificate matter to rest than The Donald. And that's because he can finally get back to focusing on the issues that matter, like, did we fake the moon landing? What really happened in Roswell? And where are Biggie and Tupac?"

Ronald Reagan: "Politics is supposed to be the second-oldest profession. I have come to realize that it bears a very close resemblance to the first."

Lyndon Johnson: "If one morning I walked on top of the water across the Potomac River, the headline that afternoon would read: 'President Can't Swim.'"

George W Bush: "When I take action, I'm not going to fire a \$2 million missile at a \$10 empty tent and hit a camel in the butt. It's going to be decisive."

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Jimmy Carter: "My esteem in this country has gone up substantially. It is very nice now when people wave at me, they use all their fingers."

Bob Dole: "Our intent will not be to create gridlock. Oh, except maybe from time to time."

Bill Clinton: "Being president is like running a cemetery: you've got a lot of people under you and nobody's listening."

Newt Gingrich: "A mere forty years ago, beach volleyball was just beginning. No bureaucrat would have invented it, and that's what freedom is all about."

Jimmy Carter: "I've looked on many women with lust. I've committed adultery in my heart many times. God knows I will do this and forgives me."

Jack Kemp: "In a recent fire, Bob Dole's library burned down. Both books were lost. And he hadn't even finished coloring one of them."

Gary Hart: "The attractive lady whom I had only recently been introduced to dropped into my lap ... I chose not to dump her off."

George H W Bush: "Please don't ask me to do that which I've just said I'm not going to do because you're burning up time. The meter is running through the sand on you, and I am now filibustering."

Marion Barry: "Outside of the killings, Washington has one of the lowest crime rates in the country."

Barry Goldwater: "If you don't mind smelling like peanut butter for two or three days, peanut butter is darn good shaving cream."

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Harry S Truman: "My choice early in life was between whether to be a piano player in a whorehouse or a politician. And to tell the truth, there's hardly any difference."

Dan Quayle: "I was recently on a tour of Latin America, and the only regret I have was that I didn't study Latin harder in school so I could converse with those people."

Everett Dirkson: "I am a man of fixed and unbending principles, the first of which is to be flexible at all times."

Mike Huckabee: "Running for president is like sticking your face in the blade of a fan."

Winston Churchill: "A politician needs the ability to foretell what is going to happen tomorrow, next week, next month, and next year. And to have the ability afterwards to explain why it didn't happen."

And so it goes ...

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Monday, February 17, 2020

Kelly \$20M, McSally \$12M

Enjoy your Presidents' Day! Meanwhile ...

Gabby Gifford's husband, Astronaut **Mark Kelly**, has been working to create a treasure chest of cash to use against incumbent Arizona Senator **Martha McSally**. Last week it was reported that he amassed almost double the cash that McSally had collected. Kelly pulled in \$20 Million vs. McSally's \$12 Million.

This points up the huge amounts of money at stake in this 2020 election cycle.

New York Mayor **Mike Bloomberg** is looking to spend over \$400 Million in just the first quarter of this year to force a place in the Democratic array of Presidential candidates. **President Trump** has said he would rather face Bloomberg in the General Election than any other Democrat. The question is - can a multi-Billionaire buy the Democrat nomination?

Which brings us back to the Kelly/McSally match-up. Is the **Democrat National Committee** ready to couple with the **Democrat Senate** and **House Committees** to contribute whatever it takes to flip the Arizona Senate seat? By the same token, are the **RNC, House** and **Senate Republican Committees** ready to out-spend the Democrats in Arizona?

Election spending limits and who gets to do the spending was a question answered by the **US Supreme Court** not that long ago when the majority agreed that corporations are people and entitled to spend as much money as any other person in the electoral process. **Wikipedia** says, "Since the Supreme Court's ruling in **Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission** in 2010, upholding the rights of corporations to make political

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expenditures under the 1st Amendment, there have been several calls for a Constitutional amendment to abolish corporate personhood. The *Citizens United* majority opinion makes no reference to corporate personhood or the Fourteenth Amendment, but rather argues that political speech rights do not depend on the identity of the speaker, which could be a person or an association of people."

It turns out that funding for the Kelly vs. McSally race could end up being the greatest amount amassed for *any* Arizona election. *Ever!* If Bloomberg can effectively buy the Democrat presidential nomination, could Kelly buy the Arizona Senate seat out from under McSally?

Care to guess how many Billions will be spent on the 2020 election cycle?

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Thursday, February 20, 2020

Beat Trump!

So far, the Democrats just want to beat President **Donald J Trump**. I ask you ... would you rather vote for someone with real, implementable plans to improve the lives of all Americans or someone whose top priority is to replace Trump? Even new-comer multi-billionaire **Mike Bloomberg** exclaimed, "I'm running to beat Donald Trump!"

I'm trying my best to remain non-partisan, but it's getting more difficult every day to maintain a journalist's objective view. Yes. I'm doing my darndest to remain objective ... but every time I hear **Chuck Schumer** or **Nancy Pelosi** speak, I get chills up and down my spine! Where are the common-sense Democrats in the House and Senate? Why aren't they getting any face time in the mainstream media - **NYT**, **WaPo**, **CNN**, **MSNBC**, et al?

I concluded long ago that the vast majority of Americans easily relate to one another. There's very little difference between a mainstream Democrat and a mainstream Republican and even mainstream Independents have the same red American blood in their veins!

I ask you, why do we get **Antifa**, **BLM**, **Pink Pussy Hats** and **AOC's Squad**? Is the leading Democrat presidential candidate Socialist **Bernie Sanders** actually neck and neck, so to speak, with Mayor **Pete Buttigieg**, an openly gay man legally married to another gay guy? Communist-leaning or limp-wristed, Democrats I know are definitely not buying The Donald's words to Black Americans, much less Bernie and Pete, "*What the Hell do you have to lose?*"

I'm still struggling daily to maintain an open mind when it comes to the fringes of both parties, far left and far right. It's very

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difficult to maintain my objectivity, knowing the vast majority of Americans, no matter their party affiliations, feel exactly the same way and wonder what happened to their beloved America.

I have no idea what happened to the leadership of the party I once was proud to call mine as its County Vice-Chair. We had some crazy stuff back then, but we certainly didn't define ourselves by the degree of hatred we had - or didn't have - for the President of the United States ... and certainly not by any Marxist leanings or public sexual preferences. Somebody, please tell me what the Hell happened?

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Monday, February 24, 2020

Schnapps Stories

I was reminiscing the other night about my adventures as a Home Entertainment Repair and Maintenance Specialist (TV Repairman). I owned a business in Tucson that did mainly in-home repair and service of TV sets and antennas.

Late one day after a house call - the last one - the woman who owned the TV asked if I had any more calls to do and I told her no, I was through for the day. Earlier in the year, I had serviced her TV and took in for further service. (Most service calls involved testing a few tubes, replacing a couple and vacuuming the insides of the TV.)

The woman was happy with the service and said when we returned it to her home, it looked better than it did when it was brand new. Nice compliment! I had suggested that she get it checked every three months or so, just on a counta. She took the advice to heart and we had a regular call from her to come check everything out - that would be the Antenna, the cabling into the house and the TV itself. (All for a mere \$12.50 at the time.)

So, this regular call turned into a last call - so to speak. She was a Jewish lady and she was very generous. After each service call we would sit and chat at her kitchen table for a while before I had to go. She always opened the freezer at the top of her Fridge ... and brought out a bottle of Peppermint Schnapps. She'd pour us each a double-shot of that icy, sweet elixir and then we'd sit and chew the fat for a while.

Ah, the stories she told. Her family had escaped the Holocaust in the early '40s and emigrated to the United States when she was a young child. Some time after her folks had passed, she decided to move from New Jersey to Tucson because she heard it was

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friendly to Jews and had plenty of sunshine and lots of that healthy Arizona air. She was a genuine piece of work!

Anyone who has ever done in-home service knows how gratifying some of their customers can be. I wish I could remember her name, but that was once upon a time ... many years ago.

Did you hear the one about the priest, the minister and the rabbi? Ok, so a priest, a minister and a rabbi walk into a bar and the bartender says, "What is this? A joke?"

Oy! She told good stories!

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Thursday, February 27, 2020

Objectivity

A week ago I penned a tome about my struggling to maintain objectivity in the face of all the crazy stuff being thrust upon Americans by their political leaders. One of the comments about my little treatise on Facebook was from Gloria Lopez.

[With revised grammar] she wrote: "I am mystified and would love to hear how you overlook some of the things Trump has done and still remain impartial! Now, [I'm] not trying to argue because that would get us nowhere! But rather, [I'd like] to hear someone's thoughts on how they can overlook some of the things Trump does! I would love you to enlighten me, because you do not sound like these other people that just want to argue and call you names! Can we meet? I know you are much more schooled than me so all I ask is to be civil!"

I wrote back to her as follows: "Gloria ... you sound like you've got a head on your shoulders. I rarely do sit-downs with others that are not good friends, so that part's off.

"Meanwhile ... I learned many moons ago to overlook others' peccadilloes because we all have them. It's like my mom used to say about my little brother, "Oh, that's just Billy." I think she'd say the same about Trump.

"In the overall picture of Life, the Universe and Everything, Trump's silliness is relatively unimportant and generally unimpressive. I simply have no need to get my shorts in a wad about anything The President says or does. I'm impressed by his mostly positive attitude about America and her people.

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"On the other hand, I'm not the least bit impressed with the constant negativity drooling out of the mouths of the likes of Schumer and Pelosi.

"It's important to keep these things in perspective - Schumer and Pelosi are the top politicians in their party and they do know how to play that game very well. That fact allows me to maintain my objectivity.

"I try to remain mindful that Trump, Schumer and Pelosi just have different ways of looking at things and radically divergent perspectives on how things do and should work.

"I hope you understand now why objectivity means so much to me. Thanks!"

Later in the FB Post, Gloria responded, "... the problem is this: They can promise, but will they stand with their promises? Again thank you for explaining!"

I hope that concerned folks like Gloria can adopt a skeptical attitude that values all input equally, allowing huge latitude and ignoring the sometimes crude language used by others. This is a healthy way to maintain one's objectivity and integrity at the same time.

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Monday, March 2, 2020

TIME Passes

For many decades I was a **TIME** magazine subscriber and I saved many because of their unique content. Occasionally, I sit down and re-read an issue from the past for clarity. I have most of the Trump-centered copies, including the *TIME's 2016 Person of the Year* issue.

Recently - while sitting in the "Library" - I had occasion to browse through *TIME's 2016 Person of the Year* issue, re-reading an article about the magazine's choice. A couple of years ago, I cancelled my *TIME* subscription because their journalism had slipped away from center and their reports included way too many adjectives and adjunctive phrases for it to remain as objective as its reputation had purported over the years. Even though the article appeared slanted, it still contained some interesting information.

Of late, the political environment has the Left claiming that middle America's pay increased during the Obama Administration's reign, but not so during Trump's Administration. The December 19th, 2016 issue of *TIME* states that, "... between 2001 and 2012, the median incomes of households headed by people without college degrees - nearly two-thirds of homes - fell as they aged, according to research by Robert Shapiro, an economist who advised Bill Clinton's campaign. As American productivity and gross domestic product grew in the first decade of the new century, median wages for all Americans broke away, effectively flatlining. Most Americans making less than the median income, but not so little as to qualify for poverty benefits, suffered income losses of about 5% between 2007 and 2013, according to research by Branko Milanovic, a former World Bank economist. ...

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Political gridlock in Washington, and the mild austerity it created, weighed everything down."

Beneath a graphic depicting US income growth between 2007 and 2013 was the paragraph, "Incomes have stagnated or fallen since the recession. The lower-middle class has been among the hardest hit, which has widened the income gap."

A **CNBC** article published last September states that "According to [a 2018 report](#) from the [Pew Research Center](#), 52% of American adults live in 'middle class' households. The median income of that group was \$78,442 in 2016."

A **statista.com** bar chart includes the following median incomes from 2007 through 2018:

2007	59,534	2013	56,479
2008	57,417	2014	55,613
2009	57,010	2015	58,476
2010	55,520	2016	60,309
2011	54,673	2017	62,626
2012	54,569	2018	63,179

2019 data was hard to find, but according to an August 2nd article in **seekingalpha.com**, "Median household income in the United States rebounded to reach a new record high of \$64,430 in June 2019."

I was puzzled by the difference in the 2016 figures from CNBC compared to Statista. The CNBC number from 2016 (\$78,442) was the median income of the US middle class, which constitutes roughly 52% of all American households. The Statista number for 2016 (\$60,309) is the median (or average) income for ALL US households that year. The large (29%) quantity of low income households is what drives that \$18,133 difference.

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Wherever you look in the available statistics, whether from the government (like the **Census**) or research institutes (like **Pew**), the facts fail to support the contention that Americans are worse off under the present administration than the previous administration.

Between 2012 (the lowest part of the Great Recession) and 2016, median incomes rose from \$54,569 to \$60,309, an increase of some \$5,740 in four years, an average increase of \$1,435 per year.

Between 2016 and June of 2019, household incomes rose from \$60,309 to \$64,430, a difference of \$4,121 in just two-and-a-half years, averaging \$1,648 per year.

Those stats demonstrate pretty clearly that today's middle class homes are reaping pay increases equating to just over 6% per year compared to how they were doing in the waning years of the previous administration - a little over 2.5% per year.

You've got to hand it to the **Obama** Administration ... they brought us back from the depths of the largest economic downturn since the 1930s and in just four years, returned median income to slightly over what it had been in 2007, before the recession. It is true that the **Trump** Administration's economic performance exceeds Obama's, but it was the 44th President's administration that set the stage for the massive economic expansion happening under number 45, Donald J Trump.

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Thursday, March 5, 2020

It's YOUR Census

March 12th through March 31st people will receive **Census 2020** forms to complete and return to the government. The "live" Census by 'phone, on-line or in-person is scheduled to begin on April 1st. There are plenty of folks who just don't understand what it's all about and why it's so important.

Having served on the **Gila County Census 2000** Committee, I can tell you there have been a number of proposed changes to the 2020 Census questions that have not made it past go.

Start with exempting "undocumented" immigrants from the census. The major reason for the census is to provide data to guide the number and allocation of each state's representatives to the **US House**. The data collected also guides each state's boundaries for legislative offices and school districts.

There's been a great deal of concern among the electorate that illegals, if not counted, would warp representation in states like **California, Arizona, Texas, Florida** and **New York**. Nearly a quarter of the nation's undocumented immigrants reside in California, where they constitute more than 6% (2.4 million) of the state's population of just under 40 million. Most of the United States' 10.7 million unauthorized immigrants live in just 20 major metropolitan areas, with the largest populations in **New York, Los Angeles, Houston** and **Dallas-Fort Worth**, according to early-2019 Pew Research Center estimates based on government data.

The reasons for concern are the probable loss of federal revenue and representation in the US House. If 6% of California residents are not counted, that could result in a 6% decrease in **FY2021-22** federal dollars flowing into the state. California leads the nation

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in federal revenues - in FY18-19, amounting to just over **\$436.1 Billion**. Take away 6% and you're talking serious money - over **\$26.2 Billion**! On top of that, California's 51 member Delegation to the US House could be decreased by 6% , reducing the delegation to 48.

The **Supreme Court of the United States** was ready to hear arguments pro and con about the **Trump Administration's** proposal to require unauthorized immigrants to declare their status on the census form. The proposal was dropped after it became clear that the **SCOTUS** would not hear the case before the forms had to be finalized and printed. Another reason it was dropped was fear that the true count would be warped because illegals would simply not fill out the form, fearing deportation if the data was not kept from **ICE** and the **Border Patrol**.

ConstitutionCenter.org presented an article March 12th of 2019 on the subject that pretty much covers the unauthorized immigrant problem. Here are the operative paragraphs:

"Since, under the founders' version of an 'actual enumeration,' representation in the House depends upon state populations, scaring off a large number of households from responding would hit hardest in states with larger concentrations of non-citizens and Hispanic citizens. California, for example, might lose one to three of its present 53 House seats.

"Moreover, the division of seats in the House of Representatives after the 2020 census - no doubt reflecting some shifts of people from state to state - would affect the population totals on which redistricting of seats is done for the House, for state legislatures, and for at least some multi-member governing bodies at the local level. And, in addition, the under-count would mean that some states and local government would receive lesser shares of the total of some \$700 billion in federal money that is now distributed on the basis of state populations."

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US Census information is used to create data banks full of statistics about the population of the United States and its territories. Visit the 2020 Census web site to learn more about it.
<https://2020census.gov/en/important-dates.html>

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Monday, March 9, 2020

Dilemma

Democrats appear to have a huge dilemma.

If they pick Bernie they almost automatically fall into a pitched battle to educate the public about the difference between Socialism and Capitalism. Kids like the idea of Socialism and all the "Free stuff." Convincing them to keep that view in the face of facts and history about Socialism and Communism is going to be a tall order.

If Everybody's Crazy Uncle Joe becomes the Democrat candidate for President, they're going to face incredible pressure to prove his mental status is fine as frog's fur. They're going to have to figure out how to keep him from blurting out stupid stuff like "Super Thursday" and "Lying Dog-faced Pony-soldier."

And they're going to have to figure out how to keep violent demonstrators at arm's length. Last week there was news that both Bernie and Joe will have Secret Service protection by April 1st. They're gonna need it!

From my vantage point as a one-time Democrat leader, the solution to the "Bump Trump" quandary is - and by God, I'm serious about this - Hillary Clinton. She is the only person that can attract enough people to oust Donald Trump. She got millions more votes in the 2016 election, but Trump beat her to death in the Electoral College. That's because the Clinton campaign didn't go for the Electoral College delegates - which Trump did. Clinton can beat Trump if her campaign goes for the Electoral College. Forget the popular vote!

I don't know ... but, when you compare the Trump and Obama Administrations, it doesn't look like the rank and file of either

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party have any warm and cuddly feelings about the prospective Democrat presidential candidates.

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Thursday, March 12, 2020

Self-Hypnosis

I was seventeen in January of 1958. The Fall of 1957 found me in the offices of a Pacific Grove, CA Shrink's office. I had a number of physical as well as mental problems and was looking for some advice.

For starters my girlfriend and I had sadly parted company. And I couldn't find a church in the whole Monterey Peninsula that was open at night. Things could have been a lot better for a 16-year-old in the late '50s. A visit to a psychologist seemed to be a good idea at the time.

I went knocking on the door of this guy (whose name escapes me to this many years later) and was gained admission into a nicely-appointed old-timey ginger-bread house decorated in Grey and white. The guy was willing to help me get over my doubts and misgivings after listening for about twenty minutes. He said he could help if I paid him a dollar for every visit. (How many Shrinks do you know that go for a buck an hour?) We agreed to meet on Saturday mornings for a month to see what happens. 10:00am. Smokin' deal!

We figured out that girlfriends and heartbreaks are a given for mid-teens and I got over it. And we agreed that the Lord exists everywhere, not just in churches and synagogues. I came to appreciate visiting with God outdoors in secluded spots around the Monterey Peninsula. My Shrink helped me get my mind right and enhanced my dad's advice to "keep good thoughts."

After a couple of weeks, we turned to physical problems. I had hurt my neck in the eighth grade doing a swan dive over the high-jump bar to beat my classmates. The pain had worked its way down my spine and sometimes made routine physical

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exercise uncomfortable. I was on the Varsity Swimming Team at Monterey Union High School. The regular training and daily work-outs were doing a good job of holding the discomfort to a minimum. But there was still the throbbing lower back pain occasionally. Sitting or standing for long periods of time wasn't a good thing. With the swimming and exercise, I was doing the right thing.

The last two visits involved mind-over-matter. My Shrink taught me self-hypnosis. I want you to understand how it works, so please humor me. Using your own "little guys" you can make big changes in how your body (and mind) react to mitigate pain and discomfort.

From here, I'll teach you how to practice self-hypnosis. I don't claim to be an expert in this field. But, I can tell you it works for me. If you don't care, skip it.

Good luck. :-) Semper Fi.

First, on a bed or comfortable couch, take a relaxed reclining position, on your back, feet slightly apart, arms at your sides next to your hips, palms down. Close your eyes. Taking big breaths, after each exhaling slowly, count from one to ten. With each breath, think to yourself, "One ... I am warm and relaxed and comfortable. Two ... I am warm and relaxed and comfortable." And so on. You don't want to hyperventilate so don't hurry. This whole deal is all about imagination and visualization.

Next, in your mind's eye, shift your attention to your toes for ten more turns. Visualize. Think clearly in your mind, "My toes feel warm and relaxed and comfortable."

Then, move your attention to your feet. Again, think 10 times to yourself that your feet are feeling warm and relaxed and comfortable. If it makes you comfortable, you can whisper.

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And so it goes, each time pausing to repeat the "warm and relaxed and comfortable" phrase ten times before moving on to the next.

The routine goes - toes, then feet, then ankles, shins and calves, knees, thighs, hips, finger-tips, palms, hands, forearms, elbows, arms, shoulders, tummy, chest, neck, face and head.

Last - concentrate on the part of your body that bothers you most. Zero in on that part and re-state that it feels warm and relaxed and comfortable - visualize - ten times.

Finally, say to yourself that "It's ok if I doze off... my *little guys** are going to work and I will awake relaxed and refreshed." Concentrate on relaxing and think to yourself, "It's ok ... my *little guys* are at work on my ____." And then encourage them to go about fixing the problem. "One. Go to it, *little guys*, let's fix that ____." Ten times. With big easy breaths.

**I always visualized the parts of the bloodstream that heal and bring positive change to body chemistry as the "little guys" who do the work of healing and keeping us well.*

Remember ... each step, it's ten times! It takes a while ... up to an hour or more.

You may doze off during this exercise and it's ok. Even if you don't finish the routine, you're warm and relaxed and comfortable. And, if you sleep, you will awake relaxed and refreshed.

Does it work? In my thirties, I had a bone spur just above the inside of my left knee that very often caught the nearby tendon and plucked it like a guitar! Talk about hurt! The fix was a surgical hammer & chisel. I opted for self-hypnosis. After two

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weeks with my *little guys* at work, there was no pain, no spur. X-rays showed that it had softened and folded over on itself like a little mushroom, allowing the tendon to slide over it painlessly rather than pluck.

The Power of Positive Thinking is a 1952 best-selling book by **Norman Vincent Peale**. Pastor Peale's work describes how to achieve a permanent and optimistic attitude through unending positive conscious thought, usually through affirmations or visualizations.

If you like, read Peale's book and discover why self-hypnosis is really mind over matter!

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Monday, March 16, 2020

ABC7 via Facebook

Rules to avoid illness from COVID-19.

Wash your hands! Plain ol' soap and hot water works just fine.

Don't touch your mouth or nose (face) and make it a habit!

If you have to cough or sneeze, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your elbow.

Disinfect counter-tops and table tops before cooking and/or eating.

Don't share ... food, 'phone, etc.

Stay about three feet away from people you think could be infected.

New information: Washing and cleaning are most effective against this virus because it cannot survive "in the wild." It needs to establish itself in the lungs to survive.

Memorize the following symptoms:



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Thursday, March 19, 2020

Never Too Late

It's never too late to teach an old dog new tricks.

I've been an IT kinda guy since the time I cut my teeth on an Altair computer in 1980 at the UofA in Tucson. I learned Fortran to interface with the University Computer Center and MS Basic (and compiling) to write business and communications routines for one of the very first IBM-PCs. I was also doing system-level programming to create drivers for printers.

Now, I maintain and care for my ASUS computer and its interfaces to the world as well as its software, hard drives and firmware. On top of that I write two columns per week that are emailed to about two-hundred friends and posted on Facebook for another 2300 friends. In addition, I am the webmaster-host of ten websites on GoDaddy - BlondiesGlobe.com, GuayosRestaurants.com, GlobeRotary.org and TRSD.org to name a few.

At one point about a decade ago I was manually up-loading the data to the websites on GoDaddy. It was very time-consuming, so I bought an up-loader application (Ipswitch) that did all the work for me. Meanwhile, back at the ranch, GoDaddy was updating things including the way many of their interfaces worked. Early this month my hosting site became infected with "malware," as they call it. GoDaddy Support helped me get it squared away and I purchased GoDaddy Security for four of the most important websites and a Firewall for the Hosting site. But somehow, in the process the Password for access to the websites by my uploader changed.

At 79, I couldn't access the sites on GoDaddy, so this old dawg needed to learn a new trick!

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I asked the tech what it would take to be able to do what I used to do ... just in case. He said, "Well it's not that much different from what you used to do ... it's just how to get there." And he took me through the clicks needed to get me to the same place I used to be. It was out-freakin'-standing!

I don't have to use my up-loader any more ... but I'll keep it. New Password. It works!

This is a good thing because it enabled me to quickly post cancellation notices for the Globe Rotary Club and Tri-City Regional Sanitary District meetings because of the CoViD-19 virus.

So, it just goes to show ... sometimes you CAN teach an old dog new tricks!

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Monday, March 23, 2020

Zinc?

Got a note from a good friend the other day inquiring if there was anyone at the County level who could somehow make chloroquine available for use against the **Wuhan Coronavirus**.

Three recent studies claim that chloroquine is effective as a protectant and medication relative to **COVID-19**, the US government name for the Flu-like disease that originated in China's Wuhan Province.

James Delingpole wrote in **Breitbart** last Wednesday that "there's an effective treatment already and it's available and cheap, according to studies." He continues "**Chloroquine phosphate**, an old-fashioned anti-malarial drug, has shown strong results against COVID-19 infections in **South Korea** and **China**." (Emphasis added.)

I'm always a little cynical about claims by journalists that "**recent studies**" are about anything but **Fake News**, so I kept reading to see if the so-called studies were included along with their Principal Investigators' names. Viola! They were!

Referring to <https://wattsupwiththat.com/2020/03/17/an-effective-treatment-for-coronavirus-covid-19-has-been-found-in-a-common-anti-malarial-drug/>, Delingpole wrote that **Anthony Watts** had tracked down three studies "demonstrating its efficacy against the Coronavirus."

The first was done by **James M Todaro** and **Gregory J Rigano**, in association with **Stanford University School of Medicine** and **National Academy of Sciences Researchers**.

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The second was done by **Jianjun Gao, Zhenxue Tian, Xu Yang**.

And the third was published in the journal *Nature* titled "Remdesivir and chloroquine effectively inhibit the recently emerged novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) in vitro."

You can read them all at the link above. Careful ... some of the language is "out there!"

Delingpole writes "The reason that Chloroquine works, I understand from an expert in viral pandemics, is that [it] enables the body to absorb more zinc. Zinc appears to be the most effective agent in disrupting the virus and preventing the 'cytokine storm', which is the deadly phase in which the virus tricks the body's immune system into attacking its own healthy tissue, with often fatal consequences."

That paragraph led me to investigate zinc. As I wrote back to my friend, "50 mg zinc per day as an OTC supplement might make a difference in lieu of chloroquine, which requires a prescription. As you probably already know, zinc enhances the immune system. However, more than 50 mg per day can reduce copper and iron absorption, affecting red blood cell production and reducing levels of HDL, the so-called 'good' cholesterol."

Regarding chloroquine, my friend wrote back that "Off-label use of prescription drugs is not unheard of but this would be a huge move, not just a one or two! Glad to hear this morning that the FDA is going to be looking into it."

Meanwhile, I've been taking that 50 mg zinc supplement daily since mid-January!

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Thursday, March 26, 2020

About the Shower

We bought our Park Model Mobile Home in 1993 from a local couple who had lived in it for three months and whose folks had lived in it for another three months.

They found a site in Roosevelt where the builder was setting up portable housing units much larger than the Park Model. Their folks came to visit and loved the new sites, so they stayed in the Park Model while their new outfit was being placed.

That was all in 1989. The thing had only been lived in six months when we bought it for cash three-and-a-half years later. It was barely broke in! The owner had it up for sale for three years and it hadn't moved. So we were able to buy this \$18,000 home for \$10,000. Wow!

A quarter-century later Claudette's health took a down-turn and I was still earning good money on top of my Social Security so I decided to do some improvements. First on my list was glass doors for the shower. Claudette was worried that she could fall getting in or out of the shower and shower doors worried her, so that project went on the back burner.

Two years later Claudette Thayer, 57 years my devoted wife, passed away at age 82. I miss her terribly, but life must go on. Since her passing I've been up to my eye-balls in projects!

There were all the clothes and personal effects to distribute. Pots, pans and dishes were also on the list. Rejuvenating the oven was another project. New vertical blinds replaced the broken assembly in front of the living room sliding doors. I still have to sort and pitch the spices. And I haven't gotten to the coats and jackets yet. I've cleaned the collections of coffee cups hanging

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in the windows but the bears sitting in baskets Claudette wove back in the '70s, as well as the ones in high places like the tops of the bookshelf and the movie screen, are waiting for the vacuum cleaner.

A few days back, I tackled what I had suggested years ago - installing those shower doors! I'm not afraid of falling - there are grab-bars in the shower, so I feel comfortable with it.

There's something about mobile homes - especially ones designed as travel trailers or RVs. They aren't always plumb, square and level, no matter what you do! I followed all the shower door installation instructions to the letter, even cutting a smidgen larger than needed so I could custom file parts to fit precisely.

That's all well and good, but the walls of the Thayer bathroom are $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch wider at the top than at the bottom, so the shower doors were off a little. I had to adjust the hangers on the left door to extreme *down* on the left and extreme *up* on the right! And it still didn't line up perfectly - got $\frac{1}{16}$ inch to go. That alone will be another project! With a file and a beer.

Meanwhile remember: Wash your hands a lot. Don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands, face. Clean surfaces like counter tops and tables, door knobs and light switches often.

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Monday, March 30, 2020

Match This!

I don't know about the rest of you, but lately I've been getting a lot of political duns for loot. The thing is, most want small amounts (\$3, \$10, \$30) that will be doubled or trippled, even quitupled, if you cough up the money. They don't know there'll be no donations from me until September or October.

Meanwhile, I've been wondering how can they do that? Do they line up some fat cat and hook him for a committment to match the total taken in during the promotion by two to five times? That would seem to make sense.

It would also explain why both parties are saying that most of their money is coming from small donors in amounts of three to five dollars. I think the brains behind the first Obama presidential campaign came up with the concept of using the internet, cell phones and email to find and grow today's small donor gold mine.

I can tell you first-hand that it beats the dickens out of mailers and door-hangers. And while door-knocking is great for personal contact, it's a tough way to raise funds.

What if your name wasn't Bloomberg and you didn't have a half-a-billion dollars to spend?

Finally, remember: Wash your hands a lot. Don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands, face. Disinfect surfaces like counter tops and tables, cabinet handles, door knobs and light switches often. Don't forget the car: Steering wheel, shifter, radio/stereo, headlight light and turn-signal switches, window cranks/switches, door locks as well as inside and outside door handles!

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Thursday, April 2, 2020

No Photos

Back when I was a kid in the '50,s we used to vacation from California to Arizona to visit old friends and family in Phoenix, Mayer, Cottonwood and the Hopi Reservation. We always took pictures of Aunt Minna and Aunt Verde and Uncle Charlie and the Ormes, Emery Dennis and Hopi Chief Tewaquaptewa.

Emery was a Hopi friend my dad met when he was a cat-skinner working Hoover/Boulder dam in the late '30s. I have no idea how they became friends, but it was evident when we went on vacation. We always took gifts of blankets for Emery's family and friends. He was a Hopi Medicine Man and he had introduced my dad to Hopi Chief Tewaquaptewa.

We always got a treat when we visited the Hopis on First Mesa. Blue Piki Bread! Somehow, one of Tewaquaptewa's women was always making Piki Bread when we came to visit. She had a big flat stone - it appeared to be granite - sitting over an open fire. She'd take a glop of Grey-blue corn goo out of a pot and slosh it on the stone. It cooked very quickly, was peeled off the stone like paper and rolled up into a tube of yummy deliciousness! (My sister found some Hopi Piki Bread in a stash at the Ranch a couple of years ago after our parents had passed. That stuff has an infinite shelf life!)

Tewaquaptewa was also a prolific Kachina-Doll-maker. He made it a point to give each of us kids a Kachina Doll. He made the dolls out of cottonwood, carved the "old way" with the feet looking more like a single cloven hoof and legs and arms in relief. Sometime in the late fifties young Hopi men began creating more elaborate works using various types of wood. They were human figures, clad in the attire appropriate to the celebration represented - really, works of art that today can fetch

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in the thousands of dollars! The "old-style" Kachinas were relegated to their original purpose - gifts for the children during the many Hopi celebrations.

The last time I visited Oriabe, Chief Tewaquaptewa was no longer alive and one of Emery's daughters was getting married. We were invited to stay and watch. It was a treat. So was the corn cake after! I got to take pictures of the bride and groom but not the ceremony. It was quite an experience.

After we left First Mesa we stopped at the Trading Post on Second Mesa, looking to buy a couple of Kachinas. All they had were about twenty beautiful art pieces priced between fifty and two-hundred dollars. I asked about the more traditional Dolls and the proprietor said they didn't sell them anymore, but that there was an old man up the street who still made them. He was sitting on the stoop, carving a Kachina and we asked if he had any that he would give to us and told him we would pay him well. He went inside and came out with two, each about five inches tall, made in the old style. He said he'd take ten bucks for the pair. I gave him twenty bucks each! My son has them today.

There has always been a rule in Native American culture: Don't take photos of an Indian because it takes a piece of their soul. It should be stated clearly that the operative words are "without specific permission." My family may still have a stash of great photos of Tewaquaptewa and Emery Dennis and their kids and Hopi pottery and Kachinas and teen-agers. Remember ... they were all taken with permission.

So: No Indian photos without permission. Ok?

Isn't that a copyright thing, anyway?

Please remember: Wash your hands a lot. Don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands, face. Disinfect surfaces like counter

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tops and tables, cabinet handles, door knobs and light switches often. Don't forget the car: Steering wheel, shifter, radio/stereo, headlight and turn-signal switches, window cranks/switches, door locks as well as inside/outside door handles!

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Monday, April 6, 2020

The Real Deal

Last Thursday, I watched a video recorded by a Texas doctor/surgeon that scared the living crap outa me! **Duc Dong Vuong, MD, General Surgeon**, who works at **CHRISTUS St. Joseph Medical Center** in Houston, accomplished his purpose: Scare the living shit outa you! Excuse the language, please ... but it's not nearly harsh enough. This is a deal that requires your attention, and hopefully that of your friends and family!

At the end of this column is a link to the **YouTube** video this guy created. It's long and it's technical and it's peppered with obscenities and it's scary. Get yourself a stiff drink, kick back in your most comfortable spot and be prepared to have the crap scared out of you.

This is more crazy stuff than you've ever seen at the movies. This beats the living Hell out of **Friday The 13th, Halloween, Jason, Freddy Krueger** and **The Andromeda Strain** combined! It's thirty-five minutes of the **REAL DEAL**

Get pencil and paper and take notes. This video is the damndest science class I have ever attended. You can always play the video again, but the notes you take will help you understand how serious this **SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19)** really is ... **DEADLY** serious!

Now ... click on this link and hold on tight!

<https://youtu.be/4J0d59dd-qM>

A word about mask-wearing. CDC says do it - couldn't hurt. Nonsense. You wear a mask for two reasons ... you're a robber or

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you need protection. The operative word is efficacy. There's a chart here. Pay attention to efficacy (Efficiency.)



Remember: Wash your hands a lot. Don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands, face. Disinfect surfaces like counter tops and tables, cabinet handles, door knobs and light switches often. Don't forget the car: Steering wheel, shifter, radio/stereo, headlight and turn-signal switches, window cranks/switches, door locks as well as inside/outside door handles!

Be well and prosper.
Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Thursday, April 9, 2020

I Survived the Measles

I had the **measles** when I was very young ... before school. There was a complication: My ankles "turned over", as my mother told me. I have no idea what that was about, but I ended up with special shoes and leg braces. Don't remember that either. Back in the day measles caused a lot of problems all over the world.

It was a lot like the **Wuhan Coronavirus**, only not as fatal. It spread the same way and it was seasonal, just like **COVID-19**.

According to **Viracor** "The six human coronaviruses are: alpha coronaviruses **229E** and **NL63**, and beta coronaviruses **OC43**, **HKU1**, **SARS-CoV** (SARS), and **MERS-CoV** (the coronavirus that causes Middle East Respiratory Syndrome or MERS)."

SARS-CoV (SARS) is the precursor to **SARS-CoV-2** better known as COVID-19.

According to Editor in Chief **Anthony L. Komaroff, M.D** of the **Harvard Health Letter** "The measles virus has been infecting humans for at least 1,000 years. When I was very young, in the 1940s, I got the measles. So did nearly every kid I knew; it is very contagious. I had a high fever, sneezing, coughing, very red eyes, and then a rash on my face and all over my body. Fortunately, I didn't develop the severe complications of measles: pneumonia (which affects one in 20 people with measles) or encephalitis (which affects one in 1,000 and can be fatal). Still, I was miserable for more than a week.

"Then, in the early 1950s, something wonderful happened, and it happened here at Harvard Medical School. Dr. John Enders and two colleagues developed a technique for growing viruses called cell culture. His invention led to the discovery of many new

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viruses. It allowed Jonas Salk and Albert Sabin to develop the polio vaccine, and it allowed Enders to develop a measles vaccine. Enders' curiosity-driven basic research led ultimately to the saving of tens of millions of lives and was honored with the Nobel Prize.

"The measles vaccine has been available since 1963. Before the vaccine became available, each year up to four million Americans got measles. Of these, 48,000 were hospitalized, 4,000 developed encephalitis, and around 500 died. ... [S]ince the vaccine, the annual number of victims would fill just one small auditorium. The vaccine made a difference.

"If you were born before 1957, as I was, you don't need the vaccine: measles was so common when you were young that your exposure to the virus has given you natural immunity. However, if you were born later and never got the vaccine, you may well need to get it as an adult. Talk with your doctor."

There is some very serious speculation that those of us who contracted measles at a very early age - before there was the vaccine - may have some immunity to SARS-CoV-2 because the original SARS-CoV was brought under control using live measles vaccine. So, there may be some hope for a SARS-CoV-2 vaccine, however ...

An article in the March 2014 issue of **Virology** is titled "Protection from SARS coronavirus conferred by live measles vaccine expressing the spike glycoprotein" Note that SARS first appeared in China in 2002 ... it took 12 years to create a vaccine! It's always good to have the facts at hand. But it's also good to pay attention to what your health providers and experts tell you. So, no matter what ... follow the rules!

Please get in the habit: Wash your hands a lot. Don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands and/or faces. Disinfect surfaces

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like counter tops and tables, cabinet handles, door knobs and light switches often. And in the car: Disinfect/clean the steering wheel, shifter, radio/stereo, headlight and turn-signal switches, window cranks/switches, door locks as well as inside/outside door handles!

Be well and prosper.

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Monday, April 13, 2020

Spring Cleaning

One thing about this staying home to control the Wuhan Coronavirus is that it gives us a good reason to do the most thorough Spring Cleaning we've done in decades! Think of it. Every surface is not only cleaned with soap and water, it's disinfected with bleach-water! Yes, it's hard to get used to the smell of Clorox bleach in the house, but it's comforting to know the chemical wipes out the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

Think of all the stuff that gets cleaned - if you're serious about it. Walls. Counter-tops. Shelves. Stuff sitting on shelves. Cupboards. Stuff inside the cupboards. Do you have any idea how many handles there are in your outfit? I've got 56 handles in my Park Model mobile home and that doesn't include the sinks, the toilet handle and the door knobs! Who knew?

Then there are all those things just sitting around. The curtains and window shades. The coffee pot and the toaster. The microwave and toaster-oven, the alarm clock and the Weather Radio.

How about all the stuff in your kitchen drawers? Silverware. Knives. And those gazillion kitchen tools - the can-opener, the bottle-opener, the measuring thingies, the cookie-cutters and all those gizmos that make your kitchen work.

And the windows! OMG! The windows ... how many window panes are there? Twenty-two in my outfit not counting the sliding glass doors in the front entrance and the shower doors. Then there are the mirrors in the bedroom, hall and bathroom.

Digging deep, we find the two air-conditioners and the heater. Gotta clean the dust out and spray disinfectant in them. Got a fan or two kickin' around? Well, those cooling devices need to be

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disassembled, cleaned and disinfected, too! Even the ceiling fan, if you have one, needs to be cleaned and disinfected.

Let no stone go un-turned. Did you consider those collections? I've cleaned all the coffee cups hanging from cup hooks all over the place. And I've vacuumed and spritzed about two-dozen teddy-bears! (See the photo below.) Not to mention that there are at least seven tea sets that at least need dusting and spritzing.

I simply can't believe the amount of stuff Claudette and I collected over our 57 years of marriage! Before we got married - back in January of 1962 - I had a small pot (for soup), a small frying pan (for eggs & bacon & hot cakes & round steak), a classic percolator coffee pot, a few knives, forks and spoons, a butcher knife and a coffee cup. I also had a couple of sheets and pillow cases as well as some blankets.

Please, please, please, remember: Wash your hands a lot. Don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands, face. Disinfect surfaces like counter tops and tables, cabinet handles, door knobs and light switches often. And the car: Steering wheel, shifter, radio/stereo, headlight light and turn-signal switches, window cranks/switches, door locks as well as inside and outside door handles!



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Thursday, April 16, 2020

Egotists

Humans are egotists. We were egotists from the very beginning right up until today.

Used to be the Earth was the center of the Universe. And the Earth was flat and if you sailed out to sea too far, you'd fall right off the edge!

Then (after the Church and the Inquisition prosecuted such ideas) gravity was invented and it was proven that the World is round. That helped prove that the Earth rotated around the Sun. And the telescope was invented, which helped find the Planets. And that showed that the Human ego was still the center of the Universe.

It took a long time but, after Albert Einstein developed the Theory of Relativity, scientists arrived at the Big Bang Theory - egotistic proof that we ARE the Center of the Universe!

Meanwhile, telescopes kept getting bigger and more sensitive in an effort to dig further into the Big Bang Theory. The idea that light from stars (objects) in the skies could tell you how old the object was came into play. White stars are stationary; red ones are moving away from us. AWAY FROM US! Thus, proving without doubt that the Big Bang actually happened right here at the Center of our egotistical Universe in the middle of the Milky Way!

What's been discovered since is that ours is not the only Universe. There are Galaxies and Universes and Planets and Worlds scattered all over the place.

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Not long ago, one scientist observed that the red stars are starting to slow down in their movements away from us. He calculated that it won't be long until all that stardust and stuff will stop going away and begin to fall back toward us - we being the Center of the Universe.

Using data from the European Space Agency's Planck spacecraft in 2013, scientists calculated that the Universe is some 13.82 Billion years old. So when it stops expanding and begins to contract, it should take a little over 13.9 Billion years before we here at the Center of the Universe become a Black Hole!

Now, does that mean that we'll crank up our ego and start all over again with a Big Bang? Right here at the Center of the Universe? We'll be able to prove that statement when the stars change from red to blue.

Please: Wash your hands a lot. Don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands and/or faces. Disinfect surfaces like counter tops and tables, cabinet handles, door knobs and light switches often. And in the car: Disinfect/clean the steering wheel, shifter, radio/stereo, headlight and turn-signal switches, window cranks/switches, door locks as well as inside/outside door handles!

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Monday, April 20, 2020

Back in the Day

Advice from the experts about how to mitigate exposure to the **Wuhan Virus** is no different than it was during the **Polio Virus** outbreaks back in the early 20th century. Two things distinguish today's instructions from those days: face-masks and personal distancing when expecting to be in close quarters.

Infantile Paralysis took the life of President **Franklin D Roosevelt** in 1945. He contracted the disease in 1921 at age 39. Roosevelt founded the precursor to the **March of Dimes** to help battle the disease. **Polio** had been around since its discovery in 1789. It took until 1953 until a vaccine was developed. **Dr. Jonas Salk** and his associates had been hard at it since 1947 when he was recruited by the University of Pennsylvania to develop a Polio virus research program.

Think of it ... how many people died or were permanently crippled by Polio in the 164 years between 1789 and 1953? According to **Google**, "The 1916 toll nationwide was 27,000 cases and 6,000 deaths. Epidemics worsened during the century: in 1952, a record 57,628 cases of Polio were reported in the United States."

In 1962 the **Albert Sabin** killed virus vaccine replaced the Salk live vaccine as the desired prophylactic preventative. And in 1999 the reactivated polio vaccine replaced oral Polio vaccine as the preferred method.

Meanwhile, in 1985, **Rotary International** launched the **PolioPlus** program with a goal of eradicating the disease worldwide. In 1988, Rotary was joined by the **PanAmerican Health Organization, World Health Organization, Centers for Disease Control** and **UNICEF** in an international campaign to stop transmission of the disease everywhere.

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The rules haven't changed since the early '50s. Absolute number one on the list has always been ***Wash Your Hands!*** Number two for just about forever has been disinfect countertops, tabletops, handles and doorknobs. Number three has, at least since the beginning of **World War Two**, been personal hygiene and family cleanliness using soap and hot water.

In 1953, I knew one kid that had contracted Infantile Paralysis - Polio. He had spent time in an iron lung and had recovered. He had a funny walk as a result, but he was cool. He joined my **Boy Scout** troop (Monterey California Troop Two) and earned his place in history as an **Eagle Scout**, an incredible achievement! Back in the day, the Monterey City Manager's son, my friend **Kurt Hahn** survived Polio.

I believe that putting hygiene on the front burner helped slow the spread of Polio after WWII. Every day before school I took a shower. And anytime I hit the restroom, it was wash hands. After school, it was play, come home and wash hands and face before dinner.

Even with all the personal hygiene, I still suffered the childhood diseases kids today have rarely - Measles, Mumps, Chicken Pox and so forth. The thing was to go to bed and stay there for three or four weeks. The benefits were four-fold: Stay home, rest, recuperate and don't infect anyone else. It appears to have worked

Even as we did back in the day ... please remember: Wash your hands a lot. Don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands or face. Disinfect surfaces often - like counter tops and tables, cabinet handles, door knobs and light switches. And don't forget the car!

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Thursday, April 23, 2020

1984

Wikipedia tells us the following:

"Nineteen Eighty-Four: A Novel, often published as *1984*, is a dystopian novel by English novelist George Orwell. It was published on 8 June 1949 by Secker & Warburg as Orwell's ninth and final book completed in his lifetime. The story was mostly written at Barnhill, a farmhouse on the Scottish island of Jura, at times while Orwell suffered from severe tuberculosis. Thematically, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* centres on the consequences of government over-reach, totalitarianism, mass surveillance, and repressive regimentation of all persons and behaviours within society.

"The story takes place in an imagined future, the year 1984, when much of the world has fallen victim to perpetual war, omnipresent government surveillance, historical negationism, and propaganda. Great Britain, known as Airstrip One, has become a province of a superstate named Oceania that is ruled by the Party who employ the Thought Police to persecute individuality and independent thinking. Big Brother, the leader of the Party, enjoys an intense cult of personality despite the fact that he may not exist. The protagonist, Winston Smith, is a diligent and skillful rank-and-file worker and Party member who secretly hates the Party and dreams of rebellion. He enters a forbidden relationship with a co-worker, Julia.

"Nineteen Eighty-Four has become a classic literary example of political and dystopian fiction. Many terms used in the novel have entered common usage, including Big Brother, doublethink, thoughtcrime, Newspeak, Room 101, telescreen, 2 + 2 = 5, prole, and memory hole. *Nineteen Eighty-Four* also popularised the adjective "Orwellian", connoting things such as official

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deception, secret surveillance, brazenly misleading terminology, and manipulation of recorded history by a totalitarian or authoritarian state. *Time* included it on its 100 best English-language novels from 1923 to 2005. It was placed on the Modern Library's 100 Best Novels, reaching No. 13 on the editors' list and No. 6 on the readers' list. In 2003, the novel was listed at No. 8 on The Big Read survey by the BBC. Parallels have been drawn between the novel's subject matter and real life instances of totalitarianism, communism, mass surveillance, and violations of freedom of expression among other themes."

The shut-down of America - and the world for the most part, as well - has come with what many are calling *Orwellian* edicts ranging from *Wash Your Hands* to *You Can't Go Fish*. Some, backed by the **Center for Disease Control**, make sense to help control the spread of just about any disease: Wash your hands, don't touch your face (or anyone else's), practice social distancing (stay at least six feet away from others), disinfect surfaces like counter-tops and door-knobs, and so forth. Wearing a mask to avoid contaminating others is a good option, also. However, government mandates to not drive, not go outside to obtain healing fresh air and sunshine, not golfing, running, hiking or other outside activities that can easily incorporate social distancing are just outrageous!

This thing is playing like some kind of scary movie. According to a **Fox News** article yesterday, a Chinese team of scientists found that some of the most aggressive strains of the **SARS-CoV-2** virus were able to generate 270 times the viral load as the weakest strains; in addition, the aggressive strains killed the human cells fastest. They're saying they've counted thirty strains, 19 of which have never been seen before. It kinda brings *The Andromeda Strain* to mind.

Earlier this week this column discussed the importance of personal hygiene dating back to the days of suppressing the

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spread of **Infantile Paralysis (Polio)** in the '40s and '50s. Those same practices are just as effective today as they were then, without the outrageous patchwork of edicts government officials seem to delight in imposing on unsuspecting citizens under the guise of law. Orwellian practices only make life miserable for large numbers of people without actually accomplishing anything except massaging the egos of bureaucrats.

I recall that, back in the day, my mom would wipe down every horizontal surface in the kitchen with the rinsewater from the dishes, which contained a dash of Clorox. She'd follow that with a quick swipe of the kitchen handles and the front and back porch doorknobs. Simple and effective practices promoting hygiene ... a good example for us kids of the '50s.

Swine Flu, SARS and MERS have been suppressed using the same practices used in the '40s and '50s. Those practices alone can go a long way to suppress SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19.)

Last week, word came that a controversial Swedish Doctor has determined that "shelter-in-place" and "stay home" orders have no effect on the disease other than screwing up the economy. He claims that the vast majority of SARS-CoV-2 patients survive. Some 98% make up a majority of the population with what they're calling "herd immunity," surviving the less than 2% who perish from it.

According to a **Life** article by **George Martin**, "The population of the Swedish capital Stockholm could achieve 'herd immunity' from coronavirus within weeks, a health chief has claimed. Dr **Anders Tegnell**, the man responsible for drawing up the country's controversial coronavirus strategy, said infection rates in the capital are slowing because people had developed a resistance."

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Tegnell asserts that it's a waste of time and resources to do anything more than common-sense personal hygiene - hand washing, social distancing, disinfecting surfaces and so on.

Below is a link to a very educational and well-presented article in the Wall Street Journal last week about hand-washing (of all things.) Read it - you may learn something new.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-dos-and-donts-of-handwashing-11583952006?mod=wsjtwittertest19>

Wash your hands. Don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands and/or faces. Disinfect surfaces at least daily ... counter tops, tables, cabinet handles, door knobs and light switches. And don't forget the car!

Be well and prosper.

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Monday, April 27, 2020

The President is a Jerk

Food for thought from a Facebooker ...

[Peggy Hattaway Wilson](#)

04-17-2020 on Facebook

"I'm not posting this for debate. I don't need any comments. Unfriend me if you must. Just please consider this...when you think the President is a jerk...

"The bottom line has been that Trump IS a jerk. He's crude, he bloviates, he gets his feelings hurt and he's a hot head. And he should stay off Twitter.

"Let me tell you what else he is. He is a guy that demands performance. He is a guy that asks lots of questions. The questions he asks aren't cloaked in fancy phrases, they are 'why the hell....' questions.

"For decades the health industry has thrown away billions of face masks after one use. Trump asks, 'Why the hell are we throwing them away? Why not sterilize them and use them numerous times?' He's the guy that gets hospital ships readied in one week, when it would have taken a bureaucrat weeks or months to get it done. He's the guy that gets temporary hospitals built in three days. He's the guy that gets industries to build ventilators and face masks in a business that's highly regulated by agencies that move like sloths.

"He's the guy that asks why we aren't using drugs that might work on people that are dying; what the hell do we have to lose? In spite of all the naysayers. He's the guy that shut down travel from China, when the liberals and the media were screaming xenophobia and racist. Now they are asking why didn't he react

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sooner? He's the guy that ran on securing the border in the face of a screaming press and media. When he shut down borders in the midst of the coronavirus virus they were up in arms over such a draconian move. Then the rest of the world followed suit all over, including the European Union between member countries.

"Has he made mistakes, yep. Everyone I know would have. All of these experts wouldn't have done any better. Trump is working harder than I've ever seen a President work. He isn't hiding in his office, he's out front every day.

"Take for instance, all the shortages of PPE's and ventilators. I'm unaware of anything that prevented all of these governors from ordering all the PPE and ventilators for emergency purposes over the last two years. And yet, it is Trump's fault that they didn't.

"He's balanced his approach and listened to the experts, when his distractors said he wouldn't and couldn't. When he offers hope, he's lying and when he's straight forward, he should be hopeful. It's a no win, but he is not deterred by all of that BS coming from the press and the liberals."

Peggy didn't even mention Fake News! She's a little over the top, but she sure is the first person I've heard that isn't afraid to stand up and call a spade a spade. I also really appreciate the tomes James II and Otto put out there. A lot of food for thought, all things considered.

Wash your hands. Don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands and/or faces. Disinfect surfaces like counter tops and tables, cabinet handles, door knobs and light switches at least once a day. And don't neglect the car!

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Thursday, April 30, 2020

Hotter'n the Dickens!

I don't know about you, but I've become tired of the COVID-19 SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus stories and reports. Lighten up a little, I say! This story was published in August of 2014.

Back in the mid-70s Claudette and I had occasion to visit a hole-in-the-wall family-operated Mexican food restaurant on South 12th 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 it was compact and comfortable. The interior walls were white stucco decorated with pictures and trinkets – 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 like is used in the traditional hangover cure Menudo. 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.

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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. The salsa was hot – not so hot that it burnt my mouth and tongue, but hot enough to make my pores open wide and gush!

The help peered around the kitchen doorway and Claudette laughed when I motioned for a waitress. "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.

I'll never forget that Mexican dinner. I wish I could remember the name of that little hole-in-the-wall so very long ago. Haven't had anything that good since. Even in Globe!

Remember ... even if you've been playing with salsa ... Wash your hands. Don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands and/or faces. Disinfect surfaces like counter tops and tables, cabinet handles, door knobs and light switches at least once every day. And do the car, too!

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Monday, May 4, 2020

About Getting Old

This getting old is something else! Check this out ... I keep running into people fifteen years my junior that look older than me. Now how's that turn your crank?

My dad was 82 when he passed. My mom was 97. My beloved Claudette was 82. I'm 79 and am the beneficiary of hundreds of years of biological diversity ... and I'm the kid!

What's hard for me is that I don't look like an old coot! And (other than for knees, prostate and back) I feel just fine! So what's the deal, eh? My brother Bill, at 76, is still hangin' in. And my 72-year-old sister Mandy is in fine fettle (all things considered.) So what's this deal about getting old?

Gee whiz, my Great-Grandfather George Washington Hance was 84 when he crossed over the great divide, Great Aunt Mary Ellen Wine Richards was 97 when she passed and Great Aunt Verde Wine Burmister made it to 102.

The thing is, there are all these old farts out there that look like they're on their last legs. I mean there are people in their sixties that look like their skin is about to fall off! How does this happen? Is it the Sun? Certainly not the moon or stars. Does it have to do with smoking or drinking or doing doobies? Lord help us. I don't know!

What I do know is that, the Lord willing and the creek don't rise, I'll join a number of my classmates next January as a member of the Fourscore Club - folks who've successfully negotiated their way to the ripe old age of eighty.

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I also know that my love for my beautiful, missing Claudette has graduated, ever so slowly, to old friends in appreciation of their circumstances. I guess it's what we do.

Even as we did back in the day ... Wash your hands. Don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands and/or face. Disinfect surfaces like counter tops and tables, cabinet handles, door knobs and light switches at least daily. And don't forget the car! Do Good - be safe.

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Thursday, May 7, 2020

How to Get the Truth

I was talking with my sister a while back and she suggested that I share my knowledge of how to get the straight story out of Fake News, or at least Slanted News. Ok, I'll do just that. But first, you have to remember those stirring words from the movie *Network*, "I'm mad as Hell! And I'm not going to take it anymore!"

You need a good computer, internet service and a reliable printer. Today's browsers will allow you to print just about anything from the internet. All you need to learn is exactly how to do that. In short, it's a series of steps that you need to learn from your browser. They include Internet Explorer, Microsoft Edge, Chrome and Firefox among others. Go to your browser's home page and ask "How do I print online articles or information?"

Once you are sure you can print anything off the internet, you're ready to edit the news.

I've written before that I don't trust the publisher who runs stories with lots of adjectives and adjunctive phrases and uses "unnamed sources" or "reports" or just "sources." Off the top of my head, you'll find a lot of this kind of reporting, commentary and opinion pieces in the Washington Post (WaPo), the New York Times (NYT), Slate, TIME, Huffington Post (HuffPo), CNN, MSNBC and other liberal news organizations.

Let's dredge up an example.

Biden and Trump campaigns squabble over Pence-mask furor

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Washington Examiner | by [Naomi Lim](#) | April 28, 2020 10:10 PM

The Biden and Trump campaigns are bickering over Vice President Mike Pence's decision not to wear a face mask during a visit to a Minnesota Mayo Clinic.

Biden spokeswoman Kate Bedingfield fired the first shot Tuesday, calling Pence's trip to the state President Trump's team hopes to win in November's election part of a "damage control tour."

"While Vice President Pence tours the country attempting to paper over the Trump Administration's delayed, insufficient response to this pandemic by passing the buck to governors and posing for photos at the finish line, Vice President Biden stands firmly with Minnesotans — and Americans across the country — in listening to public health experts and following the science so we can keep Americans safe and get our economy back on track," Bedingfield wrote.

Trump spokesman Andrew Clarke sniped back, saying Biden was heckling "from the sidelines" as Pence acknowledged America's healthcare workers for their "incredible" work trying to better understand the novel coronavirus. The email subject line for his missive asked, "Why Is Joe Biden Attacking VP Mike Pence for Thanking Mayo Clinic Researchers?"

But Pence's efforts to highlight a partnership between the Mayo Clinic and the University of Minnesota aimed at ramping up COVID-19 research and testing was derailed by questions over why he didn't wear a mask when he visited a Mayo employee recovering from the virus who was donating plasma for therapy treatment, when he toured a diagnostic testing lab, or during a roundtable on Mayo's programs.

Thayer's Wild Bunch VIII

The Biden campaign quickly pounced on the negative press coverage, sharing select articles with its media lists.

Under pressure, Mayo said Pence had been advised of its policy to wear a mask before the trip, in line with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines pushed by the White House's COVID-19 task force, which the vice president leads. Pence defended his choice by explaining he was regularly tested for the virus and wasn't at risk of spreading it, the main reason why the federal government recommended donning a mask.

"Since I don't have the coronavirus, I thought it'd be a good opportunity for me to be here, to be able to speak to these researchers, these incredible healthcare personnel, and look them in the eye and say 'thank you,'" he said.

Pence's move reflects Trump's personal distaste for wearing a mask.

"I don't know, somehow, I don't see it for myself. I just don't. Maybe I'll change my mind," the president said in April, repeating that the guidance was voluntary.

Now, let's look at the edited version.

Press Questions Pence's Bare Face

Washington Examiner | by [Naomi Lim](#) | April 28, 2020 10:10 PM

The Biden and Trump campaigns have been trading statements about Vice President Mike Pence's decision not to wear a face mask during a visit to a Minnesota Mayo Clinic.

Last Tuesday, Biden spokeswoman Kate Bedingfield called Pence's trip to Minnesota part of a "damage control tour."

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“While Vice President Pence tours the country attempting to paper over the Trump Administration’s delayed, insufficient response to this pandemic by passing the buck to governors and posing for photos at the finish line, Vice President Biden stands firmly with Minnesotans - and Americans across the country - in listening to public health experts and following the science so we can keep Americans safe and get our economy back on track,” Bedingfield wrote.

Trump spokesman Andrew Clarke declared that Biden was heckling "from the sidelines" as Pence acknowledged America’s healthcare workers for their "incredible" work trying to better understand the SARS-Cov-2 coronavirus.

The bare-faced Vice-President visited a Mayo employee recovering from the virus, toured a diagnostic testing lab and attended a roundtable on Mayo's programs. Pence's efforts to highlight a partnership between the Mayo Clinic and the University of Minnesota were marred by members of the press corps questioning why he didn't wear a mask.

Mayo said Pence had been advised of its policy to wear a mask before the trip, in accordance with guidelines from the COVID-19 task force.

Pence had explained that he was regularly tested for the virus and wasn't at risk of spreading it, which is the main reason donning a mask is recommended.

"Since I don't have the coronavirus, I thought it'd be a good opportunity for me to be here, to be able to speak to these researchers, these incredible healthcare personnel, and look them in the eye and say 'thank you,'" he said.

Meanwhile, the Biden campaign shared press corps articles about the controversy with its media lists.

Thayer's Wild Bunch VIII

Earlier last month the President himself noted that mask-wearing was voluntary. "I don't know," he said, "somehow, I don't see it for myself. I just don't. Maybe I'll change my mind,"

Somehow the edited version seems a little tense but less of a hatchet-job than the original.

No matter what story you like best, don't forget to wash your hands. Don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands and/or faces. Disinfect surfaces at least daily ... counter tops, tables, cabinet handles, door knobs and light switches. And don't forget the car!

Be well and prosper.

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Monday, May 11, 2020

Personal Hygiene

The **President's** COVID-19 team led by Vice-President **Mike Pence**, in mid-March put out a set of recommendations on how to avoid being infected by the coronavirus and to avoid infecting others with it. They included hand-washing/disinfecting, "social distancing," disinfecting surfaces, wearing protective masks and staying home.

Since that time, a number of Governors had changed staying home to "Shelter in Place." I have to take issue with *Shelter in Place* because that's a command used by Law Enforcement, Emergency Services and the National Guard to help people avoid injury during active shooter incidents, invasions of all sorts including gangs and foreign parties, insurrection and severe weather events. It's no wonder invoking *Shelter in Place* scares the dickens out of people!

The really horrible part of the *Shelter* requirement is suppression of the immune system. The human body's endocrine system controls the release and use of hormones. It's the endocrine system that controls "fight or flight" hormones adrenaline and noradrenaline, and in so doing it draws on the immune system for help. The stress generated by *Shelter in Place* enables the fight-or-flight hormones, increases heart rate and blood pressure and saps the immune system of some of its ability to ward off illness.

That last paragraph is corroborated by New York's Mayor. Last Wednesday, Bill de Blasio revealed that some 68% of all COVID-19 cases admitted to his city's hospitals came from families that were staying home - *Sheltering in Place*!

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I was asked by a friend the other day how I felt about the COVID-19 recommendations - did they go too far, are they about right, or are they too lax. I said I thought they were way over the top in many ways. Common sense tells us exactly what to do. Simply hearken back to the '40s, '50s and '60s when personal hygiene was not only taught by mothers all over the country, but also in school at every grade level right up to high school.

Children were taught how to properly wash their hands and face and how to brush their teeth. They were taught how to use the bath and/or shower. Proper application of soap in the right places with a wash cloth was not only taught at home but also in Physical Education classes at school (don't forget to wash behind your ears, Johnny!) Kids also learned the acceptable application of deodorant, cologne and perfume.

I think my brother and sister and I began battling over who washed and who dried the dishes by the time we got to be seven or eight. Mom taught us that the dish soap went with the hot water in the sink on the right, the rinse water went on the left and the dish rack and drain went on the left next to the rinse water, which was also hot with a jigger of Clorox bleach in it. The dishes and silverware were washed using a dish rag - actually, a regular bathroom wash cloth. Only the silverware was dried. The dishes and pots and pans were air dried in the rack.

When the dishes were done the dish rag was rinsed in the rinse water, squeezed almost dry and used to disinfect the counter tops, refrigerator, freezer, oven and cabinet handles, light switches and the doorknobs on the front and back doors, closets and bathrooms. It took just an extra minute-and-a-half or so to disinfect almost the entire house!

These efforts were not only needed to combat the diseases common back in the day - mumps, measles, chicken pox, whooping cough and even polio - but also the spread of the

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common cold. There was no *Shelter in Place* back then ... people stayed home when they were sick. And they stayed there until they were well. Common remedies were aspirin, orange juice, hot showers, Vicks VapoRub, fresh air, sunshine and doctor-prescribed antibiotics.

The CDC website posted early on that measles is a corona virus related to MERS and SARS, all of which are related to SARS-Cov-2. I contend that anyone who had a bad case of measles in their youth probably carries some limited immunity to COVID-19 (SARS-Cov-2.)

Just as it was in the '40s, '50s and '60s, so it should be today to combat disease: Nothing less than the generous application of personal and family hygiene. We don't need to shelter in place, wear masks all the time and avoid people. And we certainly don't need to be afraid! We do need to apply an extremely strong dose of common sense, open our dwelling windows in the evening to circulate fresh air and get outside for some sunshine and exercise every day.

By the way, as I wrote in a Facebook post last week: You wear a mask to keep from infecting others if you're an asymptomatic carrier. If you're immune you don't need to worry about infecting anybody else because you're not a carrier. Other than with properly fitted PPE, a mask will not protect you from the coronavirus (aka COVID-19 and SARS-CoV-2.)

Get in the habit of washing your hands, not touching your face or others' hands and/or faces. Disinfect surfaces like counter tops and tables, cabinet handles, door knobs and light switches at least once a day. Keep your distance (a knuckle-bump at arm's-length is about right) and wear a mask in crowded places like big-box stores. Whatever you do, don't neglect the car!

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Thursday, May 14, 2020

Alone

Marlo Thomas Donahue said two Sundays ago on **CBS News Sunday Morning** that the thing about marriage is it's something that helps you get through those rough times.

I've always appreciated my wife Claudette because she was always there, my supportive partner in life, helping the two of us get through the rough times. But, she hasn't been around for going on nine months. Without her around it's very difficult to get motivated. For me, this is one of the roughest of times.

I was sitting in my LaZboy rocker the other day, alone, with the TV playing quietly in the background, gazing through the sliding door at the Spring foliage in the yard. My daughter, who lives next door, was at work; my other next-door neighbor was in the Valley with her kids after spending a week in the hospital suffering from congestive heart failure.

Loneliness is not an issue, although it's disconcerting to look across the room at the matching LaZboy without my love lounging in it. Her spirit is here and the memories of her persist but, without her corporeal self nearby, I'm alone.

There's plenty for me to do - ways to stay busy ... my writing and a pile of chores that seem to grow daily. I still haven't finished culling the spices and the coats and jackets, replacing the shed floor, installing new skirts for the mobile home, starting on front corner repairs to Janet's travel trailer, taking out the trash and emptying the cat box. I wonder how many others are in my situation, feeling alone occasionally, but busy enough to not feel lonely.

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I'm really not lonely. I have my close personal friends and acquaintances, Facebook friends, my daughter and my neighbors, all of whom show me those attributes that always make for good camaraderie. But, I don't know what I'd do without the cat. Yeah, the cat.

Cinnamon, my yellow and white tabby, seems to know instinctively when I need some company. Even if he's outdoors. he'll come in through his kitty door, get a few cat crunchies and a couple of laps of water, and then jump up and sit on the arm of the rocker next to me, purring. Waking as I do mornings, just before the dawn, he's there taking Claudette's place because he also knows she's gone. Every now and then he comes over and pokes his nose in my face, tickling my cheeks with his whiskers and making little peeping noises. Somehow, I don't feel alone during those moments.

Even with the slow re-opening of our retail economy, don't drop your guard. Wash your hands. Don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands and/or faces. Disinfect surfaces at least daily ... counter tops, tables, cabinet handles, door knobs and light switches. And don't forget the car!

Be well and prosper.

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Monday, May 18, 2020

Opportunity

If you had a gazillion dollars today, what would you do with it to keep it growing? Where would you invest it? Stocks? Bonds? Municipal Bonds? Gold? Silver? Natural Gas?

How about small businesses preparing to file or having already filed for bankruptcy? Adversity always presents opportunity. The coronavirus economic collapse presents enormous opportunities for savvy investors.

Any small business filing for bankruptcy has no choice unless it can find an "angel." If you're the one with a gazillion dollars, you can be the "angel" and make a ton of money after helping get your new partners on their feet.

For starters, take a trip down main street reading window signs ... Closed, Out of Business, Closed for Good. Listing all of them, and visiting City Hall might be a good next step. You want to know the owners' names, mailing addresses and 'phone numbers and the City Clerk may be able to share that information. If you can't obtain that information (it's supposed to be public) grab your 'phone book and get busy ... you'll get there.

Contact what appear to be the most promising prospects and give them a call, set up a meeting with each one. You want to know how they were doing before the shutdown. Real numbers. You'll want to see Tax Returns, P&L and Balance Sheets for the last year. You want to know how seasonal a business is and how they cope when it slows down. You also want to know how the owners' families are doing both before and after the shutdown. And you want to know their personal histories - family finances, criminal histories if any, church, club and community

Thayer's Wild Bunch VIII

participation, health histories, and what they do for rest and recreation.

The thing is, if you're going to invest in a business you need to know who you're dealing with at the most intimate levels. You need to be considering whether you're looking to invest in new friends who are hard-working Americans that have been making a good living and raising a family successfully ... or whether you're just after getting a piece the bottom line in a profit-making enterprise.

What's different about this approach is that "angels" usually have people come to them. This process is very similar except that this "go find them" process assures a tighter bond between investor and partners. Smart investors never just jump in with both feet ... they're careful. Not very many "angels" just fall into a gazillion dollars. They earn it!

Even though we're slowly getting back to work ... Get in the habit. Wash your hands. Don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands and/or face. Disinfect surfaces like counter tops and tables, cabinet handles, door knobs and light switches at least daily. And don't forget about the car! Be safe.

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Thursday, May 21, 2020

How It Used to Be

Back in the day, journalists used to ask clear, pointed questions during interviews. Not like they do today. Now, it's cool to preface questions with statements or short stories. If you want to know why **President Trump** gets so short with journalists in the Press Corps, all ya gotta do is pay attention to the questions. Many are either gotcha or beating a dead horse.

The **Washington Examiner's Selena Zito** interviewed the President last Thursday at "an Upper Macungie Township distribution center for the medical equipment company **Owens & Minor**, one of five companies in the nation selected by the **Department of Health and Human Services** to supply 600 million N95 respirator masks for hospitals and surgical centers."

A typical question in the Trump-Zito one-on-one interview went like this:

Zito: "Let's stick with Pennsylvania here. Today Joe Biden named Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Bernie Sanders. Yeah, as part of their Climate Change Task Force. So these are two people that have not been particularly supportive of the fossil fuel industry which employs 300,000 jobs here in Pennsylvania, and it's a \$45 billion industry. Contrast how you — how does that make those workers feel — and they're not just blue-collar workers. They're engineers and high tech and executives. So, how do you contrast with him on that position?"

I'm sorry, but a real journalist would have asked, "What do you think about Biden naming Bernie Sanders and OAC to his Climate Change Task Force?" Short, sweet and to the point.

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The assumption is that the President is a dummy who doesn't know anything so any question must include background information. Bad dog - no bisquit! The interviewer (Zito) is clearly trying to impress the POTUS with her expertise. I'll tell you, if the President doesn't understand an on-point question he'll say so and ask for more information.

The Head Man is not stupid ... he got wise to Zito's way of asking questions. This exchange shows how he can simply cut to the chase.

Zito: "I was going to ask you about — the Democrats believe that they can run on you ruining the economy, but —" [interrupted]

Trump: "Even they don't believe that. Honestly, I've never even been hit by that. They're not saying that."

We've seen the President beam up people like CNN's **Jim Acosta**, who often asks long, stupid, "gotcha" questions. But Donald Trump also knows how to keep certain members of the press in his corner. This closing exchange with Zito is a case in point:

Zito: "Mr. President, thank you very much. I'd shake your hand, but probably cause a national incident."

Trump: "Did you make a prediction this election yet?"

Zito: "No, not yet. Check with me in July, but it ..." [interrupted]

Trump: "It won't change."

Zito: "Yeah, I don't think so. Thank you."

Trump: "Salena, take care of yourself."

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Zito: "Thank you very much, sir."

Trump: "You're doing great."

Zito: "Thank you. Thank you."

Don't lighten up, people! Wash your hands. Don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands and/or faces. Disinfect surfaces at least daily ... counter tops, tables, cabinet handles, door knobs and light switches. And, for Heaven's sake, don't neglect the car! Stay well and prosper.

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Monday, May 25, 2020

Conjure

Today is a special, particularly American holiday that honors those across the world who gave their lives in the cause of freedom from tyranny and oppression. Today, Memorial Day, we also honor the tens of thousands lost to SARS-Cov-2 (Covid-19, the Hunan Virus). We stop for a few moments to be thankful we are working our way back to normalcy.

To conjure is, according to **Dictionary.com**, to affect or influence by or as if by invocation or spell; to effect, produce, bring, etc., by or as by magic; to conjure a miracle; to call upon or command (a devil or spirit) by invocation or spell.

Back in the mid '70s it was - at times - in vogue to conjure spirits, the dead, the un-dead and sometimes even the Devil himself. Yes. there were those who poo-pooed the idea of spirituality as well as tangling with the supernatural. But, the practice did happen. I know because I did it on a number of occasions. And I'm not a Witch or a Warlock.

I don't remember what got me going, but I got good enough at conjuring that it scared my wife Claudette on at least one occasion. It also scared a few friends at other times. Even after we had moved from Tucson I was able to conjure up evil one night in a corner of our Park Model Mobile Home in Wheatfields north of Globe. No, I don't remember why!

There's every probability that I could do it today. Scoff, if you will, but this is the real deal and I bring it up because there may be good reason to conjure up a bunch of positive vibes today and well into the future to combat the health and economic disasters that have come upon us of late.

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First, here's how one conjures up good, benign and evil forces. First, get comfortable ... sitting in an easy-chair or on a pillow - whatever - the idea is to be completely relaxed. Breathe slowly and deeply, not so as to hyperventilate, but rather to aid in relaxation.

Now, concentrate. Think. Make your mind work. If you want good, think a warm, fuzzy, pink or sky-blue force standing in a corner or sitting on the couch. If you want benign, think something that is just there with you, in the corner or on the couch. If it's evil you want, hold your hands together tightly and think of God's nemesis, the source of all evil, the anti-Christ.

Remember, you must be completely relaxed and let your mind do the heavy lifting. This exercise can be frightening for a first-timer. And if you get too much too fast it can be down-right terrifying! To bring a session to an immediate halt, just stand up, take a deep breath and leave the area.

The reason I bring this up is to empower my readers with the means to change this mess we find ourselves in today. It's like disease, depression, desperation and dictatorial powers have taken over our lives. It doesn't have to be this way. We have the power to conjure up evil to combat the forces that are making our lives miserable, if not boring. By the same token, we all have the power to conjure up the healing forces of good to keep us out of danger and ward off potential infection.

The idea of *Mind Over Matter* is real. Dr. **Norman Vincent Peale** was a preacher and he impressed many with his faith. President **Bill Clinton** wrote in Peale's obituary, "The name of Dr. Norman Vincent Peale will forever be associated with the wondrously American values of optimism and service. Dr. Peale was an optimist who believed that, whatever the antagonisms and complexities of modern life brought us, anyone could prevail by approaching life with a simple sense of faith. And he served us

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by instilling that optimism in every Christian and every other person who came in contact with his writings or his hopeful soul."

So there you have it. Simply practice the power of positive thinking, along with your innate ability to make things happen through the forces of good and evil, and we'll all be OK.

Get in the habit. Wash your hands. Don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands and/or face. Disinfect surfaces like counter tops and tables, cabinet handles, door knobs and light switches at least daily. And don't forget about the car! Be safe.

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Thursday, May 28, 2020

Herd Mentality v. Herd Immunity

I've been running into both Mentality and Immunity Herd characteristics of late.

First, it was Herd Mentality. You see it a lot of it on **Facebook**. And you watch it and read it in the **Mainstream Media**.

The Herd kicks in on Facebook when someone trolls or posts an off-the-wall article from some obscure website. That gets the Herd going, most all of the participants on the same wavelength, arguing the same point over and over again while calling each other names.

There can be little skepticism about the existence of the Mainstream Media Herd because the same stories, using the exact same lines are repeated over and over again in print and on TV news and commentary until they're replaced a couple of days later in the next news cycle.

While Herd *Mentality* leaves something to be desired for many people, Herd *Immunity* is an invaluable asset to humans (and animals alike.) Measles and mumps and chicken pox and whooping cough, and even Polio, are rare diseases anymore. Before today's assortment of inoculations became common, it was Herd Immunity that saved countless lives, even as others were being lost for the lack of common antibodies in affected populations.

According to **Wikipedia**, "*Herd immunity (also called herd effect, community immunity, population immunity, or social immunity) is a form of indirect protection from infectious disease that occurs when a large percentage of a population has become immune to an infection, whether through vaccination or previous*

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infections, thereby providing a measure of protection for individuals who are not immune. In a population in which a large proportion of individuals possess immunity, such people being unlikely to contribute to disease transmission, chains of infection are more likely to be disrupted, which either stops or slows the spread of disease. The greater the proportion of immune individuals in a community, the smaller the probability that non-immune individuals will come into contact with an infectious individual, helping to shield non-immune individuals from infection.

"Individuals can become immune by recovering from an earlier infection or through vaccination. Some individuals cannot become immune because of medical conditions, such as an immunodeficiency or immunosuppression, and for this group herd immunity is a crucial method of protection. Once a certain threshold has been reached, herd immunity gradually eliminates a disease from a population."

Herd Immunity may come into play with **Covid-19** because the three major Corona Viruses (**Measles**, **MERS** and **SARS**) are related to the disease (also known as **SARS-Cov-2**.) If an individual has had any of the three, there may be a Herd correlation to Covid-19.

Now, if we could just do something to corral Herd Mentality ...

Next Subject:

Why is **Twitter** out of line "Fact Checking" (censuring) content from politicians?

April 22, 2014, **New Yorker** magazine:

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"In a landmark decision, the Supreme Court of the United States declared on Tuesday that lying by politicians is protected by the First Amendment because it is an expression of their religion.

"By a 5–4 majority, the Court struck down an Ohio law that would make it harder to lie in political ads, arguing instead that 'any attempt to restrict or punish lying by politicians is an unconstitutional infringement on a religion they have practiced for decades.'

"The Court's decision won praise from politicians of both parties, with many saying that the Justices' recognition of lying as a religion was 'long overdue.'"

That's why.

Even with the slow re-opening of our retail economy, don't drop your guard. Wash your hands. Don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands and/or faces. Disinfect surfaces at least daily... counter tops, tables, cabinet handles, door knobs and light switches. And don't forget the car!

Be well and prosper.

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Monday, June 01, 2020

Positive Writing I

This is the first in a series of columns on how to write positively. Negatives are out.

The only negative words in this missive are in this paragraph and only to make the point. Words like no, none, not, never, bad, shamed, can't, won't, un-anything, idiotic, etc.

The trick is to write what you feel and then turn all the negatives in your piece into positives. It's hard to do. You might need a dictionary or thesaurus, but try it. You'll like the challenge!

I was lecturing a **Facebook** friend the other day about the need to be kind rather than insult and degrade others with which you have difficulty agreeing. (You see ... it would have been easier to blurt, "You shouldn't call others you disagree with idiots or stupid. It's wrong.")

Sure, making a silk purse out of a sow's ear is a tough task, but it can be done!

Back in the early '80s, I was a manager at the University of Arizona. My boss taught me how to write a memo that chewed out an employee for unacceptable behavior on the job without using any language that could be construed as negative or mean or harassing. The trick was to write a memo that chewed like a dog on a bone ... then go back and change the negative words and phrases into positives. I got really good at it!

So, here's your homework: Record and transcribe the words of US Senate Minority Leader **Chuck Schumer**, Fox News' ***The Five*** star **Juan Williams** and CNN's **Jim Acosta**. Do the same

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with the Bronx' Congresswoman **AOC** and ABC's *The View* icon **Joy Behar**. And, we can't forget **Donald J Trump**!

Each of these folks has a reputation as a nay-saying trouble-maker whose positives are often hiding in plain sight, just beyond hearing range! When attempting to translate what you perceive as nasty remarks into positive statements, you might find their words inspiring, uplifting and even thought-provoking. You won't know until you finish your homework!

Get in the habit, people! Wash your hands and face - after that leave your face alone. Keep your distance from others. Disinfect surfaces at least daily ... counter tops, tables, cabinet handles, bathroom fixtures, remote controls, door knobs and light switches. And, don't forget to get after the car! It's called common-sense personal hygiene.

As Spock used to say, "Be well and prosper."

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Thursday, June 4, 2020

The Polls Say ...

Just before the 2016 Presidential election, the Polls had **Hillary Clinton** leading **Donald Trump** by as much as 6.5% in the critical swing states. It looked like a lock. But we know what happened and the Media, Dems, Pundits and Hollywood have been at war with President Trump ever since.

How could Clinton possibly have lost that election - by such a wide margin in the **Electoral College**? According to the Polls, mere hours away from the end of the 2016 election cycle, Clinton was a shoe-in. And as it turned out, she won the popular vote by some 2.9 Million votes! A clear plurality driven by the east and left coasts. However, the critical "fly-over" states had been ignored by the Clinton Camp. Oooooops!

What is it they say? "*The best laid plans of mice and men often go awry.*" It was the original **Murphy's Law**. **Wikipedia** tells us that the saying is adapted from a line in "*To a Mouse*," by **Robert Burns**: "*The best laid schemes o' mice an' men / Gang aft a-gley.*"

Be that as it may - Clinton lost the 2016 election because her campaign failed to understand that the Electoral College is the key. Its consists of 538 **electors** selected by the popular vote in each state. With 7 un-committed electors, the final results were Trump 304, Clinton 227.

What makes the whole scenario so absurd is that the political Pros, the Pundits and the Polls failed to understand the importance of the Electoral College and its relationship to America's fly-over states.

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Guess what? Nothing has changed. Trump did his homework and beat the pants off Clinton because she failed to do her job. With Biden leading in the Polls, it appears that a repeat of the 2016 election cycle is in the works.

Don't lighten up, people! Wash your hands and face. Then, don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands and/or faces. Disinfect surfaces at least daily ... counter tops, tables, cabinet handles, door knobs and light switches. And, for Heaven's sake, don't neglect the car!
Stay well and prosper.

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Monday, June 08, 2020

Positive Writing II

This is the second in a series of columns on how to write positively. Negatives are out.

Last week's homework: Record and transcribe the words of US Senate Minority Leader **Chuck Schumer**, Fox News' *The Five* star **Juan Williams** and CNN's **Jim Acosta**. Do the same with the Bronx' Congresswoman **AOC** and ABC's *The View* icon **Joy Behar**. Oh, yes ... we can't forget **Donald J Trump**!

I closed last week's column with this: Each of these folks has a reputation as a nay-saying trouble-maker whose positives are often hiding in plain sight, just beyond hearing range! When attempting to translate what you perceive as nasty remarks into positive statements, you might find their words inspiring, uplifting and even thought-provoking. You won't know until you finish your homework!

So, I'm probably stretching it to assume that everybody did this exercise.

But ... here's what I found:

Chuck Schumer - This is a politician who polished his craft at the feet of Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid of Searchlight, NV. Harry was a very effective leader who was also viewed by many as the epitome of evil. He's the guy who floated the story that Mitt Romney had failed to pay his taxes for years. After Romney dropped out of the Presidential race, Reid was asked if the story was true, to which he responded, "No, but it worked didn't it?"

Thayer's Wild Bunch VIII

Schumer's language is always composed of positive statements much like Reid's. During a post-State-of-the-Union speech from the Senate Floor, Schumer said, "Instead of offering substantive ideas and spending some time on these issues, [President Trump] delivered a couple of lines about each and then moved on." A questionable take on the President's SOTUM composed of positive language. It's a great skill.

Juan Williams - Juan comes across as a whiner. But he almost always speaks in positive terms. Quoting MORE's 2020 campaign strategy in **The Hill**, Williams wrote, "The former 'wartime president' now wants you to forget his stumbles on the battlefield of the coronavirus pandemic." Nothing wrong with that, but it could be revised somewhat. How about, "The 'wartime president' wants you to forget his positions on Covid-19."

In another, Juan wrote, "Trump predicts virus death toll could reach 100,000 in the US." About as negative a statement as one could write, but absolutely the truth! As you can see, however, the sentence is constructed to put the worst light on the President.

Jim Acosta - I couldn't find one negative sentence from Acosta! The guy makes it a point to be a burr under Trump's saddle, but everything he says - every statement - is positive.

This exchange happened between Acosta and Trump according to an April 3rd **Washington Examiner** article: "'And where is Dr. Fauci?' Acosta asked the president near the beginning of the Friday press conference.

"I don't know. But every time you ask that question whenever he is not here, and you say, 'Where is he. Is there a problem?' No problem whatsoever," Trump said. "Sometimes, I'll ask him to come because that's the first question you and a couple of others from fake news establishment ask."

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"Fauci has attended some but not all of the president's daily press briefings."

AOC - It was not Greta Thunberg, but Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez who, quoted by **thehuli.com** in March of last year, stated that, "The world is going to end in 12 years if we don't address climate change." Negative connotations, but affirmatively stated! I'm less than fond of "don't" ... but, it'll have to do.

Now, consider this from **The Guardian** a little over a year ago: "So older, conservative white men are considered 'everyone' and everyone else is discounted as an exception. Cool." Very negative politically, but very forcefully presented.

Joy Behar - A May, 2019 quote from **Deadline**: "Behar was discussing how Trump was courting black voters with an attack on Biden's support for the 1994 crime bill. 'Black people know about Charlottesville,' Behar said. 'And they know about [Trump] saying these are [censored] countries.'" That's close to as nasty as it gets, but stated positively.

Quotes.net contributed these Behar gems: "I just think that [Hillary] could be a useful idiot the way that Trump is a useful idiot to the Russians." and "It's one thing to talk to Jesus, it's another thing when Jesus talks to you." and "[Trump] can't even go to the bathroom without a golf cart." Like I said ... each of Behar's negative quotes is presented positively --- sorta like Chuck Schumer!

Trump - This one's a dilly! There is so much negative baggage around the President that it's difficult to cull the good stuff from the bad. **CNN** reports that Trump stated flatly after a meeting with Vladimir Putin, "There was no collusion. Everybody knows there was no collusion." Very negative subject in retrospect, but positively stated.

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Considering criticism leveled at him about his treatment of and language toward women, **Marie Claire** tells us that Trump has been very straightforward about The Fair Sex, "I have tremendous respect for women."

Trump can also be wishy-washy. **NBC** reported that the President wasn't exactly clear on whether he would declare a national emergency because of the pending government shut-down. "I probably will do it," he said, "maybe definitely." Positive - negative - meh ...

I have so much fun trying to figure out what the politicians and pundits are really trying to say. It's sad that most just want to rant about the President. It's too bad that these days, there has always got to be a goat ...

OK. So, let's see how many will follow this to the third and final lesson. Pick a subject - any subject - and write a story/report about it. It must be composed entirely of positive language, except you now know that positive language can be severely negative. Send it to me by email or post it on Facebook before this coming weekend. With that, I'll submit the third and final column on this subject.

Get in the habit. Wash your hands and face - after that leave your face alone. Keep your distance from others. Disinfect surfaces at least daily ... counter tops, tables, cabinet handles, bathroom fixtures, remote controls, door knobs and light switches. And, don't forget the car!

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Thursday, June 11, 2020

Privilege

I was listening to the **Rush Limbaugh** show a little over a week ago when I heard some astonishing words spoken by three highly acclaimed broadcasters better known as **The Breakfast Club**. They had been recommended as people who have earned the trust of their very loyal black audience in the morning.

Theirs is a syndicated 6-10 am radio show from New York carried nationwide on some 90 stations hosted by **Charlamagne Tha God, Angela Yee** and **D J Envy**. Limbaugh invited them to be on his show to talk about the way the black community has been reacting to the death of **George Floyd** at the hands of **Minneapolis Police**. Their appearance was pre-recorded Sunday, May 31st.

Fox News reported the following Monday, *"At one point after Limbaugh noted the success of The Breakfast Club, Charlamagne Tha God said America 'denies black people justice and just plain decency' but black people have been expected to act like they're 'happy to be here' because a few of them, like him, could be well-off.*

"When did I say that?" Limbaugh asked, to which the Breakfast Club pointed to the conservative icon's praise of Charlamagne. He attempted to finish his point when Limbaugh cut him off.

"Charlamagne, you're adding things to my mouth that I did not say," Limbaugh said. 'I was trying to be complimentary of you and I'm trying to illustrate that you are an example to others.'"

It was about halfway through the visit, when Limbaugh raised everybody's hackles by saying, "I don't buy into the notion of white privilege. That's a liberal political construct right along the

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lines of political correctness. It's designed to intimidate and get people to shut up and admit that they're guilty of doing things they haven't done. I don't have any white privilege"

Charlamagne asked, "Do you know what white privilege is? White privilege is that, that ... what happened to George Floyd would not have happened to a white man."

Limbaugh countered with, "If what had happened to George Floyd had happened to a white man, we probably wouldn't have even heard about it ... Now, how do we end racism? What can we do to end this so that you are not frustrated and angry and feeling like whatever you feel like. I don't like the fact that you're angry all the time ... So, what can we do to stop the racism?"

Charlamagne answered, "As long as there's a system of white supremacy there will always be these type of situations. It doesn't matter who is in the White House if that person is not willing to dismantle the mechanism of white supremacy. If that person is not willing to change legislation that disproportionately impacts black folks, it doesn't matter."

He went on, "We've gotta stop acting like white supremacy isn't done by design. The whole function of disintegration is to marginalize black people and it's very hard to get any damned-near 80-year-old white man to change the system that's been working for him and his family for years. Once again, we need people who are willing to dismantle the mechanism of white supremacy."

This may take some aback, but I believe there is both black *and* white privilege.

Black folks have a different way of looking at things for a number of reasons, not the least of which is anger and frustration. They take advantage of situations that involve social customs and

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their communities. This means of calling attention to their problems, I'm inclined to call black privilege. Unfortunately, too often, black folks are inclined to throw up their hands in despair and just walk away. You cannot believe what that pent-up frustration can do to a person, no matter their color!

White privilege, on the other hand, is the black's mirror image. White folks tend to press issues only when they're affected directly. They're not afraid to confront some big-wig that can make a difference in the situation. And they'll press the issue, if it's serious enough, until there's a solution. But, like black folks, some will throw their hands up in disgust and just walk away.

The point is, when you get right down in the trenches, we all have our privileges. It's just a matter of how we approach them. The sticky wicket here, however, is this: What exactly is the "mechanism of white supremacy?" Until the likes of Charlamagne Tha God, Angela Yee and D J Envy can explain it in less than esoteric terms, "As long as there's a system of white supremacy there will always be these type of situations."

Don't drop your guard. Wash your hands and face. Don't touch your face afterwards. Don't touch others' hands and/or faces. Disinfect surfaces at least daily ... counter tops, tables, remotes, 'phones, cabinet handles, door knobs and light switches. And the car!

Stay healthy.

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Monday, June 15, 2020

Positive Writing III

"Nothing in all the world is more dangerous than sincere ignorance and conscientious stupidity."

Martin Luther King Jr., *Strength to Love*.

Your homework was to pick a subject - any subject - and write a story/report about it. It must be composed entirely of positive language, except you know now that positive language can be severely negative. You were encouraged to email it to me at ted@tedthayer.com.

Again, I did my homework.

Dumbfounded. That's the word that best describes my feelings about the *sincere ignorance and conscientious stupidity* surrounding us since the death of George Floyd. MLK was right.

How did we get from some cop killing a guy who was apparently high on Meth - and most probably out of control - to thugs killing both innocent bystanders and first-responders, burning Police cars, trashing businesses, looting them and even torching the local Police Precinct. How did the idea of "defunding the police" get put on the table? Defunding or cutting budgets is under serious consideration by City Councils all over America!

Reducing or eliminating law enforcement presence is a certain path to anarchy in the streets. If the cops are unable to keep up with the bad guys, people will have to provide for their own protection and safety. Eventually, chaos will rear its ugly head and the well-to-do will hire their own "police" for protection.

The less affluent will have to fend for themselves or find a way to throw in with the wealthy. This is how serfdoms operated in

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medieval times. The wealthy will cow-tow to the government for favors, the poor will bow down to them, and all will be well with the world.

Oh, wait! There's more! There will be free stuff for the serfs, provided by the government and distributed by the wealthy ... food, clothing, housing, education, jobs, transportation, entertainment. Extravagant taxes will be paid by the serfs to the wealthy, who in turn will deliver most of the spoils to the government to pay for all the free stuff.

Throughout history, though, despots and dictators have eventually been discarded as governments collapsed from the incredible pressure generated by *sincere ignorance and conscientious stupidity*.

Get in the habit, folks! Wash your hands and face - after that, leave your face alone. Keep your distance from others. Disinfect surfaces at least daily ... counter tops, tables, cabinet handles, bathroom fixtures, remote controls, door knobs and light switches. And, get after the car! It's common-sense personal hygiene.

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Thursday, June 18, 2020

What is The Problem?

Former Arizona Congressman **Rick Renzi** wrote the following on **Facebook** a little over a week ago: "14 days of violent protest...19 dead...billions of dollars in destruction...change must happen so lets get about fixing the problem."

I replied, "Rick, you seem like a head-on-his-shoulders kinda guy ... what exactly is the problem? Be specific, please."

Some years ago, a good friend noted that, generally speaking, the problem contains the solution. An astute observation ... at least when it involves mathematics. Solving an equation is accomplished by simply restating and simplifying the answer until there is no further resolution.

So, if mathematics offers solutions to problems, why can't we apply the same principles to real-life problems? Why not solve by simplifying in steps?

Actually, the best solutions are found by getting to the "root of the problem." This technique is used in **Quality Circles**, **Whatever It Takes**, **Continuous Measureable Improvement** and other ***Kaisen***-based improvement techniques.

According to an article in **qz.com** by **Melody Wilding**:

"In the years following World War II, American auto executives visited Toyota manufacturing plants in Japan to examine how the company was able to produce so many vehicles so quickly. They discovered a humanizing philosophy driving the manufacturer's innovation, one that intrinsically motivated workers to change process, procedures, and themselves for the better.

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"Instead of punishing employees for errors, Toyota encouraged workers to stop production at any time to fix a problem or provide suggestions to management about how to reduce waste and improve efficiency. As a result, Toyota's factories experienced fewer costly errors and benefitted from consistent improvement. This philosophy, Kaizen, is one that the American executives took home and has since revolutionized multiple industries, from healthcare to software development.

"Put simply, the Kaizen approach is based on the belief that continuous, incremental improvement adds up to substantial change over time. When teams or groups implement Kaizen, they circumvent the upheaval, unrest, and mistakes that often go hand-in-hand with major innovation. It's fitting that the Japanese word *kaizen* translates to 'good change.'"

So, the question appears: Can America solve "The Problem" using organized demonstrations, riots, murder, burning, looting, extreme pressure on public officials and verbal clashes in the political arena ... or can liberal application of Kaizen provide the solution?

Rick hasn't answered, so far.

Don't slack off, people! Wash your hands and face. Then, don't touch your face. Don't touch others'. Disinfect surfaces daily ... counter tops, tables, cabinet handles, door knobs and light switches. And the surfaces in the car!

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Monday, June 22, 2020

Masks in Public

This was posted on Facebook on Thursday, June 18th by Globe AZ Mayor Al Gameros:

"To the residents of Globe. Yesterday Governor Ducey held a press conference and recommended that everyone wear a mask in public, but did not mandate it. Arizona is the nation's hot spot with rising cases and deaths since lifting the "Stay At Home Order" in May. Many Arizona Mayors have been asking the Governor to change the game plan since it is not working. We want to address it aggressively so we can avoid another shutdown.

"The Governor's new Executive Order gives the Mayors in communities across Arizona the authority to pass a proclamation to mandate wearing masks in public.

*"I want to inform you that I will be joining the coalition of Mayors signing a proclamation that will **mandate wearing a face mask in public when social distancing cannot not be accomplished.** [Emphasis added.] Our City Attorney is currently working on the details that includes enforcement. We anticipate this order to go into effect by midnight Sunday [June 21]. The main goal is to slow the spread and start bringing the curve down for the health and well being of our residents. The spread and numbers in our community are rising rapidly. Thank you for your continued support and cooperation as we all work together to get this pandemic in our state under control.*

"Please share post with your Facebook friends so everyone is informed.

"Mayor Gameros."

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Get in the habit. Wash your hands and face - then leave your face alone. Keep your distance from others - six to ten feet. Wear a mask if you can't keep your distance. Disinfect the surfaces you touch ... at least daily. And, for heaven's sake - don't forget the car! Stay safe.

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Thursday, June 25, 2020
US White Supremacy
J E Ted Thayer | 06-25-2020

Considering all the racial hoopla over the last month or so, perhaps we can get this thing into some perspective. I posted a simile of the following on **Facebook** June 11th:

According to **The US Census**, The **United States** is composed of the following races or origins by percent: Whites alone 76.5%, Hispanic or Latino 18.3%, Black or African-American 13.4%, Asian 5.9%, Two or more races 2.7%, American Indian and Alaska Native alone 1.3%, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander alone .02%.

Put another way, less than one quarter of America's population is composed of minorities while over three-quarters of the population is white.

The Census gives two numbers for whites in the population. First is White alone at 76.5% and the other is White alone, not Hispanic or Latino at 60.4%. Many Hispanics and a percentage of Latinos are White, and can thus be included in the White population making up the 76.5%.

What is wrong, in my opinion, are the fatuous claims by organized protesters and thugs - for some reason, made up of mostly young whites - that somehow they represent the majority of minorities. If that is a false assumption, where are all the Hispanics and Latinos? They constitute a plurality (43%) of the US minorities!

For the sake of discussion - two words are used interchangeably in these dark days of American name-calling. Their interchangeability comes of ignorance, which seems to be at the root of all social and political difficulties these days.

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Racist: a person who shows or feels discrimination or prejudice against people of other races, or who believes that a particular race is superior to another.

Bigot: a person who is intolerant toward those holding different opinions.

In truth, there really *are* white supremacists, believing that white people dominate the US population, if you will, and there's nothing wrong or inherently bad about that - it's not the status quo; it's the way it is. It's a fact - three-quarters of the US population *is* white.

The unfortunate part of this controversy is that a tiny fraction of "white supremacists," as well as their ultra-liberal counterparts, have used criminality, intimidation, violence and murder in activities that seek to justify (or rebuke) the racist political position that whites are somehow better than minorities.

Thanks to **The New York Times**, **The Washington and Huffington Posts**; **Buzzfeed** and **Slate** newspapers; the likes of **TIME**, **Newsweek**, **Vox** and **Mother Jones** magazines; **CNN**, **MSNBC**, **NBC** and **CBS-TV**, racism and bigotry on both sides of the coin are alive and well in the most populous parts of our beloved America.

Racism has colored parts of our history, at least since the Civil War - not 1619 as the NYT would have you believe. But, it may be somewhat comforting to understand that Americans of all colors and stripes celebrated June 19, 1865, *Emancipation Day*, last Friday, *Juneteenth*.

The fact is that, aside from the violence posed by the naysayers, white people (whether 60.4% or 76.5% of the population) are simply not going away. Furthermore, a huge majority of

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people composed of a rainbow of colors from all over this great land are rightfully proud of their unique American privilege.

Just tryin' to get things into perspective here, folks.

Get in the habit. Wash your hands and face - then leave your face alone. Keep your distance from others - six to ten feet. Wear a mask if you can't keep your distance. Disinfect the surfaces you touch ... at least daily. And, for heaven's sake - don't forget the car!

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Monday, June 29, 2020

Prevent Sickness

The crux of the following column was posted on **Facebook** June 14th:

I fear that the media and liberal skullduggery have been using the **Covid19** virus as a tool to vie for watchers, readers, followers.

Look at what has happened in less than six months: **WHO** declares Pandemic; **CDC** recommends social distancing, masks, hand-washing; "shelter" at home, lock-downs ordered by governors, mayors; economy shuts down; stock market in daily turmoil; riots, looting, burning, murders, and now ... the uptick.

Covid19 will do what it will do and those of us who may be more at risk than others for serious, if not fatal, complications have to take precautions.

However, contrary to what the mainstream media will have you believe, taken in proper perspective, there is a far greater danger posed by the **Flu** - as much as four orders of magnitude (1,399 times) more - than **Covid19**.

According to **Johns Hopkins Medicine**, the disease is caused by one virus, the **novel 2019 coronavirus**, ... severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2, or **SARS-CoV-2**.

Approximately **9,926,828** SARS-CoV-2 cases have been confirmed worldwide and there have been **2,569,574** cases in the U.S. as of June 27, 2020.

By the same token, the World Health Organization estimates that **One Billion** people get the Flu **every year**. In the United States,

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for Oct. 1, 2019 through Apr. 4, 2020, the CDC estimates that there were between **39,000,000** and **56,000,000** cases of Flu.

What explains the meteoric rise in Covid19 cases in the south and southwest? Some say (as **President Trump** did a week ago) that the massive increase in test-kit availability and subsequent testing roughly parallel the increase in positive Covid cases. Another source, **Dr. Saskia Popescu**, contends that the "opening" of Arizona and other states over the Memorial Day weekend is responsible for the outbreak because the rise in positive cases came almost exactly two weeks later!

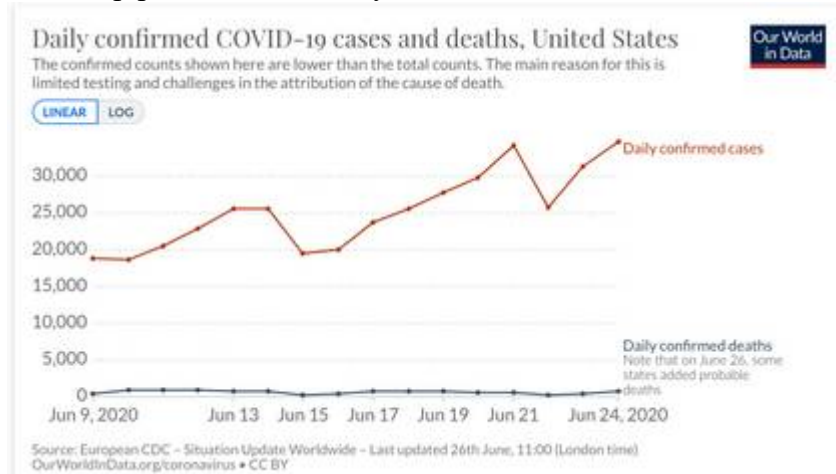
This is what Popescu, writing in **ContagionLive.com**, has to say about that: *"Like clockwork, cases began to quickly rise roughly 2 weeks after Arizona reopened. May 26 saw 808 cases, and then an increasing growth to the new daily high of more than 3200. Intensive care unit capacity is taking a hit too, as 85% of beds in the state are occupied. Another 83% of inpatient, non-ICU, beds are currently in use. Images of packed bars and restaurants without mask[ed] occupants were seen across the nation as Arizonans celebrated Memorial Day in a reopened state."*

So, who is right? The President or Dr. Popescu? I think it's a little of both. Massively increased testing is naturally going to uncover new cases as well as previously undiscovered cases of the disease. But, a massive shoulder-to-shoulder three-day holiday binge without protection is going to result in two things: A lot more Covid19 cases and a lot more babies come next March!

The increase in Covid19 cases has been a wake-up call for much of Arizona. Maricopa County accounts for over 37,000 coronavirus cases. The Navajo and Hopi Reservations in Apache, Coconino and Navajo Counties account for another 7,200 cases. Tucson's home, Pima County, has 6,500 cases and Yuma County has over 5100. In total, Arizona has detected Covid19 virus

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in over 619,000 individuals. Of all patients tested, 8.9% have turned up positive. Nationally, that rate is 7.1%.



Just as we live with wasps and bees, so do we also live with other bugs like fire ants and the seven - yes, seven! - corona viruses, which some experts contend include the common cold. For the most part, paying due respect to the bugs we live with helps keep us healthy.

The truth is that the best practices to stay healthy involve **common-sense hygiene** every day, **moderate exercise** - preferably outdoors, and modest **immune system boosts** with vitamins **A, B1, B12, C, Folic Acid and Zinc**. (Ask your doctor for best dosages.)

Don't drop your guard. Wash your hands and face. Don't touch your face afterwards. Don't touch others' and keep your distance, masking if you can't. Disinfect surfaces at least daily ... and do the car! Stay healthy.

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Thursday, July 2, 2020

Think you've Got It Bad?

There is no shortage of disease in the world today ... and throughout history.

The infection that caused the **Cocoliztli** epidemic in the *mid-1500s* was a form of viral hemorrhagic fever that killed **15 million** inhabitants of Mexico and Central America. Among a population already weakened by extreme drought, the disease proved to be utterly catastrophic. "Cocoliztli" is the Aztec word for "pest."

In the modern industrial age, new transport links made it easier for **influenza** viruses to wreak havoc. In just a few months during *1899-90*, the disease spanned the globe, killing **1 million** people. It took just five weeks for the epidemic to reach peak mortality.

From *1918-1920*, an estimated 500 million people from the South Seas to the North Pole fell victim to **Spanish Flu**. One-fifth, **100 million**, of those died, with some indigenous communities pushed to the brink of extinction. The flu's spread and lethality was enhanced by cramped conditions of soldiers and poor wartime nutrition that many people were experiencing during World War I.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention notes that the **Asian Flu** spread rapidly and was reported in Singapore in February *1957*, Hong Kong in April 1957, and the coastal cities of the United States in the summer of 1957. The total death toll was more than **1.1 million** worldwide, with 116,000 deaths occurring in the United States.

Worldwide, there are an estimated **24.1 million cases** of **pertussis** (Whooping Cough) and about **160,700 deaths** per year,

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according to a recent publication modeling these data. In **2012**, the most recent peak year, CDC reported 48,277 cases of pertussis in the United States, even though DPT (Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus) shots are routine for children under seven, beginning school in the US.

AIDS has claimed an estimated **35 million** lives since it was first identified. **HIV**, which is the virus that causes AIDS, likely developed from a chimpanzee virus that transferred to humans in West Africa in the **1920s**. The virus made its way around the world, and AIDS was a pandemic by the **late 20th century**. Medication developed in the 1990s now allows people with the disease to experience a normal life span with regular treatment.

The **2009** swine flu pandemic was caused by a new strain of **H1N1** that originated in Mexico in the spring of 2009 before spreading to the rest of the world. In one year, the virus infected as many as 1.4 billion people across the globe and killed between **151,700** and **575,400** people, according to the CDC.

Worldwide more than **140,000 people** died from **measles** in **2018**, according to new estimates from the World Health Organization and the United States Centers for Diseases Control and Prevention. These deaths occurred as measles cases surged globally, amidst devastating outbreaks in all regions. Most deaths were among children under 5 years of age.

As we reported on Monday, the World Health Organization estimates that 1 billion people worldwide get the **Flu** every year. In the U.S., for **Oct. 1, 2019 – Apr. 4, 2020**, the CDC estimates that there were **39,000,000** to **56,000,000** cases of flu. Estimates are that some **24,000 - 62,000** Americans died of the Flu.

On a less somber subject ... The world's population is something like 7 Billion. **This week**, worldwide deaths from Covid19 passed the **10 Million** mark - a death rate of .0014 - just over one tenth

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of one percent! Do the math. It means that **6 Billion 900 Million** people did ***not*** die from the virus.

So, if you think we've got it tough right now, think of the millions upon millions who have lost their lives to transmittable diseases over the years. Don't ease up! Wash your hands and face. Then, don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands or faces. Keep your distance from others or wear a mask. Disinfect common surfaces daily. And don't neglect the surfaces in the car! Stay well.

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Monday, July 6, 2020

The Bad Guys

For going on over five years now, my eyes and ears have been hurting from the language used to describe our country's leaders - by our country's leaders. It appears that other people have about had it also. Today, I've put together a compendium of articles from other publications that document (with sources) the political craziness that Americans are expected to believe.

*** Take **FoxNews.com** | June 27, 2020:

*The "**Hannity**" town hall featuring President Trump was the most-watched hour of television across both broadcast and cable networks.*

*The sitdown between the president and **Fox News** host Sean Hannity drew a whopping 5.1 million viewers on Thursday night, which beat **MSNBC** and **CNN** combined during that same 9 p.m. time slot according to final Nielsen data. MSNBC's "**The Rachel Maddow Show**" drew just 3.1 million viewers while and CNN's "**Cuomo Prime Time**" drew a measly 1.8 million viewers.*

*"Hannity" also dominated among the key demographic of adults age 25-54 with 968,000 viewers while CNN's **Chris Cuomo** edged out MSNBC's Rachel Maddow with 490,000 and 484,000 viewers respectively.*

*The town hall event ... drew more viewers than the entire primetime lineups on **ABC**, **CBS** and **NBC**.*

CNN's "Cuomo Prime Time," which is the network's most-watched program, came [in] dead last on Wednesday's 9 p.m. time slot with just over 2 million viewers tuning in to the latest

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*interview between high-profile brothers Chris Cuomo and New York Gov. **Andrew Cuomo**.*

*According to **Nielsen Media Research** "Fox News Channel finish[ed] as the most-watched network in all of television during primetime for the week of June 15-21, as President Trump's rally with record-setting viewership helped the network surpass primetime averages of even CBS, NBC and ABC."*

******* Then there's the **Washington Examiner** | June 28, 2020:

*When he was running the U.S. Senate in 2012, **Harry Reid** asserted ... that Republican nominee **Mitt Romney** was a tax cheat. 'So, the word is out that he has not paid any taxes for 10 years. Let him prove that he has paid taxes, because he hasn't.' ... his comment didn't bear any relation to reality. Romney paid millions of dollars in taxes each year and gave a significant amount to charity. Asked years later if he had any regrets about the dastardly attack, Reid replied, 'Romney didn't win, did he?'*

In a new book, Reid has now declared there's "no question" that Russian hackers tampered with vote totals in 2016. "I think one reason the elections weren't what they should have been was because the Russians manipulated the votes. It's that simple," Reid [asserts], "It doesn't take a math expert to understand that by changing a few votes, the outcome will be different. So, I have no doubt."

Of course, we know how that story ends ... the idea that Russian hackers were actually able to tap into voting systems to change vote counts is pure tinfoil hat territory ... there was no suggestion that actual vote totals were tampered with.

... a report by the Select Committee on Intelligence ...made clear that "the Committee has seen no evidence that any votes were changed or that any voting machines were manipulated."

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... there's no actual evidence to support Reid's assertion that Russia actually was able to tamper with vote totals in U.S. elections.

Reid's latest fabrication is just sleaze accepted by the Left. What's amazing is that decades ago the US Supreme Court found that outright lies are legal when claimed by politicians running for office. And it affirmed that stance in 2019. Do Reid's claims fall outside that ruling? Is he running for re-election? Meh.

*** Arizona is doubling its **Covid19** testing. Will this significantly increase the number of cases coming in "positive" for the disease? Was President Trump correct in his assumption a week ago that the increases in active cases was proportional to the increase in testing across the south and southwest?

When **Dr. Saskia Popescu** wrote in **ContagionLive.com** that the "opening of Arizona and other states over the Memorial Day weekend was responsible for the outbreak because the rise in positive cases came almost exactly two weeks later," the **MSM** was all over it, led by MSNBC, CNN and the New York Times! The object, of course, was to discredit the President's assessment.

I'm betting that increases in positive cases, at least in Arizona, will turn out to be in direct proportion to the number of new tests administered. Test positives nationwide have been about 7.1% of those taken. Last week Arizona came in at some 8.9%, which correlates well with Popescu's assessment, while at the same time supporting the President's claim. At least the MSM refrained from name-calling over the issue!

*** Another page from the **Washington Examiner** | June 30, 2020:

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*On Tuesday, New York City Mayor **Bill de Blasio** and the City Council reached a tentative deal to cut \$1 billion from the **New York Police Department**, “though nearly half will be through shifting school safety from the police to the Department of Education,” according to **Gotham Gazette** senior reporter **Samar Khurshid**.*

*Democratic Rep. **Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez**, who represents New York’s 15th District, did not take the news well.*

“Defunding police means defunding police,” she said in a statement. “It does not mean budget tricks or funny math. It does not mean moving school police officers from the NYPD budget to the Department of Education’s budget so that the exact same police remain in schools.”

It continues, “It does not mean counting overtime cuts as cuts, even as NYPD ignores every attempt by City Council to curb overtime spending and overspends on overtime anyways. It does not mean hiring more police officers while cutting more than \$800M from NYC schools. If these reports are accurate, then these proposed ‘cuts’ to NYPD’s budget are a disingenuous illusion. This is not a victory. The fight to defund policing continues.”

***** This stunning report comes from the JeffreyLord Staff | July 3, 2020:**

*Inconsistencies continue to come from the **World Health Organization** and **China**. The WHO has repeatedly come to the defense of China, prompting President **Trump** to relinquish funding. Shocking new evidence shows that China never reported the existence of the coronavirus directly to WHO. Both Chinese officials and the WHO have previously claimed China did in fact report the spread of the virus. In actuality, “international health*

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officials discovered the virus through information posted to a U.S. website" reports the *Washington Free Beacon* [WFB].

WHO director-general **Tedros Adhanom** for months said China informed them about the virus, and it was confirmed on a WHO timeline tracking the virus. China also insisted in multiple interviews and media releases that they went directly to WHO with information about the virus at a responsible length of time.

The "WHO's backtracking lends credibility to a recent congressional investigation that determined China concealed information about the virus and did not initially inform the WHO, as it was required to do" writes the [WFB]. The WHO posted an updated timeline this week which confirms officials learned about the virus on December 31, 2019, with information posted on a United States website by doctors who first experienced the virus working in **Wuhan**. Originally WHO's timeline stated China alerted them on the same day. Actually, according to Wikipedia, "The first confirmed case has been traced back to 17 November 2019 in Hubei." [*South China Morning Post*]

According to the WHO's initial timeline, the "Wuhan Municipal Health Commission, China, reported a cluster of cases of pneumonia in Wuhan, **Hubei Province**" on Dec. 31. The WHO's backtracking "lends credibility to a recent congressional investigation that determined China concealed information about the virus and did not initially inform the WHO, as it was required to do" writes the [WFB].

Texas Republican Representative **Michael McCaul** of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and a member of Congress's China Task Force, "was one of the first lawmakers to expose China's lies about reporting the virus. An interim congressional report on the virus's origins published last month first disclosed the fact that the WHO found out about the virus from online postings, not China" according to the [WFB].

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*In a statement, McCaul told the Washington Free Beacon, "I'm glad to see the WHO and the **Chinese Communist Party** [CCP] have both read my interim report on the origins of the pandemic and are finally admitting to the world the truth – the CCP never reported the virus outbreak to the WHO in violation of WHO regulation." McCaul added, "the question now is whether the CCP will continue their false propaganda campaign that continues to claim they warned the world, or whether they will come clean and begin to work with the world health community to get to the bottom of this deadly pandemic."*

Who are the Bad Guys? Getting at the truth has become a hugely fearsome task. The MSM appears to have dropped all semblance of balanced Journalism in favor of openly left-leaning agendas and single-sourced, uncorroborated reports. Politicians on both the left and right are openly hostile to one-another and throw insults around like cans of soda pop to satiate the MSM's thirst for yellow journalism.

Acceptance of violence, mayhem and murder as core values of progressive organizations funding the **BLM**, **Antifa** and **Occupy** movements is the MSM's reason to openly support "peaceful" demonstrations that deface, damage or destroy private and public property. Worse is the acceptance of demands from activist agitators by State, County and municipal leaders. That creates great press for the progressive movement and its agenda - which appears to embrace Communism, Socialism, Marxism, redistribution of wealth and an oppressive government, as well as unbridled disdain for Capitalism.

The problem is not so much the work of the MSM and its now openly-declared support of the far left's liberal agenda, but rather the divisiveness and hatred it gins up in many of its readers and watchers. I suspect that most Americans have about had it, and their reaction will be evident in ballot boxes all over the country during the remainder of this election cycle.

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Meanwhile, get in the habit. Wash your hands and face - then leave your face alone. Keep your distance from others - six to ten feet. Wear a mask if you can't keep your distance. Disinfect the surfaces you touch ... at least daily. And, for heaven's sake - don't forget the car! Stay safe. Be well.

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Thursday, July 9, 2020

Some Perspective

First, troops, the GoDaddy Email service has been giving me problems, so we're gonna fix it right now. I won't be sending you an email in the future unless it's a communication only for you. I'll be publishing the twice weekly column on my website and on my Facebook page. You can visit either one with one of the links at the bottom of the page. Check it out Mondays and Thursdays about 8:00am. Thanks! Now for today's thing:

Robert Bob Lee submitted a Meme on Facebook the other day that prompted me to go looking through the available statistics on Covid-19 in relation to other deaths across Arizona. It was an eye-opener!

Robert posted:

7.279 million. The population of AZ.

100,000 confirmed cases of some form of Covid-19.

Do the math.

Ted Thayer

[As of 07-06-2020] 1,411.1 [Covid-19] cases per 100,000. 25.18 deaths per 100,000. That works out to, by population, 1,833 deaths or 0.00025% of the population - just under three-hundredths of one percent! Do the math! $7,279,000 \times 0.00025 = 1,819.75$. [Round up to 1,833.]

Robert Bob Lee

Yup

Ted Thayer

Heart Disease and Cancer, alone, claimed some 24,507 Arizona lives in 2018 (According to the latest readily-available statistics

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from American Heart Association's 2020 report.) That's one-third of one percent of Arizonans.

Robert Bob Lee

Ya'd think there'd be more jumpin' up and down about strokes today, what with Charlie Daniels' death from a stroke. But nooooo...media stuck on China bug. [And Arizona.]

It doesn't stop there. I did the math for the United States. There are, as of July 2020, some 331,002,651 people in the US. The latest report July 8th, lists 131,480 Covid-19 fatalities nationwide. When you do the math it comes out actually MORE people have died across the USA as a percentage than in Arizona. The MSM reports that Arizona is the worst in the world! Go figure.

The real numbers work out to four one-hundredths of one percent (.000397%) of the US population compared to .000252% of Arizona's population.

Hopefully, that brings things into some perspective. =

Don't give up, troops! Wash your hands and face. Then, don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands or faces. Keep your distance (6 - 10 feet) or wear a mask. Disinfect common surfaces daily. And don't neglect the car! Above all, keep your sense of humor - things aren't really as bad as they seem. Stay well.

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Monday, July 13, 2020

You Must Fail

What is it that has made the United States of America the greatest country in the history of the world? Failure!

It's safe to say that most experiments fall flat until there are satisfactory resolutions to the causes of those failures. The Great American Experiment has always been an adventure in failure. Think of it! The greatest failures of all time have advanced the cause of freedom.

If the British had not failed to contain the American Colonial Militia, there would have been no July 4th, 1776. If Hitler had not failed to take Russia as well as defend his homeland, there would have been no VE-day. If Japan had crushed the United States' Pacific Fleet there would have been no base in the Philippines from which the Enola Gay could take off to bomb Hiroshima. If Martin Luther King, Jr. had not been assassinated, it may never have been so widely recognized that he was "the first person in the Western world to have shown us that a struggle can be waged without violence."

Think of it! We have rioting, looting, burning, assault and murder in the streets of America's major cities today with no end in sight. Federal, State and Local governments are caving into threats from violent activist minority groups - and in the process infringing on the "inalienable" rights of all Americans. Great swaths of the United States' political establishment have taken over the ways and means of health maintenance and disease control once reserved for the medical establishment.

It may take a while, but these anomalies will be recognized as failures and we will learn and benefit from them. Just remember, continuous improvement doesn't happen without

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failure. That's how every little kid learns not to touch the hot stove! It's basic evolution. To grow, you must fail!

It may not look that way today, but be assured our future is bright!

Hang in there, troops! Wash your hands and face. Then, don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands or faces. Keep your distance (6 - 10 feet) or wear a mask. Disinfect common surfaces daily. And don't neglect the car! Remember, things aren't really as bad as they seem. Be well.

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

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Thursday, July 16, 2020

Tasty

This from a Thayer book in progress titled *¿Quien Sabe?*

Did you ever stop to think what turns your taste-buds absolutely in-side-out? Is it that first remembrance of **Pablum** when you were an itty-bitty? How about a tug straight out of the bottle of **Jack Daniels**? Ok, then. To phrase it differently ...

How could you go for a bowl of **Kellogg's Corn Flakes** swimming in **half-and-half** topped with a big glop of **fresh strawberries** and not one, but two, tablespoons of sugar?

Maybe it's a **Ritz** cracker topped with a **Sardine** fresh out of one of those little blue and white tins. Not so much? How 'bout **Smoked Oysters**? On a Ritz - or straight with a tooth-pick.

Alright, let's get serious here! **Shrimp, clams, mussels** and **raw oysters** with a spicy **seafood cocktail** sauce and a dip made with **red wine vinegar**, salt, pepper and **olive oil**! Throw in a **tossed salad** topped with **croutons**, **red onion** slices and **Italian dressing** - and big slices of **San Francisco sourdough** garlic bread - not to mention a big glass of **Dago Red**!

Not tasty enough, you say? **Red Blanchard**, a west-coast radio personality of the fifties, pitched the **Zorch Cow** made with **Belfast Old-fashioned Mug Root Beer** and a whopping scoop of vanilla ice cream stirred into a tall glass. That's your classic Root Beer Float. Oh, boy!

Is there anything wrong with two pieces of bread, buttered on both sides, toasted, with a slice of **Velveeta** cheese melted inside?

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For that matter, how 'bout **mac and cheese** made with America's favorite?

Could you go for a big ol' glop of **fruit cocktail** with a double super-humongous-spoon-full of **cottage-cheese** on top, served with a '**mater sammich** made with real **mayo** and a sprinkle of **garlic salt**?

Then there's that **T-bone** steak, sizzling in its medium-rare perfection just off the barbecue. In the preparation, just the tiniest dusting of **garlic salt** always brings out that caveman flavor! So, if barbecue isn't your style, how about a big juicy slice of **Prime Rib** with a dollop of creamy **Horseradish** sauce on the side. Oh, mama!

Did you ever eat a **lemon**? With no sweetener? How 'bout a **Grapefruit**?

Food isn't the only challenge to the taste-buds. How about wet stuff?

Did ya ever just sip a shot of **Jose Quervo** - *straight* - with no lime or salt? Does **Sun Tea** over ice sweetened with a little sugar do something for you? Could ya do with a cool **Mint Julep** while sitting out there on the porch on a nice, warm summer afternoon? Can I get a big Amen for that one, brothers and sisters?

When it's dark, cold and foggy outside, have you ever tried **Coffee, Kahlua and a Twist**? Speaking of coffee ... while it takes a bit to get used to, there's nothing quite like a shot of **Espresso**. Have you ever experienced the delicate bubbly tingle of a tiny sip of **Extra Dry Andre Champagne**? Did you ever drink **Carnation condensed milk** straight out of the can? How 'bout **Eagle Brand**?

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There's hardly a sensation like sipping from a warm mug of **hot chocolate** cupped in your palms. Did you ever get a **strawberry milkshake** mustache? There's nothing quite like an almost-frozen, super-cold **Bud** on a hundred-degree summer afternoon! For that matter, what is there in the whole world even remotely as delectable as a sip of fresh **water from a babbling brook** high in the mountains?

Not to be too gross ... But, when you were laboring in the sun out in the yard, did you taste the **sweat** that dripped down your face onto to your lips? Ok. Did ya ever taste **dirt**? How 'bout **dog poop**? Do you remember how old you were when you ate your first **booger**? When you were very young, did you ever eat a **worm**? Most folks can't recall at what age they first sampled it, but do you remember what your **big toe** tasted like? Don't even get me started on **finger-nails**!

There is nothing quite like a long piece of **dry grass** gripped between your teeth, is there? **Twigs** are good, too. Even for a non-smoker, there's nothing like the taste of a **Rum-soaked Crook**. How many folks do you know brave enough to put just a pinch of **Copenhagen** between their cheek and gum?

Speaking of gum - a fresh new chunk of **Fleer Double-Bubble**, anyone? Fond memories go with **Black-Jack**, **Dentyne**, **Cloves**, **Beemans**, **Wrigley's Spearmint** and **Double-Mint**. Ever try a little **wax coke-bottle**? Hooray for pink and white **Good & Plenty**! Did you know that a **Big Hunk** kept in the fridge will crack into pieces instead of bending? And there's nothing in the world like a frozen **Snickers** bar. Oh, yeah!

The sensations created in the mouth range widely from **sweet** to **sour**, **salty** to **acidic**, **soft** to **hard**, **wet** to **dry**, **delightful** to **disgusting**!

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The sensitivity of our lips and tongues began at the breasts of our mothers, heightened during our pre-teen years with that first tentative, feathery touching of the lips - later the tongues, and matured when we discovered the sensuousness of kisses ever-so-gently placed on private places all around our partners' bodies. Why is sucking your partner's fingers so sexy? Who but star-crossed lovers can say for sure?

Taste is just one amazing segment of our human senses. It runs the gamut of sensual delights from breakfast to bed-time. Try to imagine ... where would we be without it?

Alrighty then, troops! Wash your hands and face. Then, don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands or faces. Keep your distance (6 - 10 feet) or wear a mask. Disinfect common surfaces daily. And be certain to take care of the car! It's OK - things aren't really as bad as they seem! Fer sure!

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Monday, July 20, 2020

Wax On - Wax Off

Just for fun, here's another one from the Thayer book titled *¿Quien Sabe?*

I woke with a start. It was three-fifteen in the morning. There was this noise in my right ear! It sounded like somebody was crumpling and scratching cellophane inside there.

Cellophane – you don't notice the stuff much anymore, except maybe as that clear wrapping that covers many gift baskets and flower assortments. Back in the day cigarette packs and cigars came wrapped in cellophane. It remains a popular meat packaging wrap, but it's been replaced mostly by plastic wrap.

I was a smoker for just shy of forty years. Quit on August 25th of 1996. You used to pull on a little plastic band around the top of a pack of cigarettes to zip open the cellophane protecting the product. Then, you carefully ripped open one side of the little envelope-like top to reveal five or six of the cigarettes inside. That packaging changed over time and was replaced on some brands by the flip-top box, making the opening of a pack of cigarettes easier.

At any rate ... I was wide-awake just after three o'clock in the morning with this sound like something scratching on cellophane inside my right ear. I knew in a flash what it was. I had a bug in my ear. Nothing anywhere close to as large as a Lady-bug or even a carpet beetle. It was something very much smaller than that. It somehow had become stuck in my ear wax and its tiny little beetle feet were clawing mightily on my ear drum in a gargantuan effort to escape.

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A couple of years ago, we had an infestation of tiny beetles that kept turning up in bread, cracker and cereal packages. After finding out what the little bugs were called, I researched how to get rid of them. Poison is out of the question, according to the local pest-control person, because they only infect food. They do, however, migrate hither and thither around the house in search of additional food sources.

The cure is the trash can, a cloth moistened with bleach-water, and a vacuum cleaner. All opened paper and cardboard packages have to be checked for the little creatures and thrown out, even if just one is detected. Then, the chore turns to finding better ways to adequately seal packaged materials made from flour. Folding and rolling paper packages like those used in cereal and some cracker boxes works very well if the packaging is secured using clothes-pins.

Flour needs to be kept in a container like a Ball or Mason jar or one made specifically for the purpose. Breads should have their own spot in a bread-box or the refrigerator. Once the storage areas are secure, every nook and cranny must be vacuumed and then wiped down with a bleach dampened cloth to get rid of any residual baby bugs or eggs. That's what the experts say about quelling an invasion of those itty-bitty beasts.

There will be some who are missed – probably hanging around like carpet beetles – and will only be visible to the naked eye on counter-tops and smooth bedding like sheets and pillow cases. I've found a little bug every now and then on my pillow. They don't run or even crawl fast, and they don't fly often, so they're easy to catch (and smoosh!)

The ones in my house were called Red Flour Beetles and they come about as big as a ten-point apostrophe, one that you might find in an email. (If you look in the upper right corner of your computer Window, the little dash in the Minimize box is a

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little larger than a Red Flour Beetle.) This dash in this sentence (-) is a tiny bit larger than one of them.

Not having found a beetle on my pillow in some time, I knew almost for sure it was one of those little guys in my ear. I got up and tried rinsing it out of my ear. First with warm water, then with alcohol, and finally with ear wax remover. It was a futile effort on my part except that it apparently killed the bug because the noise stopped.

I was unable to get it out using a Q-tip, so I phoned the hospital and asked if they had anyone there qualified to extract a bug from someone's ear. The gal on the other end of the phone giggled and said she thought there probably was a bug expert somewhere around the Emergency Room. She said they had a light load and invited me come on down, they'd give it a try.

When I walked into the ER, there were grins everywhere. After mandatory triage, I was put in room number two: The Bug Removal Room. A support nurse and the triage nurse took turns peering into my ear with a little flashlight-in-a-tube. They finally saw it buried in there in a glop of ear wax. So the procedure began.

They took a huge syringe full of hot water and sprayed it in, rinsing debris out as I held a large clear plastic cup under the ear. No bug. More peering. It was still in there, firmly cemented to the eardrum with a tiny piece of ear wax. More hot water. Still no bug. Even more peering. One more mighty gush of hot water and finally, out it popped, met with more peering and oos and ahs. Such a gigantic effort for such a tiny creature! It worked, and with the wax gone I noticed new sibilance in everyone's speech.

And except for that poor little Red Flour Beetle - a good time was had by all!

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Since that time, I've obtained hearing aids and noticed that the things get clogged up with ear wax every so often. At first, I used Q-tips in my ears. They always got some wax. And my hearing improved also after cleaning both hearing aids. Recently, I remembered my trip to the ER for beetle-removal. Now, it's a routine procedure: a squeeze-bulb, a Red Solo Cup and hot water. The hot water melts the wax after a few gentle squirts and out it comes!

The pros call it irrigation. And it works.

Stay totally cool, troops! Wash your hands and face. Then, don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands or faces. Keep your distance (6 - 10 feet) or wear a mask. Disinfect common surfaces daily. And don't neglect the car! Don't worry - things aren't really as bad as they seem!

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

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Thursday, July 23, 2020

CG

My wife and I met almost 60 years ago in **Gilroy, California**, the **Garlic Capitol of the World**. **Sunsweet Prunes** air-cured its harvest in that same atmosphere, giving the product its unique taste. The town had its own smell, long before the wall of smog from the **South Bay** began to encroach on the populations south of **San Jose**. Sadly, Sunsweet Growers now imports its prunes from **Chile** and packages them in **Yuba City, CA**. They just aren't the same without that Gilroy garlic smell and taste.

There are certain things you don't mess with ... you know? Sunsweet prunes and my wife's monogram! Oh, yes! When we first met in 1961, she had all kinds of items with her initials on them! Talk about outstanding. She was a gorgeous platinum blonde. She was tall and attractive and knew how to dress. You could say she was everyman's dream. At the very least, mine!

One of the accessories she had was a Compact. Oh, you know ... a round clam-shell-like gizmo with a mirror inside along with a small powder-puff and some face-powder. Her's was special. It had her monogram on it. **CG**. Her maiden name was **Claudette Gordon**. Wow! That was pretty impressive to a young buck like me.

Claudette also had lipstick that she carried around in her purse with the compact. It was a light, subtle, shade of red and on the outside of the little case were the unmistakable initials: **CG**. That monogram was mind-boggling!

One day we were shootin' the breeze on her front yard lawn when she reached into her purse and pulled out a hairbrush. She brushed her hair there in the sunshine of Gilroy's Central California Fall. There is something very special about a

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voluptuous woman brushing her hair outdoors in the sun. Oh, she was a peach! When she had finished brushing and was about to put the hairbrush back in her purse, I noticed the **CG** monogram on it. Wow! Talk about impressed. I gushed that I had never met a gal who had her own monogram like that. She froze like a statue, and said, "What?"

I replied, "Oh. I've just never met anybody with their own monogram."

She grinned, put the brush in her purse, cupped my chin in her hands and said, "Teddy, I'm a cosmetologist. I get a special deal on **Cover Girl** products. That monogram is not mine. It's their logo."

What is it **Homer Simpson** says? "D'oh!"

Alright, people! Wash your hands and face. Then, don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands or faces. Keep your distance (6 - 10 feet) or wear a mask. Disinfect common surfaces daily. And be certain to take care of the car! It's alright - things are not as bad as they seem! Stay loose!

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Monday, July 27, 2020

Cottage Eggs

And now, for something entirely different:

When I was a kid, Christmas was special. Everything about the Thayer family Christmas tradition was special ... and it took lots of work ... for the cook!

While we kids attacked and unwrapped one present each, Mom would put a pound of bacon in a big cast iron frying pan and place it on the stove to fry while she busied herself cutting three grapefruit in halves. There were five of us (what with Mom, Dad, Sister Mandy, Brother Bill and me) so saving the sixth half was a good thing for somebody's snack later on in the day.

Then she would grab a candy cane off the Christmas Tree, take a meat tenderizer out of the kitchen drawer and use it to beat the candy cane to smithereens! The remains of the candy cane were sprinkled over the grapefruit halves, which were plated and delivered to the dining table. About that time she'd open a can of peach halves and pour the contents into a small pot and put it on the stove to simmer. Then it was time!

It didn't take any coaxing to get Pop and us kids to the table! Mom picked at her grapefruit half while checking every now and then on the progress of the bacon - it had to be just so ... not too limp, yet not overly crisp. About the time everyone was done with their grapefruit, the bacon would be ready. It was laid out on a paper towel to drain, the grease was poured into the bacon grease container, and the frying pan was wiped clean.

Then it was time for the presents. Pop would hand them out, picking through the pile under the tree to make sure each kid got a present before him or mom. He made sure mom got all of her

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presents before he did, so she could get the rest of breakfast ready while us offspring toiled over the presents and he collected and disposed of the discarded wrapping paper.

I don't recall exactly when mom stopped making cinnamon rolls by hand, but I know that they were all ready to bake right out of the fridge right after she had opened her last present. She began "popping" a tube of Pillsbury Cinnamon Rolls for Christmas breakfast shortly after they came on the market in the early '50s. While the rolls were baking, mom whipped up the Cottage Eggs – literally! The ingredients were plopped into a big mixing bowl and unceremoniously whisked into a smooth liquid.

Next came the melting of two pats of butter – at a time most of the rest of the country was still hand mixing their Nucoa, a non-dairy spread that came out in 1937, just before the USA got involved in World War II.

Vegetable-based Nucoa oleo-margerine replaced butter during WWII when rationing made the dairy product too expensive for most folks. It came with a separately-packaged orange powder that was mixed with the normally white product to make it resemble the color of butter. Kids across the country were pressed into service by their moms to perform this chore by squeezing and squishing the oleo and powder together between their fingers! Eventually, the powder was replaced by orange goo from a separate bubble-pack. Claudette reminisced that her mom sometimes forgot about the mix (which was just fine as far the kids were concerned) and they had white butter instead! "That's when we got the cow," she said. "It was fun watching real butter happen for a change."

Now, where were we? Oh, yeah! Melting two pats of butter in the frying pan. That done, the cottage egg mix was poured into the pan and scrambled eggs happened. As soon as the eggs were ready, they were plated on a big platter with the bacon and hot

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peach halves dusted with cinnamon. Just in time! The Cinnamon Rolls were ready and placed on their own platter.

So ... here is the recipe for the Thayers' Christmas breakfast:

Cottage Eggs

8 Extra Large Eggs	1 lb Bacon Strips	15oz can Peach Halves
1 heaping Tbsp Small Curd Cottage Cheese	1 tsp Prepared Mustard	
1 level Tbsp Sour Cream	1 level Tbsp Mayonnaise	
2 pats Salted Butter	As needed: powdered Cinnamon, Salt, Pepper	

Arrange Bacon strips in a large frying pan over medium heat til just crisping. Open Peach Halves and pour into small pot over medium heat. Crack eight eggs into a large bowl. Using a tablespoon, add one overloaded glob of Cottage Cheese, a level Tablespoon of Sour Cream, a level Tablespoon of Mayonnaise, a level teaspoon of prepared Mustard, and a few pinches of salt and pepper. Mix/blend thoroughly. Prepare a medium frying pan with two pats of Salted Butter at medium heat. Scramble the egg mixture til ready to serve. Make a pile of scrambled eggs in the middle of a large serving plate. Arrange the Bacon Strips around the pile of eggs. Place Peach Halves around the outside. Dust the Peach Halves with Cinnamon. Serve with Champagne. Will feed 6.

Be cool, people! Wash your hands and face. Then, don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands or faces. Keep your distance (6 - 10 feet) or wear a mask. Disinfect common surfaces daily. And do the car! Don't worry - things aren't really as bad as they seem!

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Thursday, July 30, 2020

You, Me & Covid19

Mike Rowe, the *Dirty Jobs* guy, posted Wednesday a week ago, on *Facebook*, exactly what I've been surmising for months. Read on, troops!

"On March 15th, the day after my part of the country was locked down, I posted a link to an interview with Dr. Michael Osterholm. I'm posting it again, because I believe you and everyone else in the country would benefit from listening carefully to what he has to say. <https://bit.ly/2WLOM6o>

"Dr. Osterholm is the Director of Infectious Disease Research and Policy. This is the same epidemiologist who ten years ago, predicted a coronavirus would come from China and turn our country upside down. In his book "Deadliest Enemies," he described the utterly irresponsible way in which the media would report on the situation, the completely opportunistic and shamelessly political way our leaders would likely react, and the unprecedented chaos and confusion that would arise from all the mixed messages from the medical community. His resume is unexampled, <https://bit.ly/2WCwqou>, and his analysis of the situation is the most logical and persuasive of any I'd heard so far. He's also the only expert I know of who hasn't walked back his numbers, reconsidered his position, or moved the goalposts with regard to what we must do, what we can do, and what he expects to happen next. I say all of this because Dr. Osterholm also predicted that we could easily see 100 million COVID cases in this country, with a very strong possibility of 480,000 fatalities – even if we successfully "flattened the curve."

"It took me a few weeks to accept this scenario, because 480,000 fatalities is a frightening number, and lot of other experts were saying lots of conflicting things. But eventually, I came to the

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conclusion that Dr. Osterholm was probably correct, and quickly navigated the four stages of grief that usually precede acceptance – denial, anger, bargaining, and depression. By late April, I had come to accept Dr. Osterholm's predictions as a matter of fact. Since then, I've had three full months to come to terms with the fact that, a) I am probably going to get COVID-19 at some point, b), I am almost certainly going to survive it, and c), I might very well give it to someone else.

"I hope that doesn't sound blasé, or glib, or fatalistic, or selfish. Four-hundred eighty thousand deaths is an obvious tragedy, and I'm deeply sympathetic to all who have been impacted thus far. I'm also very concerned for my parents, and everyone else in a high risk category. But when Dr. Osterholm says that COVID can be slowed, but not stopped, I believe him. When he says a vaccine will not necessarily hasten herd immunity, I believe him. And when he says that "flattening the curve" and eliminating the virus have nothing to do with each other, I believe him.

"Thus, for the last three months, I've been operating from the assumption that this is a year-round virus that's eventually going to infect 100 million people and kill roughly 1/2 of one percent of those infected. I've gotten used to those numbers in much the same way I've gotten used to the fact that 40,000 people will likely die on the highways this year. That's why I'm not panicked or surprised by tens of thousands of daily COVID cases; I've been expecting them. Unfortunately, many others have not. Every day, millions of people watch the same breathless coverage by the same breathless journalists, who seem determined to do all they can to foster uncertainty. And so, millions of people are still paralyzed by fear, because they haven't been given a chance to digest the truth, (or, what I believe to be the truth.) Fact is, we can accept almost anything if we're given the facts, and enough time to get our heads around them. But if we don't have an understanding of what's really happening, we simply can't get

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past denial and bargaining, where so many seem to be stuck, understandably so.

"Imagine for a moment you had no idea how many people would die in car accidents this year. Now, imagine that every single accident – over six million a year in the US alone – were reported on the same way that every new COVID case is reported today. Imagine every day you were told in hysterical tones, that another 16,000 accidents had occurred, resulting in another 90 deaths per day. What would that do to your willingness to drive? Six million accidents is a lot of accidents, and 40,000 annual fatalities is a lot of death – especially if you don't know how high that number could get. But we DO know the dangers of driving, and we've accepted those numbers.

"Consequently, we're able to make a grown-up decision about whether or not we want to assume the associated risk of operating a motor vehicle.

"Again, don't misunderstand. I'm not ignoring COVID, and I'm not pretending the risks at hand aren't real. I don't want to get this disease and give it to someone else, any more than I want to be in a car wreck and hurt someone else. So, I take precautions. I get tested often. If I can't distance, I wear a mask – especially around higher risk people. I also wear a seatbelt, obey the speed limits, and check my mirrors before changing lanes. I'm aware that we'd all be a lot safer if we kept our cars in the garage. I'm also aware we'd be a lot safer if we all kept ourselves in the house. But that's not why cars, or people, exist."

Hold on, troops! Wash your hands and face. Then, don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands or faces. Keep your distance (6 - 10 feet) or wear a mask. Disinfect common surfaces daily. And don't neglect the car! Above all, stay calm. It's Summer and things aren't nearly as bad as they seem. Shalom.

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Monday, August 3, 2020

HCQ & Z-Pak

I came upon a July 23rd article in **Newsweek**, written by **Harvey A. Risch**, MD, PhD, a professor of epidemiology at **Yale School of Public Health**. In the article, he asks the question:

"Why has **hydroxychloroquine** been disregarded?

"First, as all know, the medication has become highly politicized. For many, it is viewed as a marker of political identity, on both sides of the political spectrum. Nobody needs me to remind them that this is not how medicine should proceed. We must judge this medication strictly on the science. When doctors graduate from medical school, they formally promise to make the health and life of the patient their first consideration, without biases of race, religion, nationality, social standing—or political affiliation. Lives must come first.

"Second, the drug has not been used properly in many studies. Hydroxychloroquine has shown major success when used early in high-risk people but, as one would expect for an antiviral, much less success when used late in the disease course. Even so, it has demonstrated significant benefit in large hospital studies in Michigan and New York City when started within the first 24 to 48 hours after admission.

"In fact, as inexpensive, oral and widely available medications, and a nutritional supplement, the combination of hydroxychloroquine, **azithromycin** or **doxycycline**, and **zinc** are well-suited for early treatment in the outpatient setting. The combination should be prescribed in high-risk patients immediately upon clinical suspicion of **COVID-19** disease, without waiting for results of testing. Delays in waiting before starting the medications can reduce their efficacy."

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Earlier in the article Dr. Risch wrote, "On May 27, I published an article in the *American Journal of Epidemiology* (*AJE*) entitled, 'Early Outpatient Treatment of Symptomatic, High-Risk COVID-19 Patients that Should be Ramped-Up Immediately as Key to the Pandemic Crisis.' That article, published in the world's leading epidemiology journal, analyzed five studies, demonstrating clear-cut and significant benefits to treated patients, plus other very large studies that showed the medication safety."

He continues. "Physicians who have been using these medications in the face of widespread skepticism have been truly heroic. They have done what the science shows is best for their patients, often at great personal risk. I myself know of two doctors who have saved the lives of hundreds of patients with these medications, but are now fighting state medical boards to save their licenses and reputations. The cases against them are completely without scientific merit."

Dr. Risch goes on, "... concerns have been raised by the FDA and others about risks of cardiac arrhythmia, especially when hydroxychloroquine is given in combination with azithromycin. The FDA based its comments on data in its FDA Adverse Event Reporting System. ... But what the FDA did not announce is that these adverse events were generated from tens of millions of patient uses of hydroxychloroquine for long periods of time, often for the chronic treatment of lupus or rheumatoid arthritis. Even if the true rates of arrhythmia are ten-fold higher than those reported, the harms would be minuscule compared to the mortality occurring right now in inadequately treated high-risk COVID-19 patients. This fact is proven by an **Oxford University** study of more than 320,000 older patients taking both hydroxychloroquine and azithromycin, who had arrhythmia excess death rates of less than 9/100,000 users, as I discuss in my May 27 paper cited above. A new paper in the *American Journal*

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of Medicine by established cardiologists around the world fully agrees with this."

"In the future," Dr. Risch concludes, "I believe this misbegotten episode regarding hydroxychloroquine will be studied by sociologists of medicine as a classic example of how extra-scientific factors overrode clear-cut medical evidence. But for now, reality demands a clear, scientific eye on the evidence and where it points. For the sake of high-risk patients, for the sake of our parents and grandparents, for the sake of the unemployed, for our economy and for our polity, especially those disproportionately affected, we must start treating immediately."

You can obtain Dr. Risch's May 27th *AJE* paper at:
<https://academic.oup.com/aje/article/doi/10.1093/aje/kwaa093/5847586>

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Thursday, August 6, 2020

Podcasting Terrible Ted

Monday I launched my first Podcast. Although the subject matter was a hit, for me it was a disaster!

It was wonderful that published information involving hundreds of thousands of people sick with Covid19 supported claims that hydroxychloroquine, Z-Paks and Zinc have been effective in suppressing the disease in at-risk patients.

I was terribly disappointed that the Podcast audio was fine, but the video didn't work. My daughter told me, "Dad, Podcasts are just audio!" Well, there I was again ... Homer Simpson - D'oh!

Well, doing just audio puts me back on the radio in a whole different way. Now, it has to be less than three minutes and yet be the same as the email broadcast and Facebook post for the day. Verry Interestink!

No problem compared to Monday. Just after I got the email, Facebook and Podcast posted, it was necessary to download and install the latest version of Windows Ten. Four (yes, four!) hours later the horrid deed was done.

Windows Ten is notorious for two things: the BSOD (that's the Blue Screen of Death) and its ability to screw up your favorite software and data. I still use Outlook Express for my email because it's easy to use and doesn't loose stuff. Monday, Windows 10 Version 2004 was installing ... you gotta know what happened. It took the rest of the day to fix it!

Well, we'll have something more interesting next Monday, thanks.

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Alright, people! Wash your hands and face. Then, don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands or faces. Keep your distance (6 - 10 feet) or wear a mask. Disinfect common surfaces daily. And don't forget the car! Above all, stay laid back. Things are not as bad as the media wants you to think. And for God's sake, peace out!

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Monday, August 10, 2020

President Pelosi

You're familiar with the rules of succession to the Presidency, right? If the President can't serve, the Vice-President takes over. Then, if for some reason, the Vice-President can't serve, the Speaker of the U.S. House becomes the Head of State. Today, in order, that would be Donald Trump, Mike Pence and Nancy Pelosi.

Did he just say Nancy Pelosi? Oh my! Now, don't get your tighty-whites in a wad just yet. But you might want to hold your breath until Inauguration Day, January 20th, 2021. There is a bizarre scenario whereby Nancy Pelosi could be sworn in as President on that day. Let me elucidate:

It's election day 2020 plus two and the Presidential election hasn't been called by the Mainstream Media because it's too tight. Arizona and Texas have Republican and Democrat races across the board in dead heats. The Electoral College is still up for grabs.

Election Day plus two weeks - still no definitive call. There are huge questions about the validity of all mail-in ballots - Absentee, Early Voting and straight Mail-in Ballots - they're all in question because a suit has been filed in New York questioning their validity because of the Summer elections held in the Big Apple where a significant number of the ballots were post-marked late or not post-marked at all!

Let's get this straight, troops. To become the U.S. President, a candidate must obtain an absolute majority of half the total electoral votes plus one. With 538 Electors, a candidate must receive at least 270 votes to be elected President. Texas has

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thirty-eight electoral votes and Arizona has a piddly, but significant possibly tie-breaking eleven.

What happens if the tie isn't broken by Inauguration Day? Well, as Ronald Reagan used to say ... with no officially-elected President or Vice-President in office, and ... if Pelosi has been re-elected for her umteen-gazillionth term, she could claim the Presidency because she would remain Speaker until and unless the House elects a new one!

Alright ... now, it's ok to get your tighty-whities in a wad!

Be cool, you guys! Wash your hands and face. Then, don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands or faces. Keep your distance (6 - 10 feet) or wear a mask. Disinfect common surfaces daily. And clean the car! Ease up - things are not anywhere close to as bad as they seem!

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Thursday, August 13, 2020

Bolero

I have a delicate story this time, one where I need to sorta tippy-toe around the edges, so to speak.

Back just before the 1960s, I was in my late teens and I was a member of the Columbia Record Club. Every month, I'd get a new record. It's been long enough that I have no recollection of the prices back then. But, suffice it to say that it took a good chunk of my allowance at the time.

I think I had the easy listening membership, where you could always opt for something other than the current month's offering. I recall, instead of the Ray Conniff Singers one month, I opted for The Grand Canyon Suite. Oooh my!

When I was a little kid in the '40s, my mom and dad bought records - 78 RPM records - that were played on a wind-up Victrola. (Those of you among the uninitiated might want to google "1940s Victrola"!)

At any rate ... The Grand Canyon Suite in those days came in a four-record set with a thick binder. And, each record played about three minutes to a side, making the total playing time a little under half-an-hour. Thirty minutes is a long time for a little kid to be still, but if it happens in three minute increments, with a break to crank the winder-upper and change the record, it could go on for hours. I remember those days.

One month, back in 1958 I think, I opted for something completely different from the record club. I Ordered Ravel's Bolero with Andre Kostelanitz and his Orchestra. I was seventeen at the time and had recently graduated from Monterey Union High School.

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Here's where the tippy-toeing part comes in, troops.

Generally speaking, most young people become aware of their sexuality in their mid-teens. Back in the day, that phenomenon resulted in a number of early marriages before graduation or girls disappearing from school for three or four months at a time. This was back before "The Pill" so it meant that sometimes a girl might "get in trouble", so to speak, as a result of an especially close relationship with a boyfriend.

Boys will be boys, so getting to third base with a girl has always been the ultimate goal of every young man. But then, there's the home run ...

I don't think I'll ever forget my first time making love to Ravel's Bolero.

Ravel Bolero
Columbia Records Masterworks Series
Long Playing Microgroove LP 372
Andre Kostelanetz
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vSSC2_YokfI

Alrighty, then! Wash your hands and face. Then, don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands or faces. Keep your distance (6 - 10 feet) or wear a mask. Disinfect common surfaces daily. And do the car! Absolutely, be cool. Things are not how you may believe. Lighten up!

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Monday, August 17, 2020

Get Your Mind Right

In making the movie "*Cool Hand Luke*", Paul Newman actually sat (and lay) right down and ate all those eggs! Luke was trying to prove to his fellow inmates that there was no way he would ever get his mind right. As *The Captain* stood over him, cool-hand Luke lied like a "dog-faced Pony-soldier", hugging the man's leg and sobbing, "I got my mind right, Boss, I got my mind right."

Well, no matter how many hard-boiled eggs there are, it's gonna to take a lot more punishment from those boneheads for me to get MY mind right! By "those boneheads", I mean the elected officials who allow their communities to fall to the likes of Antifa, BLM Inc., Occupy and any old anarchist that happens along. What a load of Baloney!

I hope our local authorities have a plan (or plans - there are Municipalities here in the boonies, also) to maintain peace and tranquility here in rural Gila County Arizona. By a plan, I mean a way of allowing people from "around these parts" to assemble and talk about their problems, while at the same time keeping "outsiders" at bay - by force, if needed.

Who are the "outsiders"? C'mon. Even I know that's a stupid question!

There ya are, standin' on the corner between the Safeway and the Post Office at seven PM in downtown Globe and here come six guys dressed all in black, wearing black "masks", black headbands and black back-packs. If you're not carryin' serious heat are you going to walk right up and ask, "Howdy. You boys aren't from around these parts, are ya?"

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That's the scenario all around the country these days. Where are the police in this scenario? Who but me is going to keep me safe?

That's where "The Plan" comes in to play. Our duly elected officials and their employees have the ways and means to know when the "Bad Guys" are going to be showing up. They can have Law Enforcement and Emergency Services people standing around, waiting for anyone "not from around these parts", waiting for one wrong move.

Having served on the Gila County Local Emergency Planning Commission for five years around the turn of the Century, my question is this: Do you really believe "The Plan" actually exists? If not, you'd better get your mind right, my friend.

Stay loose, goose! Wash your hands and face. Then, don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands or faces. Keep your distance (6 - 10 feet) or wear a mask. Disinfect common surfaces daily. And do the car! Hey, things are not anywhere close to as bad as they may seem! It's OK.

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Thursday, August 20, 2020

Ripe for the Pickin'

There was a news article the other day featuring Millennials just released from jail who were aghast and had no idea "it was like that" on the inside. The story didn't get anywhere close to the coverage it deserved. The fact is that young men are at risk from jail predators. Let's be specific.

Jails routinely protect accused pedophiles and rapists by isolating them from the rest of the jail population. The criminal element detests those who would prey on women and children. But violent protesters are also on the wrong side of today's "more moral" criminal element. Millennials who have never before been in a jail scenario are in for a shock when they are placed with the "general" population.

Hardened criminals often return from prison to jail housing in the city where they face charges unrelated to prior crimes. Violent protesters soon find that they are not welcome in that environment and are met with the vilest threats from inmates who have watched on TV the rioting, looting, burning, beatings and even murder.

There are perfectly peaceful members of the radical left including Antifa, BLM, Occupy and others. These are the people who carry the placards and chant slogans, but who also are very careful to obey the law and requests from law enforcement to keep the peace.

The violent protesters come from loosely-organized groups labeling themselves Antifa, hoodlums hired by BLM, Inc., splinter groups like 1312, ACAB and self-motivated thugs from surrounding areas. Many are paid to do their dirty work, including wielding baseball bats, supplying frozen water bottles

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and eggs, throwing explosives and even providing whole pallets of bricks to throw at police. Still, a large percentage of the violent ones are wet behind the ears when it comes to a stay in the hoosgow.

Law enforcement has gotten wise to the lifestyles of violent protesters, who are entitled to an "Initial Appearance" before a local magistrate within 24 hours. An Initial Appearance is where the defendant is advised of the charges, bail is set and an attorney appointed if necessary. Pleas and other discussions are held during Arraignment, the next appearance, which could be weeks away for someone unable to make bail. The initial appearances for local folks accused of petty crimes are usually heard within hours, but these days, it seems, violent offenders get to wait in the general population for their appearances right up to the 24 hour maximum.

That extended wait period compared to non-violent locals puts the violent protesters at risk for incomprehensible threats, intimidation, beatings and unsolicited sexual favors from hardened criminals in the general population. Jail newbys are just so ripe for the pickin'. More and more, jailers across the country are getting wise to this phenomenon.

Alright! Wash your hands and face. Then, don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands or faces. Keep your distance (6 - 10 feet) or wear a mask. Disinfect common surfaces daily. And clean the car! Fer sure you guys! Things are nowhere close to as bad as you might think. Ease up!

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Monday, August 24, 2020

A Visit with Manners

The Thayer family has heritage that includes some very high-class relatives and hoity-toity relations dating back many decades to the era when 18 year-old Ruth Hance visited New York City. There, she actively dabbled in the art of proper manners, which over time our mother perfected and passed along to her three children.

In an email to my sister Mandy and me in April 2014, brother Bill, who turned 77 five days ago, wrote:

"A long time ago, while in San Francisco, I had occasion to visit with Great Aunt Eve Hance. We had tea. *[Her name was Eve, but pronounced Eva.]*

"When the tea, with plenty of conversation, was over, she said, "I am happy to see that your mother taught you proper manners. Yours are impeccable, William." I thanked her, of course, and told her I would inform her niece of her approval. Which I later did.

"I don't know if either of you had much to do with Aunt Eva, but she could be quite intimidating - With a look she could stop a grizzly bear cold! She acted like a grand dame, and she was. In spades. But, she always treated me the same way I treated her, with a great deal of sincere respect and deference.

"All of which I learned at my Mother's knee.

"Mom told me one truth that has stuck ever since she voiced it, ***'Be very, very polite to everyone you meet.'*** This not only works wonders in the US and A, but it is my hard and fast rule when visiting other countries."

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In these, his later years, my brother can be quite a rude and unruly handful. But, when pressed, especially around classy women, he is still a fine, polite gentleman that I'm proud to call my little brother Billy!

Be cool! Wash your hands and face. Then, don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands or faces. Keep your distance (6 - 10 feet) or wear a mask. Disinfect common surfaces daily. And clean the car! Slow down - things are way better than you can believe!

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Thursday, August 27, 2020

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I was browsing my daily email magazines the other day when I came across one of those "OMG, Can You Believe It?" headlines and followed it for a few clicks. It was "The Smartest Something-or-other in the World" or something.

According to a Google post, **Albert Einstein** had an IQ of about 160. A 12-year-old girl in Cheshire County, England, has scored 162 on an IQ test, putting her in the top 99.998 percentile of test takers.

Perhaps the smartest of United States Presidents was **John Quincy Adams** with an astounding IQ of 175. **Thomas Jefferson** had a 160 and **John F Kennedy** was right up there with a 159.

I didn't know **Barrack Obama** had an IQ of 145 (just slightly higher than mine!) They say that anyone with a 145 IQ or better is a loose cannon. Crazy. I don't know, but the best talker I ever heard was President Barrack Obama. He was like that horse in the old cowboy song *The Strawberry Roan*. As **Marty Robbins** sang:

He's about the worst buckner I've seen on the range
He'll turn on a Nickel and give you some change
He hits on all fours and goes up on high
Leaves me a spinnin' up there in the sky
I turns over twice and I comes back to earth
I lights in a cussin' the day of his birth
I know there are ponies that I cannot ride
There's some of them left, they haven't all died
I'll bet all my money, the man ain't alive
That'll stay with Old Strawberry
When he makes his high dive

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About three-quarters of a century ago, my dear mother **Ruth Thayer** used to sing that song to my sister Mandy, brother Bill and me - long before Marty Robbins came along.

We were talking about IQ. That Obama is one smart cookie! But the top of the heap these days (contrary to what many liberal Democrats and the MSM will tell you) is the President himself. Far and away the brainiest of the brains alive today is none other than **Donald J Trump** with an IQ of 156. Sorry, troops, not Fake News.

For you political types who appreciate the best Hollywood has to offer these days, suffice it to say that movie mogul **Samuel Goldwyn** said it best: "Give me a smart idiot over a stupid genius any day." Of course, he was also the casting couch goon who exclaimed "Give me a couple of years and I'll make that actress an overnight success"

OK. Do it to it! Wash your hands and face. Then, don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands or faces. Keep your distance (6 - 10 feet) or wear a mask. Disinfect common surfaces daily. And don't forget the car! And remember - things could be WAY worse than you can imagine! So relax.

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Monday, August 31, 2020

Notice to Rioters

I've got this notice for **BLM**, Inc., **Antifa**, **Occupy**, **ACAB** and the low-life scum tearing up our American cities. I've also got a soft spot for peaceful protest and mechanisms to make it the norm rather than the exception.

I'm thinking the way to stop the expanding rape and pillage of our cities is to put protesters on notice that ...

All demonstrations will be limited to peaceful assembly between noon and 6:00pm, at which time protesters must disperse.

Excessive screaming, megaphones, threats and intimidation (considered Disturbing the Peace) are arrestable misdemeanors at Police discretion.

At 6:30pm, without further notice, the streets will be cleared of any remaining pedestrians and traffic - by force if necessary.

Force includes local Police, County Sheriff's Deputies, State Police, National Guard Troops and Federal Agency Officers, as needed, equipped with riot gear, batons, pepper spray, helmets, face and body shields, trained Police dogs, heavy equipment, armored personnel carriers and vehicles equipped with water cannons, also as needed.

Individuals who fail to obey these lawful instructions will be arrested and held for 24 hours, at which time they will have their initial appearances before a judge or magistrate who will set bail and/or conditions of release appropriate to the charges filed with and explained by the court.

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I think if people would insist that their leaders implement this policy the violence would come to a halt pretty quickly and peaceful gatherings of folks wanting to picket and complain about stuff would again become the norm.

By the way ... I found the following on Facebook:

"To everyone instigating a possible civil war from all sides, let me give you a little bit of advice. Many of us served and fought in wars. When our time was done, we came back to the USA to start over and live in peace. It wasn't us who kneeled on the neck of a man until he died. It wasn't us who tried to retaliate by kneeling on the neck of a toddler saying 'BLM NOW mf.'"

"You see, War is hell. Millions of you do not quite grasp this concept. We have been to hell, lived in hell, climbed out of hell, and don't want to go back to hell. If you keep trampling on the peace we fought for, earned and love, then when that first shot gets fired, you will force us back to hell; and we will show you the brutal realities of hell."

"Y'all better work this nonsense out before we do, because I guarantee you are not ready for this."

(Signed) Veterans

Stay loose! Wash your hands and face. Then, don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands or faces. Keep your distance (6 - 10 feet) or wear a mask. Disinfect common surfaces daily. And clean the car! And for Heaven's sake, lighten up! Things today are better than they've ever been!

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Thursday, September 3, 2020

Wallow Fire*

Let's return the forest to its natural state,
trust me boys this will be great!

We'll shut down the loggers and cut back the cows,
this will leave more room for wolves and spotted owls.

We will build little roads for ATV's,
and big old camps for boats and RV's.

We will lift all restrictions of fire laws,
let no loggers in with axes or saws.

Yup, we are goin green that's what they said,
send your cattle our way, we've got wolves that need fed!

We will put riparian areas for the elk to eat,
then make them cowboys keep our fences neat.

We will measure the grass, mark all the trees,
we will count all their cattle and collect our fees.

Those loggers make our forest bare,
make it look like a mans head that ain't got no hair.

That's what they said many years ago,
and in takin action they wasn't too slow.

So the grass grew tall, the forest got thick
and cowboys and loggers, it made them all sick.

Now we sit here in a smoke covered town,
Forest Service trucks runnin' around.

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This coulda been stopped, but it wouldn't be heard.
Those greenies didn't listen, guess they'd rather it burned.

As humans we've failed to protect our land,
so Mother Nature stepped in and gave us a hand.

But it coulda been stopped by fallin some trees,
and that, I think, now everyone sees.

So there you go, it's in its natural state,
but don't cry now, it's already too late.

You wanted a green forest, you wanted it seen,
well take a good look cause black's the new green!

** This poem was written [at the time] by a 16 year old kid from
Eagar, AZ.*

Carson Lee

According to **Wikipedia**, The **Wallow Fire**, named for the **Bear Wallow Wilderness** area where the fire originated, was a massive wildfire that started in the **White Mountains** near **Alpine, Arizona** on May 29, 2011. The fire eventually spread across the state line into western **New Mexico**. By the time the fire was contained on July 8, it had consumed 538,049 acres of land, 522,642 acres in Arizona and 15,407 acres in New Mexico.

Go easy! Wash your hands and face. Then, don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands or faces. Keep your distance (6 - 10 feet) or wear a mask. Disinfect common surfaces daily. And clean the car! Slow down! Things are a lot better today than you think!

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Monday, September 7, 2020

Luxury

I don't remember whether it was Claudette's birthday or our anniversary but one day many decades ago I bought a California King bed. The thing was enormous, measuring six feet wide and seven feet long! I think it was because we had made a success of our business at the time and it seemed like a good way to celebrate.

Well, after a half-century, the bed has been replaced with a super-light pillow-top mattress with twin box-springs, a mattress-cover, super-lush Egyptian cotton sheets and a huge bed-spread - one of those vast things that drapes all the way to the floor on all sides. I'm sorry to say, my beautiful bride passed away a little over year ago. We had a loving 57 year marriage. But, even with the emenities, sleep is not as it used to be.

We worked hard to collect the items that help make life a bit more enjoyable. It took almost 40 years to assemble our home theatre with its 160 watt stereo receiver, both Beta and VHS video recorders, CD/DVD player, record player, ceiling-mounted projector connected to the computer, roll-down 8-foot screen, a big flat-screen TV and a nine speaker sound system.

We wanted privacy along with reduced heat and glare from outside. It took some ten years to complete the system, but it works pretty well. We started with reflective film on all the windows to keep the heat out. Each window is equipped with a sun screen on the outside and two of the windows on the west side have small roll-up awnings. The porch which measures 8' x 15' is protected by a 10'x18' white metal awning. White skirts keep the underneath of our Park Model home shaded and cool in the summer and hold the heat in during the winter months. All of the windows except the kitchen and the bathroom are equipped

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with black-out curtains which help with insulation immensely. And the sliding glass entry doors are protected outside by sun screen material and inside by a white sliding panel curtain.

Early on, we re-carpeted the house. The base is three-quarters of an inch of foam rubber. On top of that base we put down another three-quarters of an inch of plush light tan carpet matching the curtains. It's great to lounge around on and it's so thick you have to trudge to get across it!

Some years back we bought a large maroon love-seat with a low back. Draped over the back is a Mexican woven blanket, white with black, gray and matching maroon patterns running its width. The Christmas before Claudette died we bought each other the finishing touches for the living room: two matching monster maroon La-Z-Boy recliner-rockers! They're fantastic for watching TV or movies ... or just kicking back and takin' a nap!

I'm glad Claudette got to enjoy the last years of her life in the lap of luxury lovingly created by the two of us over decades of patience and hard work.

Stay loose, goose! Wash your hands and face. Then, don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands or faces. Keep your distance (6 - 10 feet) or wear a mask. Disinfect common surfaces daily. And don't forget the car! Remember, it's gonna be alright!

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Thursday, September 10, 2020

The Virus

I keep reading and hearing that this Wuhan Corona Virus thing is a politically motivated hoax foisted on us by a crowd of ill-intentioned ne'er-do-wells!

First, it was the President who failed to act early-on to stop the spread of the disease they decided to call the novel COVID-19 virus, even though its official scientific name is SARS-Cov-2. Get that? It's a hybrid of the SARS virus that we have been dealing with for decades, just like the Flu!

Next, the mainstream media and the left wing of the Democrat Party, along with a number of prominent Republicans, went ballistic when the President cut off airline flights into the United States from a number of countries across the globe to help contain the spread of the COVID virus.

Then, there was the debacle about masks. There was broad disagreement among politically-motivated factions in and out of government as to whether wearing a mask would protect the wearer or those in close proximity. A consensus was achieved when key players agreed that wearing a mask in areas where people would be within six feet of each other was a good idea.

Finally, the six foot "Social Distancing" policy was suggested - along with mask-wearing in public places, hand-washing and sanitizing of common surfaces. The suggestion became law in some cities, public policy in others and, in many cases, it was left up to Mayors and Governors to make the call.

The administration blamed the Chinese Communist Party for allowing the virus to escape the Wuhan Laboratories allegedly experimenting with it. The mainstream media and factions on the

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left blamed the President for the spread of the disease. The general public began grumbling about data manipulators who played with statistics from all over the world and made it seem to many that the world was about to end.

It began to appear that some un-named someone was trying to frighten the world with highly-politicized skullduggery. When the numbers began to not add up and the Center for Disease Control decided to recalculate, the grumble from the public grew louder. The word on the street was "They can't even agree on the statistics!"

A short while ago, to make matters worse, some obscure scientist deduced that the actual numbers of people who have been infected with COVID-19 is much higher than the statistics show.

It turns out that some 6% of people tested come up positive for the disease, but only 6% of the positives actually exhibit symptoms. 6% is a good number because that's the number of people admitted to hospitals who have actually died from the disease itself, rather than from complications of chronic disorders. This stuff has people talking insurrection at this point.

There's a theory that all this confusion will go away just before or right after the Presidential election and that it's just a ploy by the liberal "Deep State" to keep voters away from the polls. Add to that the fight over mail-in ballots and the theory takes on some credence.

The furthest-out musings (mostly from those forced to wear masks), can be coupled to the thugs associated with BLM, Antifa, MS-13 and radical organizations on the left *and* the right, the COVID-19 hoax, the spread of liberal policies in our biggest cities and our growing propensity to actually believe downright crazy stuff made up by political operatives on the left,

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to successfully allege that we are just short of a Communist take-over!

"Well," as grandma used to say, "I never."

Hang in there, troops! Wash your hands and face. Then, don't touch your face. Don't touch others' hands or faces. Keep your distance (6 - 10 feet) or wear a mask. Disinfect common surfaces daily. And don't neglect the car! And, for Heaven's Sakes, remember everything is gonna be OK!

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Monday, September 14, 2020

Black or White

I forget who I was listening to on the radio in the car the other day, but it struck me as the damndest thing I've ever heard! Here, for your perusal, is the essence of that broadcast.

It wasn't that long ago that black people were rioting in the streets, breaking store windows, looting and burning buildings, cars and trucks - even pulling other black people out of their vehicles and beating them. These were black people demonstrating their displeasure with their lot in life and the cops.

Today we have white people rioting in the streets, breaking store windows, looting and burning buildings, cars and trucks - even pulling other white people out of their vehicles and beating them. These are white people demonstrating their displeasure with their lot in life and the cops.

Remember **Marquette Frye**? Or **Rodney King**? How about **George Floyd**? Marquette Frye and Rodney King escaped with their lives. Floyd was not so lucky. All three were beaten by police.

According to **Wikipedia**, "On August 11, 1965, Marquette Frye, an African-American motorist on parole for robbery, was pulled over for reckless driving. A minor roadside argument broke out, which then escalated into a fight with police. Community members reported that the police had hurt a pregnant woman, and six days of civil unrest followed. Nearly 14,000 members of the **California Army National Guard** helped suppress the disturbance [called the **Watts Riots**] which resulted in 34 deaths and over \$40 million in property damage."

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Rodney King was attempting to escape drunk driving charges when the cops caught him and he resisted arrest. He was pulled from his truck and beaten to within an inch of his life. The fact that he was drunk and evading was all that was needed for a jury to acquit the cops. The not guilty verdicts were all it took to set off mob riots in Los Angeles. The rioting lasted six days and killed 63 people, with 2,383 more injured. It only ended after the California Army National Guard, the **United States Army**, and the **United States Marine Corps** provided reinforcements for **LAPD**. Back in 1992, the vast majority of participants in the LA Riots were enraged black people.

George Floyd, on the other hand, did not die as a result of being beaten by the Minneapolis police. He had ingested a large quantity of illegal Fontanel, an illicit, powerful pain-killer. That, added to other health-related problems resulted in his death as a cop knelt on his neck to hold him still. Floyd's death enraged an activist group calling themselves **Black Lives Matter (BLM)** for short.) BLM, Inc. is funded by **ActBlue**, which is one of a number of sources for BLM's monetary support of civil and criminal disruptions. While demonstrators in some of America's largest cities do so peacefully for the most part, BLM-funded thugs take to the streets after dark, trashing, burning, destroying and looting - and beating anyone who gets in the way. A majority of activist BLM protesters are white, as are members of other radical groups including **Antifa**, **ACAB**, the **Proud Boys** and the **Occupy** movement.

While the **Mainstream Media** seems to want the world to blame **America's** ills on President **Donald Trump**, the fact is radical groups have effectively taken the race card out of rioting, and dropped the results at the feet of both the Republicans and the Democrats, who so far don't have a clue what to do about it. They don't seem to understand that today it's not black or white.

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Thursday, September 17, 2020

The Ancient Code

Most adults can read and print and do basic math. America's **Baby Boomers**, however, have set the standard when it comes to writing - not printing, mind you, *writing*. In the days of their early schooling, they learned a secret code that allows them to send and receive messages that few members of the remaining generations can comprehend.

I was home-schooled by my mother, who was purported to be the first teacher at the prestigious **Orme Ranch**-school near **Mayer** Arizona.

I learned to read from children's books including *Fun With Dick and Jane* ("Look. Look! See Spot. See Spot run. Run, Spot, run!") The reading lessons came with writing lessons so that little eyes, ears and fingers could cooperate with the memory needed to recognize words and their context.

It was at mom's side that I learned the alphabet and how to print it in both small and capital letters. I remember the paper on which I used to do my practice. It was 8-1/2 inches long and 11 inches wide with light blue guide lines to help little fingers keep the pencil marks just so ...

After my dad was discharged from the Navy, we moved from **Tucson**, AZ to **Petaluma**, CA where I enrolled in the public school second grade just down the street from our new home. Daily print practice continued about an hour a day during the first semester, if my memory serves me correctly. The paper was still like it was in the first grade, but there was an additional line - green, I think - about two-thirds of the way between the two blue guide lines. Small letters went between the bottom line and the green line. Caps went between the bottom and the top.

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One day, the teacher said we were going to learn to write - not print - write. She unfurled a scroll that went across the full length above the top of the blackboard. On it were all the numbers and letters of the alphabet - in cursive! Under each cursive character was the printed version. This made it easier to understand. We continued to use the blue and green-lined paper, but practice became writing the letters - first just the upper-case. When we finished one page, we went to a second with just the lower-case letters. This went on for the rest of the school year. We were allowed to do our classwork and homework in print or cursive, as long as it was legible.

Little did we know at the time, but we were learning a secret code that only we in the second grade could read and comprehend! Actually, the older kids who had already been indoctrinated in the second grade understood it, too.

Some time in the seventies, I think, the IBM Selectric typewriter came into vogue. The Selectric was followed in short order by the personal computer. Kids were **not** keeping up with their printing and writing skills. And so, over the span of a few decades, cursive went the way of the dinosaurs. Kids still learned to print, but in many schools, cursive was simply dropped as a means of communication. By the time the **Millennials** were going through grade-school, cursive had become a secret code that only **Boomers** understood. So it is today. Boomers have always had trouble reading doctors' prescriptions. The latest crop of kids not only can't read a prescription, but they also can't decipher the **Ancient Code *you know as cursive!***

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Monday, September 21, 2020

Fire Happens

As a resident of the West I can attest to the value of fire. I can also tell you horror stories about the danger of fire. What is it they say about beef? "It's what's for dinner." Well, let me tell you, you want no part of fire for dinner when it's a hundred degrees out there and you'd rather have a cold glass of water. That's what's been going on in Washington and Oregon and California and Arizona this Spring and Summer.

When historians, who have not been swayed by the liberal arts, tell the tales of fire and its relationship to the Western United States, old-timers simply cannot believe that the Sierra Club has sold John Muir down the river and reformed his persona as racist!

A July 22nd story in the New York Times reads, "**Sierra Club Says It Must Confront the Racism of John Muir. Muir**, a monumental figure in American environmentalism **and a Sierra Club** founder, traded in 'deeply harmful racist stereotypes,' the organization said." The same day **sierraclub.org** posted, "The most monumental figure in the *Sierra Club's* past is *John Muir*. ... *And Muir* was not immune to the racism peddled by many in the early conservation movement. He made derogatory comments about Black people *and* Indigenous peoples that drew on deeply harmful racist stereotypes, though his views evolved later in his life."

According to vault.sierraclub.org/john_muir_exhibit/about/, "His words and deeds helped inspire President Theodore Roosevelt's innovative conservation programs, including establishing the first National Monuments by Presidential Proclamation, and Yosemite National Park by congressional action. In 1892, John Muir and other supporters formed the Sierra Club 'to make the mountains

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glad.' John Muir was the Club's first president, an office he held until his death in 1914."

What John Muir (and many of today's ranchers, loggers and caretakers of the land out West) did not foresee, was the takeover of conservative ideals by liberal thinkers who continually seek to "save us from ourselves." Muir loved the west and its grandeur, the vast expanses of pristine lands ready to help expand the West into a huge machine bent on improvement for all mankind.

Through Muir's work, practices, policies and procedures were put in place through the Interior Department that guaranteed lands reserved "for the people" to enjoy the beautiful and enticing expanses of the West. At the same time, lands were set aside for logging, grazing, mining, power production and recreation, all under the Interior Department.

Not that long ago the Sierra Club and Tucson's Center for Biological Diversity teamed up with other liberal conservationists to create a new force in the West - a force so politically potent that policies that had been in place since long before Muir's time were wiped away by willing state and federal administrations. What had once been a world-class source of wood and wood products was effectively shut down because environmentalists convinced the government that the Spotted Owl was endangered by the logging industry. All of a sudden, what had been conservative and effective forest management was discontinued for the sake of a bird that it turns out was never in danger!

The trees and the mountains, together form the basis of an ecosystem that supports wildlife, sustains the creation of life-giving oxygen and supports the snow melt that provides water for meadows and streams in the lowlands. When left to mother nature, forests and grasslands care for themselves. The wildlife consumes what would become flammable in summer and they fertilize the land so that new, nourishing growth will flourish.

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Over eons, people in the West learned how to manage their ecosystems so that they can produce wood products, support sheep and cattle grazing, grass and hay production, fishing and other items unique to the West's forest lands.

When the "Tree-huggers" forced the people of the Northwest to abandon their forests in favor of the Spotted Owl, a downward spiral began that spread throughout California (24 this year), Washington 16, Oregon 15, Idaho 12, Montana 9, Utah, Colorado and Arizona 5 each ... not to mention Wyoming, Nevada and New Mexico. Without proper land management, forests become so glutted with trees that a fire that makes it to the crowns will consume tens of thousands of acres. Improper land management allows grass fires in the lowlands to destroy hundreds of thousands of acres and hundreds if not thousands of homes and structures.

All that is needed to stop the spread of wildfires in the West is a return to the old, established, conservative land and animal husbandry that created this incredible and productive land so precious to its inhabitants. I'm sure John Muir would be delighted!

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Thursday, September 24, 2020

A Silent Majority?

I'm an incessant reader. I read at least ten online magazines every day. This includes 'zines as diverse as **The Hill**, **TIME**, **Real Clear Politics**, **NYT**, **WaPo**, **Fox News First** and **Glenn Beck's The Blaze**. I've got a huge appetite for news and commentary from a wide political spectrum, as you could see.

This is just the lead into a story I ran across the other day claiming the **Silent Majority** could be still very silent, even more than it was back in the day.

The very liberal **Washington Post** (WaPo) had this to say back on July 30th: "The concept of the 'silent' or 'hidden' voter, which has existed on the fringes of political research and polling for decades, gained renewed interest after **Trump**'s victory in 2016. While national polling was largely accurate in predicting Trump would lose the popular vote to **Clinton**, state-based polls in key swing states undercounted the level of support for him."

WaPo also revealed that: "The president has repeatedly touted a 'silent majority' of Americans he expects to show up en masse on Election Day to shock pollsters and help him repeat his surprising 2016 victory. His campaign has developed lengthy slide shows aimed at disproving public polls and predicting a swell of unexpected support that will propel Trump past Democratic rival Joe Biden in November."

According to the way the paper presents it, I must be a silent majority member because I want no part of pollsters, whether in person, on the 'phone or online. I value my time in a very protective way. What I think is none of their damned business! I write two columns a week, commentaries on what I think due to the treasure trove of information out in our American ether. If they want to know how I feel about this or that, all they gotta do

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is read my column or listen to my Podcast that changes with the columns twice a week at www.tedthayer.com.

The political atmosphere today has changed from what it was four years ago. Back in 2016 folks weren't shy about wearing hats and tee-shirts depicting their presidential preferences. And they were enthusiastic about the debates and rallies. Today, there are creepy people disrupting peaceable gatherings and making life miserable for those who would dare to speak up about their support for The Donald or their Crazy Uncle Joe. I seems like riots in our major cities - including looting, breaking, burning, beatings, murder and a war-like attitude about the police and first-responders - are keeping the Silent Majority quiet this time around.

My take on the whole thing is that hordes of registered Democrats and Independents are going to stay home in November or not vote for any presidential candidate. By the same token, it's likely that Republicans and the Silent Majority will turn out again to the surprise of both major parties, all the pollsters, the pundits and the mainstream media.

I haven't been able to find the data I ran across that convinces me this year's election is going to precipitate a landslide on a scale like Lyndon Johnson's 486 to 52 victory in 1964 and Ronald Reagan's 525 to 13 win in 1984. Suffice it to say that my recollection has Democrats polling something on the order of 35% , Independents 53% and Republicans 74% as saying the Silent Majority most represents them and the people they know. If that data is true and holds up, Trump will have a monster mandate to keep on keepin' on!

Stay tuned, troops. There's plenty of water to go under the bridge before the 2020 elections are finished and a president is elected.

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Monday, September 28, 2020

Global Warming vs CA Fires

It wasn't that long ago that California Governor **Gavin Newsom** with Senator and Vice-Presidential candidate **Kamala Harris** posed for a photo op condemning **global warming** in front of a burnt out home in Auberry, CA. Newsom claimed that the cause of the state's widespread wildfires was global warming.

September 16th, *gvwire.com* wrote, "As California senator and vice presidential candidate Kamala Harris and Gov. Gavin Newsom toured Creek Fire damage yesterday, they visited the remains of a home across the street from Pine Ridge Elementary School in Auberry.

"In a Facebook message posted later that evening, **Trampas Patten** criticized Harris and Newsom, accusing them of using his family's tragedy for political gain.

"What has me really frustrated right now is the fact that these two politicians used my parents loss for a photo opportunity to push their political agenda! Political party wouldn't have made a difference in this moment. Decent human beings that have character and class, wouldn't air someone else's misfortune on national television!" Patten wrote."

Excuse me. Whatever happened to **Climate Change**?

Remember the doom and gloom back in the '70s, when politicians and scientists were wringing their hands over **Global Cooling**. The new ice-age was just around the corner! Then, Al Gore published his well-documented, award-winning movie *An Inconvenient Truth* claiming that we were surely headed for Hell-on-earth because of **Global Warming**. Remember? Then warming/cooling leveled off - stabilized, if you will - so the

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politicians and climate scientists changed the vernacular again, calling it Climate Change. Remember?

Today, we have wildfires in the West and hurricanes in the East, all blamed on global warming - by politicians and climate scientists. Trends in global temperature or location don't appear associated with size or frequency of hurricanes or fires. With little exception, the hurricanes haunt the southeast and, with two exceptions, the worst fires seem to concentrate in the West. Here is a list of the worst fires in US history.

1871 - 3,800,000 acres up in flames in Peshtigo, Wisconsin
1902 - 1,000,000 acres in Yacoult Fire in WA & OR
1947 - 205,678 acres in Acadia Nat'l Park, Maine
1970 - 175,425 acres in Laguna CA
1988 - 1,200,000 acres burn in Yosemite CA
2004 - 5,000,000 acres of scattered wildfires in Alaska
2007 - 500,000 acres in Simi Valley CA
2011 - 538,049 acres burnt in Wallow Fire in AZ & NM
2014 - 250,000 acres in Okanogan County, Washington
257,000 acres Rim Fire, Yosemite Nat'l Park, CA
2018 - 153,000 acres Camp Fire in Northern California
2020 - 1,000,000+ acres SCU Lightning Complex N CA

I couldn't find a cyclic nature to these numbers relative to climate change, global cooling or global warming. So, my conclusion is it's all politics!

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Thursday, October 1, 2020

My Mini Vacation

This is a report that you're going to have to suffer through for a week! I'm on a mini-vacation to visit with a couple of lady friends from my High School days.

One of my ladies is a very attractive and very buff woman who happens to be the only great-grandmother Zoomba Instructor in the world, Millan (Campos) Chessman. The other is the 1958 Monterey Union High School Prom Queen, Maxine (Davis) Mason, and she is still a stone-cold peach!

These two gals get together every few months to chew the fat over dinner. The Zoomba lady, Millan, flies in from San Diego to visit with her friend, the Prom Queen, Maxine, who lives in Monterey. Both girls, into their 80s, have been widows for some time.



I still don't quite understand why I was called to have dinner at the Wharf with these gals. But, I can say this much: At whatever

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age, going to dinner with a Babe on each arm in Monterey, California has got to be one of the biggest thrills of my life! Eat your heart out, Clint Eastwood!

The trip for me is from Globe, east of Phoenix, to Blythe California for lunch. Then it's on to Barstow for an overnight stay to rest my old bones. The next morning it's off for Monterey with a lunch stop in Bakersfield.

My Zoomba lady and I are staying at the same hotel, so after I'm settled in, I'm to go pick her up at the airport and get her checked in. Dinner for the two of us is next on the agenda ... at the Sardine Factory on Cannery Row. After dinner the plan has us leafing through our 1958 High School Yearbook. Very comfortable, very intimate, very open-ended.

After breakfast Monday morning, I'm off for Big Sur with Millan, the Zoomba lady, in the passenger seat. We're visiting what once was Camp ¿Quién Sabe?, a summer camp created in 1956 by my mom and dad (Ruth & Duke Thayer) for the Monterey Recreation Department. Then it's lunch at Nepenthe, a very cool high-end restaurant once frequented by movie star Kim Novak. After lunch it's back to Monterey, where my San Diego lady picks up her rental car so she can go off and visit with other friends and family while I try to get in nine holes of golf. In the early evening, after all of this activity, the three of us (the scrawny ol' dude from Arizona, the Babe from San Diego and the Monterey Prom Queen) gather for dinner at the Wharf. What a thrill! What is it the Valley Girls used to say? OhMyGod!

Tuesday morning, Ms. Zoomba and I are going sight-seeing after breakfast. It's Carmel beach, the 17-mile Drive, a stroll down Cannery Row, a visit to my childhood home and a tour of the recently renovated MUHS football field. For lunch, we're hosted by lady Olga who, I'm told, makes the best Mexican food in Central California.

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After that, I'm on the road again, headed home to Globe via Bakersfield, Barstow and Blythe.

Wow! I could do that anytime with just the slightest nudge from those Babes. And maybe a side trip to Vegas for cards and a show!

I'll let ya know how everything turned out on Thursday, October 8th, OK?.

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Thursday, October 8, 2020

Welcome to My World

I'm sorry, troops. I had promised a report on my adventures with my dear lady friends over in Monterey California. It can wait. Right at this moment, I think this is more important:

Have you ever just awakened in the middle of the night with a tune running through your head? It's after midnight October 1st and I just did! It was an old country song, "Welcome to my world", a hit back in 1962 by Jim Reeves covered by Kitty Wells and Dean Martin in late 1965, Faron Young and Ricky Nelson in 1966 and Elvis Presley in 1973.

Welcome to my world, won't you come on in?
Miracles, I guess, still happen now and then.
Step into my heart ... leave your cares behind.
Welcome to my world, built with you in mind.
Knock and the door will open; seek and you will find;
Ask and you'll be given, to keep this world of mine.
I'll be waiting here with my arms unfurled;
Waiting just for you. Welcome to my world.

What a wonderful song! God's greatest gift and my greatest love wrapped into one lyric, strong enough to wake me in the middle of the night; just so I could scribble these magnificent words and pass them along another day.

You can listen to them on YouTube here :

<https://youtu.be/NS5OO3MEkFo>

Maybe it was anticipation of this week's adventure with my lady friends in California - or not - but it got my attention. As I read this missive, it's 1:56am on October 1st, 2020. I thought it was important. Now I can sleep.

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Monday, October 12, 2020

Love My Girls!

I had promised a report on my adventures with my dear lady friends over in Monterey California. So here we go! It's a long one ...

In response to a note I sent out to my twice-weekly email contacts in August, a lady friend wrote back the following: "Planning a trip to visit Monterey and Maxine around October. Why don't you join us for dinner on the wharf?"

Millan Chessman is the only Great-Grandmother Zumba Instructor in the whole world, a very buff Monterey Union High School chum from 1958! Maxine, the gal she referred to, was the 1958 MUHS Prom Queen! Holy crap, people! These are two Babes, and one is inviting me to dinner with the two of them!

Millan lives near San Diego and flies in to Monterey every four months or so to visit with her friend Max, who was not only the 1958 Prom Queen, but also a major-league MUHS cheer-leader!

Millan Chessman is 80, will turn 81 in early December, followed a week later by her good friend Maxine, also turning 81. Both ladies are widows. Neither has remarried. I'm the Kid here, troops, because I don't turn 80 until January. Oh, man! There's just something about older women. And I had an invitation to hang with two Babes from Monterey, California. (Heck, I only live 1,000 miles away in Arizona!)

There was no way an old leech like me could refuse such an invitation, so we planned it for the first Sunday-Monday in October. Wow!

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It was tough on my old bones, but I drove from Globe, Arizona two days both ways through Phoenix, Blythe, Barstow, Bakersfield and Paso Robles to get to Monterey, where it was 62 and the fog (yes, FOG) was thick as pea soup! Oh, compared to high 90s in Globe, it was absolutely wonderful.

After checking in at the Motel, I picked up Millan at the Airport and was informed that I was late! Ummmm ... we don't want to go there. At any rate, we got my lady Millan checked into her Motel room, freshened up and arrived at exactly six o'clock on the dot, reserved for dinner at The Sardine Factory, a high-end restaurant on Cannery Row. She had a veggie-burger while I chowed down on oysters-on-the-half-shell. We shared a Margarita, each sipping off the other's side. It was an adventure and we reminisced about teenage fun and mischief and this and that.

After dinner we took the long way back to the Seaside EconoLodge Bay Breeze, a nice, very affordable and accommodating Motel on North Fremont Street. Unlike my first stop at the Ramada in Barstow, with freight trains outside all night, the EconoLodge was mostly quiet and sleep was easy, especially with a full tummy, the World's Best Margarita and the knowledge that my Babe was just two doors away and safe.

Monday morning, I was up at 7:30 and it didn't take long to get ready for an adventure South to Big Sur. The itinerary had us leaving at 8:30 for breakfast at Denny's or the Bakery. Millan wasn't ready and said we weren't supposed to go until 9:00. (Sage advice, guys - you don't argue with a woman who is your senior by one day, much less 13 months.) So, I fiddled around for a half-an-hour while Millan got herself ready to rumble! Continental breakfasts at the bakery were easy to put together - my Zumba Lady with a pastry, coffee and cream, and me with pineapple-upside-down cake and espresso. Yummy!

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We chatted and made small-talk for the one-hour fog-shrouded drive to Big Sur. We stopped in at the Park Information Station and discovered that we couldn't park next to the meadow where we planned to disembark for a short hike. Parking for access to that area, bathed in sunshine, was off-limits. We wanted to hike into what was once the beginnings of Monterey's ¿Camp Quien Sabe?, founded in 1956 by my Mom and Dad. That was not to be.

However, the Ranger said we could park across the highway at the first turn-out from the Station and take the trail that led toward the old campgrounds. So, that we did. The hike wasn't very far until I recognized that it was over two miles, a trek that an old girlfriend and camp counselor and I used to take back in the '50s Summers. I think our total hike this year was maybe three-quarters of a mile! We got some cool pictures and I got to test out my knees. Millan, who is in extremely great shape, asked if I'd like to run. NOT EVEN! But, we had a wonderful time hangin' out in the Redwoods of Big Sur!

Then, it was off to Nepenthe, a super-high-end restaurant perched on the cliffs above the Pacific Coast at Big Sur since 1949, when it was built around a cabin first constructed in 1925. Kim Novak used to hang out there.

My Millan is a real, honest-to-goodness, down-in-the-trenches woman, the kind all men fear. You know, guys ... some women like to shop. My sister-in-law, MaryEllen, was one of those! She loved to window-shop. She taught my wife, Claudette. So it was with the Zumba Lady. I don't know what other guys do when their women go into the "shop" mode, but I was terrified! I went and waited in a six-foot separated "Social Distance" lunch-line to save her a place so we could order, but after some 35 minutes I was next and she still hadn't come out of the gift shop!

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Well, I gave up my place and decided to go back to the bench outside the Gift Shop and wait. After only a few minutes, she was done. She had bought some earrings and a tee-shirt, both very nice. Then, we climbed the stairs together, ordered lunch and drinks (somehow we didn't have to wait!) and had a great time chatting, enjoying the sunshine and the great view.

Guess what? After lunch she wanted to go buy a hat. Yeah. A hat. Men, be advised - be prepared for a long wait if your lady is shopping for a hat! Well, it only took a half-an-hour, but she came out wearing the damndest hat I had ever seen! It looked wonderful on her. Was it worth the wait? (Ummmm ...) Absolutely!

We made our way back through the coastal fog to Monterey in time to get Millan to her car rental at a little after two o'clock. She had things to do and other friends to visit, so we agreed to meet back at the Motel about five o'clock to spruce up for dinner at the Wharf.

I had an appointment with Max (remember Maxine, the Prom Queen) to get together and go cruise Monterey between twoish until a little before 5:00. We went to places Max had never been to before. We hit my home located on the hill above the High School and we did drive-bys of homes I had lived in years before. We rode to the top of Jack's Peak, a spot the kids used to go to at night to make out. Max said she'd never been there in the daytime! We had a great time cruising. And we ended up in the parking lot next to the Wharf looking to pick a spot close by before we went to dinner. What a magnificent adventure!

Max and I went back to the Motel to wait for Millan. When this gal goes on vacation, time has no meaning! She showed up at a little after 5:30, just in time to freshen up and get us going to the Wharf for dinner at 6:00 er, 6:15? No problem! Our host was an old friend of Maxine's who welcomed us with open arms later in

Thayer's Wild Bunch VIII

the evening. The plan was that we were all to go Dutch and I would buy the drinks and catch the tip.

Millan got the humongous Margarita, Max got the monster Sangria with extra cherries and I wanted the house special Bloody Mary all covered with shrimp and veggies. Wow! What fun! We had a wonderful time with the waiter, who had to come light our heater every few minutes. (This is Monterey in the early Winter with fog and a cool breeze which means you need a sweater and maybe an outdoor heater.) Millan got some kind of a salad, I think, and Max ordered Calamari (Squid, to you older folks) and she ordered up a second round of that high-end Squid for me. Now, I thought we were going to share - but being the guy at the table, I must have been mistaken! I got a bite of salad, a sip of Margarita and was expected to eat all the Squid. It was wonderful and fun ... and the remains of my Calamari went home with Max in a doggie bag! I only had one drink (I was the driver, buying the drinks and putting up the tips.) My girls, on the other hand, got blasted. And, it was just so much fun, I'd do this again in a New York minute!

We dropped Maxine off at her home in Del Rey Oaks and then took the long way home to the Motel. It was a nice evening with wonderful friends.

Tuesday morning, I checked out and Millan got ready for breakfast at Denny's in downtown Monterey. It was a tent affair in the cool, foggy air of the California Central Coast. But, before we left the motel, I gave her my green and gold super-thick MUHS Letter Sweater because she had been freezing her tatas off at dinner on the Wharf! Millan was just floored! (And I got hugs!)

We dragged Monterey and PG for a while and then went back to the Motel to get Millan checked out and get her car turned in. After she was assured that she had a ride to the airport, we went

Thayer's Wild Bunch VIII

to PG, near Asilomar, where Olga, the Mexican lady (who I'd call a walking gold mine if she could have her own hole-in-the-wall restaurant) fed us lunch. It was Green Chile Rilleno, white beans and Mexican angel-hair spaghetti (called Sopa Seca de Fideo) with an unbelievable salsa! She was a very gracious host, as sweet as any lady you would ever want to meet. And the meal was to die for! What a great way to start my return home.

You know the rest of the story. Millan and I traded hugs and exchanged a sweet kiss as I left for home some 1000 miles away. There's talk about trying this again in late January. First, though, I need to recuperate!

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Thursday, October 15, 2020

Kiss Me Once

In my travels across the internet, I've run across this song by Harry James and his Orchestra with singers Kitty Kallen and Hellen Forrest, and by Dorris Day, June Christy, Peggy Lee and Louis Armstrong. There's a verse for the song that I remembered and wrote down, but I haven't been able to find it anywhere these days. Is it real or just my imagination?

(The lyrics to It's Been a Long, Long Time)

Never thought that you would be
standing here so close to me ...
There's so much I feel that I should say ...
But words can wait until another day.

Kiss me once and kiss me twice
then kiss me once again ...
It's been a long, long time.
Haven't felt like this, my dear,
since can't remember when ...
It's been a long, long time.

You'll never know how many dreams
I've dreamed about you ...
or just how empty they all seemed without you ...
So, kiss me once and kiss me twice
and kiss me once again ...
It's been a long, long time.

(The lost lyric)

You'll never, never know how much I missed you ...
You'll never, ever know how much I cared ...

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So, kiss me once and kiss me twice
then kiss me once again ...
It's been a long, long time.

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Thayer's Wild Bunch VIII

Monday, October 19, 2020

Sandpiper

My adventures visiting Monterey, California with my lady friends Millan and Maxine have rekindled a fondness for the place I grew up - Monterey and the Central California Coast. Oh, I so yearn to return to that place so dear to my heart. Problem is, you've got to be "fixed" or own your own digs to be able to afford the cost of living!

Still, a three or four times a year visit is great, as I discovered the first week of this month (October) with my dear friends. I wish there were more of us because we keep slowly fading away into oblivion as older folks tend to do.

There was a movie, starring Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor, that just blew everybody's mind. It was a love story that took everybody by storm! It was wonderful and the movie's score was a monster hit. *The Shadow of Her Smile* ... the hit theme from ***The Sandpiper*** with incredible views in the Opening Credits. This is the essence of the Monterey peninsula. Enjoy.

<https://youtu.be/vbT0zk588ds> Opening Credits

<https://youtu.be/6W20hPoo658> Vic Damone

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Thursday, October 22, 2020

Letter Sweater

I've written recently about my mini-vacation to Monterey California to visit and recreate with two very lovely lady friends from the Monterey Union High School Class of '58. In my report last week, I wrote that I gave my Letter Sweater to Millan Chessman because she was freezing her tatas! Since graduation back in 1958, I've worn that sweater maybe four or five times.

There is something about being a gentleman around lady friends ... stuff some guys learn through association with men who understand the importance of walking on the street side of the sidewalk with a lady. It's the handling of the chair when seating a lady for lunch or dinner. And, it's that corny thing about opening doors!

Back in the day, letter sweaters were a status symbol. Guys who had them were held in high esteem because of the amount of effort required to earn one in the sports arena. I earned mine on the swimming team. I did 100 yard 'fly, 400 yard relay, diving competition and I lettered every year 1956-1958.

A High School athlete with a Letter Sweater was a trophy for many young ladies back in the day. Girls "going steady" with a jock wore their guy's Letter Sweater as a badge of honor. Class rings worn around girls' necks were also a hint of romance with a young man very much in demand.

I truly hadn't considered the significance of giving Millan my Letter Sweater when I did. It just seemed to me at the time to be the right thing to do. I just wanted the lady on my arm to be as comfortable as possible, and a gift of a heavy, thick sweater to keep the cold off her fit the bill. It really was a gift, and not some sort of a signal that we were adults "going steady." Yet, there

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was a subtle under-pinning to this warm garment, a reassurance, if you will, that my lady-friend can count on me, come hell or high-water!

Giving my Green and Gold MUHS Letter Sweater to that beautiful lady was a spur-of-the-moment kindness meant to keep Millan warm in cool and foggy Monterey, California. Hopefully, it unintentionally cemented a long overdue close relationship with a dear friend.

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Thayer's Wild Bunch VIII

Monday, October 26, 2020

Fox in Socks

<http://www.tedthayer.com/10-26-2020%20Podcast.mp3>

Ummmm ... no politics today. Instead I'm reading Dr. Seuss' ***Fox in Socks*** cold like I did on KIKX in Tucson back in 1968! Enjoy the fun with the kids. To listen, copy (or click) the url above.

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Thursday, October 29, 2020

Debates

I remember being a member of the Monterey Union High School Debate Team back in the '50s. We had so much fun going through the process of formal debating. We went to other schools to do battle in the arena of words.

It was so simple and so complex at the same time. Side one was given three minutes to deliver the proposition; Side two then had two minutes to rebut it; and then Side one had one minute to offer closing arguments. Then they changed sides. Side two - three minutes; Side one - two minutes; Side two - One minute. The amount of time allotted each side changed, if I remember correctly. Sometimes longer or shorter. But the format was always the same. Side one delivers the proposition; side two gets the rebuttal; side one closes. Just as it is in court before a judge!

How wonderful it would be if the political debates were done in that same matter!

I watched this year's final Presidential debate last week with my daughter Janet. We each laughed or squirmed uncomfortably at different times during the debate. I lean toward the conservative side; she's an oh-so-slightly left-leaning centrist.

The "debate" wasn't really a debate. In my opinion, it was a mish-mash of badly posed gotchas that even the moderator couldn't control. I was pleasantly surprised by NBC's Kristen Welker ... she was supposed to be a far left freak who would trash the President at every opportunity, but I thought she did a very even-handed and professional job that I would characterize as better than any other in this election cycle.

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The Hill wrote the following overnight last week: "Pollster Frank Luntz told Fox News on Thursday night that if poll predictions are wrong about the 2020 election between President Trump and Democratic nominee Joe Biden, his 'profession is done' in terms of faith and confidence from the public.

"Recent polls show Biden ahead nationally in some polls by double digits, with the former vice president ahead in the majority of battleground states. Biden is also competing with Trump in states like Georgia and Texas, which are normally carried by Republican candidates.

"The assessment comes nearly four years after President Trump defied almost all polls, upsetting former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in the 2016 presidential election by winning the Electoral College, 304-227. Trump, however, lost the popular vote.

"Fox News anchor Bret Baier asked Luntz during the network's pre-debate coverage on Thursday night what the consequences would be for pollsters if the industry gets it wrong again.

"Well, I hate to acknowledge it, because that's my industry — at least partially — but the public will have no faith. No confidence. Right now, the biggest issue is the trust deficit. And pollsters did not do a good job in 2016. So if Donald Trump surprises people, if Joe Biden had a 5- or 6-point lead, my profession is done.'

"Many election forecasts, including from The New York Times and FiveThirtyEight, gave Clinton more than a 70 percent chance of winning the morning of Nov. 8, 2016.

"On Oct. 21, 2016, the Times 'Upshot' even went as high as giving the former secretary of State a 93 percent chance to take the White House.

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"The RealClearPolitics index of polls gave Clinton a 3.2 percent advantage nationally on the eve of the election. The Democratic nominee captured the popular vote by 2.1 percentage points.

"Biden currently leads Trump in the RealClearPolitics index of polls in key battleground states by 4.1 percentage points."

Frank Luntz' post-debate focus group of undecided voters surprised even the pollster himself. Nobody moved a finger when Luntz asked for a show of hands of those who thought Biden would be better for the economy. But every single hand when up for Trump.

Who won the last debate? Like Luntz, I'd call it a draw.

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Monday, November 2, 2020

Election Day

One more day. I don't know about that. There's a feeling afoot that sounds like insurrection. What with Da Proud Boys, BLM, Antifa, QAnon, and random crazies out there, I just don't know. But, hey ...

Only one more day until America Votes for the next President of the United States of America.

Many of you know me as "Terrible Ted", the Announcer on KQSS-FM. Others know me as Ted Thayer, the News Guy on KIKO Radio. Others might remember me from the turn of the Century as the Vice-Chairman of the Gila County Democrat Party. Some of you may feel as Ronald Reagan and I once did, "I haven't left the Party, it left me!" That's one of the reasons why I registered NPD some years ago.

My dear old friend, August Valentine "Bill" Hardt, the longest-serving male Legislator in Arizona history, used to go on KIKO Radio every election year and tell who he thought should be elected and why. Now, I'm no Bill Hardt, but I'd like to continue that tradition in the print media. I'm writing to get people in Gila County to get out and vote.

I know that Gila County's Republicans will re-elect Tommie Martin Supervisor of District One. I support her, even after the cool smear job her opponent did on her this time out. In her tenure since taking the reigns from Ron Christensen, she has worked tirelessly for Gila County and especially for Rim Country forests and residents.

District Two Supervisor, Incumbent Tim Humphrey is a good man with almost four years of experience under his belt. But,

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I've got two bones to pick with him and the District Three Supervisor, Chairman Woody Cline, another good man.

The District Two and Three Supervisors voted to go back on a long-standing pledge to financially support our Gila County Community College, and they disapproved critical portions of a regional "Opportunity Zone" authorized by the Federal Government, effectively removing a swath of land from consideration for massive development grants and great opportunities for investors.

Fred Barcon is running as the Democrat Candidate for District Two. Fred is a well-known Gila County (and Arizona) contractor and developer who has been intimately involved in the nuts and bolts of Gila County economic development for many decades.

Bernadette "Bernie" Kniffin, also a Democrat, wants to be the District Three Supervisor. Bernie is a well-respected NAU educated San Carlos Apache woman, the Nnee Bich'oo Nii Services Director for the San Carlos Tribe and has the Tribal Council's endorsement,

Niether of these two good people can be elected unless Gila County Democrats turn out in droves! Each needs more than double the vote-count they got in the Primary Election. I like them both because they are REAL Democrats!

The Sheriff's race is already done. Incumbent Adam Shepherd won the Primary hands down and sane Democrats would not want to challenge him with the likes of Christopher Bender, a Deputy with 18 years of uniformed experience, seven of them with the Gila County Sheriff's Office. Bender has no Administrative experience to speak of, so I'm out!

Gila County's Arizona Legislative District Eight was exciting for a while because challenger Neal Carter was beating Incumbent

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Representative Frank Pratt by 50 votes. When the smoke cleared, however, Pratt had won by 53. David Cook, despite this Spring's controversies, won his place at the table handily. Pratt and Cook will be joined by Democrat Sharon Girard in the General election wherein the best two vote-getters are the ones who get elected. I like the Incumbents.

The Arizona Legislative District Eight Senate will be head-to-head between Republican Incumbent T J Shope and Democrat Challenger Barbara McGuire. McGuire started the election cycle off by filing papers to replace fellow Democrat, Arizona District One Congressman Tom O'Hallerhan. Barb missed the boat on that one but was able to corral the Democrat spot against Shope. McGuire, who lives in Kearny, was an Arizona House member from 2007 to 2010 and was in the Arizona Senate from 2013 to 2016. I think this race is going to be a nail-biter! From my political perspective, it looks like Democrats vs. Mormons again. Whoever turns out biggest, wins.

"Gabby's Husband" Mark Kelly, the astronaut, has no credentials as an elected official and for that reason I'm rooting for Martha McSally, the incumbent U.S. Senator from Arizona.

I checked out the Propositions and found that Recreational Marijuana, Prop 207, is opposed by 92.2% of the folks who submitted opinions, leaving only 7.8% in support. (I'd bet the stoners were too occupied to bother writing in favor!) I'm good with a Yes vote on this because it decriminalizes stuff here in Arizona that's been going on for decades.

Prop 208, wants more money for education, and I feel it's a ruse. We already have laws on the books that do the same thing, just not as over-reaching. There are 14 Yeas and 16 Nays in the Arizona Publicity Pamphlet. I say we're spending enough and just not managing as well as we could. I'm voting No.

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I have some very strong opinions about how the national elections are being handled by the Mainstream Media and for that reason I'm not recommending a candidate for President. For what it's worth, I think the Silent Majority will decide the Presidency this time.

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Thursday, November 5, 2020

Who Asked

I was reviewing a list that was sent to me Tuesday. Every one of the people on the list had asked for a donation to their campaign or the Republican party.

I got a number of requests from the Democrat National Committee and the Democrat Congressional Committee but no Democrat asked me, a former Gila County Democrat Vice Chair, for one stinkin' penny!

Republicans, on the other hand, had been banging on my pot because I had donated \$100 to Newt Gingrich some years back as well as \$50 to Sheriff Joe and \$100 to Senator Martha McSally.

The Donald Trump campaign asked.
So did Vice President Mike Pence,
Sarah Huckabee Sanders,
Eric Trump,
Donald Trump Jr,
Nikki Haley,
Sean Spicer,
Newt Gingrich,
John Boehner,
Paul Ryan,
Congressman Jim Jordan,
Congressman Devin Nunes,
Congressman Drew Ferguson,
Congressman Mike Waltz,
Congressman Steve Scalise,
Congressman Dan Crenshaw,
Congressman Tom Emmer,
Congressman Mike Gallagher,
Congressman Bob Gibbs,

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Congressman Rodney Davis,
Congressman Glenn Grothman,
Congressman David Joyce,
Congressman Darin LaHood,
Congressman Steven Palazzo,
Congresswoman Cathy M. Rodgers.
Congresswoman Liz Cheney,
Congresswoman Ann Wagner,
Congresswoman Debbie Lesko,
Congresswoman Elise Stefanik,
And so did Senator Martha McSally!

I'm just a chump from the boonies in Arizona, but Republicans have been busting chops trying their best to keep Arizona Red.

I have attempted to remain aloof from the Red & Blue conflagration in my writings, and I hope it showed. Arizona is now a Blue State with an incredible Democrat turnout and the majority of ballots cast were done early.

Joe Biden won Arizona, and Martha McSally was turned out by Mark Kelly, our new US Senator.

The Gila County Treasurer, Democrat Debi Savage, after many years of service was turned out by her Republican opponent, Monica Wohlforth. And both Woody and Tim were returned to their County Supervisor Seats.

Both the Recreational Marijuana and School Funding Propositions passed handily.

Thank goodness we only do this craziness every four years!

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Monday, November 9, 2020

Love 

I wrote some kind words to a sweet lady on my Facebook page just the other day. She seemed to be having a hard time and it appeared she needed a friend. So, I just told her I'm glad to have her as a friend. I have something approaching 2,500 "friends" on Facebook, she's among them. I hope my few words and the Heart Icon were helpful.

I like to use the Windows and Facebook Hearts when writing to convey kindness and support. The heart also shows love. There are a couple of treasured friends I've spoken of (and with) on Facebook, by email, Messenger and my Website. A genuine fondness has developed that binds us together not only as classmates, but good, kind, loving friends that the Heart Icon helps to reinforce.

My Heart represents the love that binds good friends together. It also represents shared hugs among close friends. In general, it represents the warm encouragement and support friends have for one another.

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And while you're at it ... share the Love!
Semper Fi.



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Thursday, November 12, 2020

Dear Friends

It's great when you have good friends to hold you and love you and be there for you and share your joy ... but what about the loss of your life's partner? Oh, my dear Lord! So painful but, isn't this why friends were created?

This last 30 days has opened my eyes to the importance of old and dear friends.

Over a month ago, out of the blue, I was invited to come to dinner with two lady friends that I had last seen at the 60th Class Reunion of Monterey Union High School's Class of 1958. I was floored!

It was late August when this [edited] message arrived by email: "Planning a trip to visit Monterey [edited] around October. Why don't you join us for dinner on the wharf?" We shared a number of emails between then and the first weekend in October, working out plans and an itinerary.

The result was an incredible visit to one of the most beautiful places on earth, including a trip to Big Sur, lunch at a very high-end restaurant south of Big Sur once frequented by Kim Novak, Dinner at a great restaurant on Cannery Row, tours of Monterey, Carmel and Pacific Grove and the promised dinner at the Monterey Wharf with my two lady friends.

It was an unbelievably fun experience, one filled with memories, one I look forward to repeating early next year.

The best part of our October visit for me, however, was sharing our histories. Both of my companions were widows, one for two years the other for twenty. I was the widower, just fifteen months

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away from my wife's passing. We all had missing spouses as well as our High School Class Camaraderie in common. Talk about creating strong bonds!

Even though my friends and I are sans spouses, we have developed an incredible bond because we have so much in common. These are now my good friends who hold on tight for a hug, generously share their love, and delight in our memorable experiences.

I can't tell you if life gets any better!

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Monday, November 16, 2020

SCOTUS

I've purposely laid off the politics for the last few broadcasts because I wanted to see what the fallout is from this year's Presidential election. So far it's stunning. Stop and consider.

While the mainstream media has banged the pot that President Donald Trump must concede the election to former Vice-President Joe Biden, he has pressed every legal avenue to either invalidate the election or swing the Electoral College in his favor. That's fair when you consider the 2000 election that went to the SCOTUS (Supreme Court Of The United States) and wasn't decided until December 14th that year.

This time around, there is ample evidence that it will again come before the SCOTUS, probably based on wide-spread inattention to states' voter laws. This brings "equal treatment under the law" into play.

The 14th Amendment requires that no state can make or enforce any law that will "*deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the law.*" These provisions require the government to treat people equally and impartially. But what if they're dead?

I ran across an excerpt from a Tucker Carlson episode a while back. It's thirteen minutes long, but it brings to the front the prospect (with graphic evidence) of widespread abuse of voter rolls in America. If you want to watch it, be prepared to wait a minute:

<https://realclearpolitics.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=61572bb8acf7b8704903af7b8&id=9c8f7a6105&e=ccc66db0f0>

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The clip is [also] available in this email at my website:

[http://www.tedthayer.com/11-16-2020 Broadcast - SCOTUS.eml](http://www.tedthayer.com/11-16-2020%20Broadcast%20-%20SCOTUS.eml)

The whole point of today's column is to assure you that whoever our next President is, he will take office lawfully and legitimately. Take that to the bank!

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Thursday, November 19, 2020

Searching

Sunday, for some God-awful reason, I woke up at 4:40am, did my early-morning business and then on a whim, turned on my PC to watch Newsmax. They were running an old Billy Graham crusade revival - one of his best. He was preaching about the human soul.

Wikipedia tells us that "**William Franklin Graham Jr.** (November 7, 1918 – February 21, 2018) was an American evangelist, a prominent evangelical Christian figure, and an ordained Southern Baptist minister who became well-known internationally in the late 1940s. One of his biographers has placed him "among the most influential Christian leaders" of the 20th century.

"As a preacher, he held large indoor and outdoor rallies with sermons that were broadcast on radio and television; some were still being re-broadcast into the 21st century. In his six decades on television, Graham hosted annual "Crusades", evangelistic campaigns that ran from 1947 until his retirement in 2005. He also hosted the radio show *Hour of Decision* from 1950 to 1954. He repudiated racial segregation and insisted on racial integration for his revivals and crusades, starting in 1953; he also invited Martin Luther King Jr. to preach jointly at a revival in New York City in 1957. In addition to his religious aims, he helped shape the worldview of a huge number of people who came from different backgrounds, leading them to find a relationship between the Bible and contemporary secular viewpoints. According to his website, Graham preached to live audiences of 210 million people in more than 185 countries and territories through various meetings, including BMS World Mission and Global Mission.

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"Graham was a spiritual adviser to U.S. presidents, and he provided spiritual counsel for every president from Harry S. Truman (33rd) to Barack Obama (44th). He was particularly close to Dwight D. Eisenhower, Lyndon B. Johnson (one of Graham's closest friends), and Richard Nixon. He was also lifelong friends with another televangelist, the founding pastor of the Crystal Cathedral, Robert Schuller, whom Graham talked into starting his own television ministry."

In essence, Billy was letting the world know that you are the epitome of God himself - if only you believe! Even though you came from the womb of a woman, you were created in the image of God. If you can believe it, you may be your mother's baby, but you are God's child!

You - because of that special relationship - are assured a place at the right hand of God if only you believe it! You don't have to get up in front of crowds of people like Billy Graham. You don't have to shout it from the mountain-tops. All you have to do is, in your heart, believe your sins are forgiven. And you will have a special place in Heaven if you just believe that Jesus died to make you free!

Billy Graham was telling me that from decades in the past at 4:45 in the morning. I think that speaks for itself.

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Monday, November 23, 2020

Disobedience

As they used to say back in the early 70s on Monty Python's Flying Circus, "The Larch." Oh! Ummm - "And now, for something completely different."

My copy of A.A.Milne's "When We Were Very Young" has an autograph inside the flyleaf. It reads: "January 11, 1985 Ted - To replace the copy you were given at age 3. Love, Your mother." It's one of my favorite books.

Let me read you an excerpt from it - it's titled "Disobedience"

James James
Morrison Morrison
Weatherby George Dupree
Took great
Care of his Mother,
Though he was only three.
James James
Said to his Mother,
"Mother," he said, said he:,
"You must never go down to the end of town,
if you don't go down with me."

James James
Morrison's mother
Put on a golden gown,
James James
Morrison's Mother
Drove to the end of town.
Jame James
Morrison's Mother
Said to herself, said she,

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"I can get right down to the end of town and be
back in time for tea."

King John
Put up a notice,
"LOST or STOLEN or STRAYED!
JAMES JAMES
MORRISON'S MOTHER
SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN MISLAID.
LAST SEEN
WANDERING VAGUELY:
QUITE OF HER OWN ACCORD,
SHE TRIED TO GET DOWN TO THE END
OF TOWN - FORTY SHILLINGS REWARD!"

James James
Morrison Morrison
(Commonly known as Jim)
Told his
Other relations
Not to go blaming him.
James James
Said to his Mother,
"Mother," he said, said he,:
"You must *never* go down to the end of town
without consulting me."

James James
Morison's mother
Hasn't been heard of since.
King John
Said he was sorry,
So did the Queen and Prince.
King John
(Somebody told me)
Said to a man he knew:

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"If people go down to the end of town, well,
what can *anyone* do?"

(Now, then, very softly)

J. J.

M. M.

W. G. Du P.

Took great

C/o his M*****

Though he was only 3.

J. J. Said to his M*****

"M*****," he said, said he:

"You-must-never-go-down-to-the-end-of-town-
if-you-don't-go-down-with ME!

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi

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Thursday, November 26, 2020

Vespers

Well, it's Thanksgiving already! So I have a treat for you.

My copy of A.A.Milne's "When We Were Very Young" is one of my favorite books. The last entry in it is, I think appropriate for this day and especially this evening at bedtime.

*Little Boy kneels at the foot of the bed,
Droops on the little hands little gold head.
Hush! Hush! Whisper who dares!
Christopher Robin is saying his prayers.*

*God bless Mummy. I know that's right.
Wasn't it fun in the bath tonight?
The cold's so cold, and the hot's so hot.
Oh! God bless Daddy - I quite forgot.*

*If I open my fingers a little bit more,
I can see Nanny's dressing gown on the door.
It's a beautiful blue, but it hasn't a hood.
Oh! God bless Nanny and make her good.*

*Mine has a hood, and I lie in bed,
And pull the hood right over my head,
And I shut my eyes, and I curl up small,
And nobody knows that I'm there at all.*

*Oh! Thank you god, for a lovely day.
And what was the other I had to say?
I said, "Bless Daddy," so what can it be?
Oh! Now I remember. God Bless Me.*

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*Little Boy kneels at the foot of the bed,
Droops on the little hands little gold head.
Hush! Hush! Whisper who dares!
Christopher Robin is saying his prayers.*

Happy Thanksgiving.

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Thayer's Wild Bunch VIII

Monday, November 30, 2020

Why Not Me?

It's bothered me for almost a year-and-a-half: Why did Claudette die before me? She was my senior by three years, three months and three days. But, why should that make a difference? We all know people in advanced years, yet they just keep on truckin'. So, how does that happen?

The first sign of deteriorating health with my baby was the worsening hump in her back at shoulder level. Claudette was an accomplished Cosmetologist who got her first California License at age eighteen. She toiled over barber chairs for many decades, taking time off only to raise our two kids, John and Janet.

Claudette's hump-back wasn't really noticeable until she finally retired at age 64, when she took to sitting in her La-Z-Boy chair, playing with the cat and watching TV. That spate of un-activity was the beginning of the end for her.

She developed COPD, having smoked for some 45 years, after quitting at the ripe ol' age of 55. She lost a breast to cancer in 1992, but survived 27 years! Along the way, she developed arthritis in her neck and back, as well as her fingers, knees and ankles.

In time, she developed neurological problems as the result of a fall in a Tucson parking lot back in the late '70s. That turned out to be the icing on the proverbial cake. My sweetheart was falling apart and there wasn't a damned thing I could do about it!

She passed away on July 29th, 2019 - a victim, it turned out - of an aggressive cancer in her abdomen. God sure handed her a load of strange blessings. But she was at peace when she left us.

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The question remains: Why her and not me?

I'm OK with admitting to my association with alcoholism, with prostate difficulties, edema, a detached right retina, disrhythmia, controlled cholesterol and dry skin. But the odds of me croaking from any one of those conditions is remote at best!

So the question remains: Why not me? Well, for starters, I've led a charmed life! My mom once told me I was so lucky that if I fell in a deep pile of wet cow manure, somehow I'd come up with a dozen roses! So maybe that's it. I just haven't lived enough yet; and by the same token, I haven't suffered enough, yet.

God damn! I miss my Claudette!

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Thayer's Wild Bunch VIII

Thursday, December 3, 2020

Winter

Holy smokes! Can you believe it's almost Winter?

The Winter Solstice, as it's called, is the best time to get married, they say. That's because it has the longest night of the year!

The Winter Solstice happens on Monday, December 21st this year. That's the official start of Winter, which will continue until the Vernal Equinox, better known as Spring, happens on Saturday, March 20th, 2021.

The Farmers Almanac Long-range Inter-mountain West forecast for Winter 2020 into Autumn 2021 is as follows:

"Winter temperatures and precipitation will be slightly below normal, on average. The coldest periods will be in early to mid-December, late January, and late February. Snowfall will be near normal, with the snowiest periods in early and late December, late January, and late February. April and May temperatures will be below normal in the north and above normal in the south, with near-normal precipitation. Summer temperatures will be cooler than normal in the north and above normal in the south, and it will be slightly rainier than normal. The hottest periods will be in late June, mid-July, and mid- to late August. September and October will be warmer than normal, with near-normal precipitation."

Thanksgiving this year was something, eh? Well, here's some retrospect from the Old Farmers Almanac:

"In a 1789 proclamation, President George Washington called on the people of the United States to acknowledge God for affording them 'an opportunity peaceably to establish a form of government for their safety and happiness' by observing a day of

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thanksgiving. Devoting a day to 'public thanksgiving and prayer,' as Washington called it, became a yearly tradition in many communities.

"Thanksgiving became a national holiday in 1863. In that year, during the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln made his Thanksgiving Day Proclamation. He asked his fellow citizens to 'to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next as a day of thanksgiving and praise ...' It was not until 1941 that Congress designated the fourth Thursday in November as Thanksgiving Day, thus creating a federal holiday. However official, the idea of a special day for giving thanks was not born of presidential proclamations. Native American harvest festivals had been celebrated for centuries, and colonial services dated back to the late 16th century.

"Thanksgiving Day, as we know it today, began in the early 1600s when settlers in both Massachusetts and Virginia came together to give thanks for their survival, for the fertility of their fields, and for their faith. The most widely known early Thanksgiving is that of the Pilgrims in Plymouth, Massachusetts, who feasted for 3 days with the Wampanoag people in 1621. Turkey has become the traditional Thanksgiving fare because at one time it was a rare treat. During the 1830s, an eight- to ten-pound bird cost a day's wages.

"Even though turkeys are affordable today, they still remain a celebratory symbol of bounty. In fact, astronauts Neil Armstrong and Edwin Aldrin ate roast turkey in foil packets for their first meal on the Moon."

Hope you had a Happy Thanksgiving! Now, following Black Friday, we can get on with the joy of Christmas shopping!

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Monday, December 7, 2020

Infamy

I was not yet a year old on December 7th, 1941, and I don't remember anything special about the day. But, I'm pretty sure my mom and dad were petrified!

As President Franklin D. Roosevelt proclaimed to a joint session of the U.S. House and Senate the next day, "Yesterday, December 7, 1941 - a date which will live in infamy - the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by the naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan."

He spoke for six-and-half grim minutes:

"The United States was at peace with that Nation and, at the solicitation of Japan, was still in conversation with its Government and its Emperor looking toward the maintenance of peace in the Pacific. Indeed, one hour after Japanese air squadrons had commenced bombing in the American Island of Oahu, the Japanese Ambassador to the United States and his colleague delivered to our Secretary of State a formal reply to a recent American message. And while this reply stated that it seemed useless to continue the existing diplomatic negotiations, it contained no threat or hint of war or of armed attack.

"It will be recorded that the distance of Hawaii from Japan makes it obvious that the attack was deliberately planned many days or even weeks ago. During the intervening time the Japanese Government has deliberately sought to deceive the United States by false statements and expressions of hope for continued peace.

"The attack yesterday on the Hawaiian Islands has caused severe damage to American naval and military forces. I regret to tell you that very many American lives have been lost. In addition

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American ships have been reported torpedoed on the high seas between San Francisco and Honolulu.

"Yesterday the Japanese Government also launched an attack against Malaya. Last night Japanese forces attacked Hong Kong: Last night Japanese forces attacked Guam. Last night Japanese forces attacked the Philippine Islands. Last night the Japanese attacked Wake Island. And this morning the Japanese attacked Midway Island.

"Japan has, therefore, undertaken a surprise offensive extending throughout the Pacific area. The facts of yesterday and today speak for themselves. The people of the United States have already formed their opinions and well understand the implications to the very life and safety of our Nation.

"As Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy I have directed that all measures be taken for our defense.

"But always will our whole Nation remember the character of the onslaught against us.

"No matter how long it may take us to overcome this premeditated invasion, the American people in their righteous might will win through to absolute victory.

"I believe that I interpret the will of the Congress and of the people when I assert that we will not only defend ourselves to the uttermost but will make it very certain that this form of treachery shall never again endanger us.

"Hostilities exist. There is no blinking at the fact that our people, our territory, and our interests are in grave danger.

"With confidence in our armed forces with the unbounding determination of our people we will gain the inevitable triumph so help us God.

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"I ask that the Congress declare that since the unprovoked and dastardly attack by Japan on Sunday, December 7, 1941, a state of war has existed between the United States and the Japanese Empire."

I'm sure glad I was little at the time and didn't get it. That's so scary.

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Thursday, December 10, 2020

Once Upon a Time

This aging business comes with memories as well as advice for those looking forward to decades yet to come: No matter what your age, enjoy it while you can.

It brings to mind a song - a Broadway song sung by the Somewhere Over the Rainbow Tin-man Ray Bolger with costar Eileen Herlie in the Broadway Play "All American."

Once Upon A Time ... a minor hit by Bobby Darin and Tony Bennett in the early '60s.

Once upon a time a girl with moonlight in her eyes
Put her hand in mine and said she loved me so ...
But that was once upon a time
Very long ago.

Oh, the early days of our marriage were so memorable. I remember the four-legged bath-tub in the apartment in North Bend, Oregon. Both of us climbing into it filled with hot water - splashing and playing like two little kids. So in love - and so innocent.

Once upon a hill we sat beneath a Willow Tree
Counting all the stars and waiting for the dawn.
But that was once upon a time
Now the tree is gone.

Which brings to mind a picnic in the woods of Western Oregon. As a fund-raiser for Mercy Hospital in Coos Bay, I had stayed awake fifteen minutes shy of a week. Claudette and I were rewarded with a mini-vacation to Salem. A photo shows the bread cost 15 cents!

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How the breeze ruffled through her hair.
How we always laughed as though tomorrow wasn't there.
We were young .. and didn't have a care.
Where ... did it go?

One of my most prized photographs of Claudette has her posing
in the dunes somewhere on the Oregon coast in the mid-'50s.
She's wearing a tank-top and a white men's shirt flying in the
breeze. It's a picture of a beautiful girl in her late teens with not a
care in the world!

Once upon a time the world was sweeter than we knew.
Everything was ours - how happy we were then.
But, somehow once upon a time
Never comes again.

Those were the days. We raised two beautiful children, over the
years grew together, suffered all the travails of living as a couple,
and made it into the Autumn of our years. But, somehow ... once
upon a time never comes again. My darling Claudette passed
away long before I ever expected. Yet ... I am so thankful for our
time together.

<https://youtu.be/Zv1Q-qb4Ipo>

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Monday, December 14, 2020

The Holidays

Oh, how I love this time of year!

First, it's Thanksgiving on the Fourth Thursday in November. It's a day to celebrate the beginnings of our great country and the people who toughed it out to help us grow into a World Power ... the people who befriended the local natives that helped them survive the new world. Truly a reason for thanksgiving.

Next it's Winter all of a sudden! The Winter Solstice drops its snow-white cover over much of the Northern Hemisphere - this year on December 21st. Meanwhile, in Australia we have friends who are just getting into the Summer Solstice Down-Under and high double-digit and even triple-digit temperatures. For us, though, it's a time for snowmen and skiing and cuddling up with somebody close with hot chocolate next to a warm and cozy hearth.

Not even a week later, it's Christmas! This year, it's tough because so many people are afraid to mingle for fear of contracting a disease that is so common that even the experts don't agree whether its deadly or benign - a cancer or a cold. Coupled with Thanksgiving, Christmas provides an atmosphere for families to join together and feast both eyes and tummies on the festive trappings of the season. Unfortunately, many families are remaining sequestered for fear of catching or spreading a virus related to the Measles!

At the end of the year, there's this little kid wearing a diaper who steps up to the plate. He's ready to take the scythe away from this year's old man and carry it into the future. It's New Years and 2020, the second decade of the 2,000th year becomes 2021, beginning the third decade in the split-second between 12

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midnight and 12 and one second am. Father Time does all sorts of miracles, but this is one of his best!

Coming up on January 11th is my 80th birthday! Yay! I get to celebrate with some very close friends at the Wharf in Monterey, California. We'll all be octogenarians, by golly! And, there were times when I thought I'd never make it past thirty-five! How wonderful it is to still be kickin' butt and takin' names! And with great old friends who so gracefully share our common bonds. I'm convinced that love is what creates and sustains old friends.

And the Holidays just make it so much better ...

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Thursday, December 17, 2020

Hanukkah

Couldn't let this one get away! Tomorrow, December 18th, is the last day of **Hanukkah**, one of the most exciting of Jewish holidays which ends at dusk. It started at dusk on December 10th.

Hanukkah is a Jewish festival commemorating the rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem at the time of the Maccabean Revolt against the Seleucid Empire. It is also known as **Festival of Lights**.

According to **Wikipedia**,

Hanukkah is observed for eight nights and days, starting on the 25th day of Kislev according to the Hebrew calendar, which may occur at any time from late November to late December in the Gregorian calendar. The festival is observed by lighting the candles of a candelabrum with nine branches, called a menorah (or hanukkiah). One branch is typically placed above or below the others and its candle is used to light the other eight candles. This unique candle is called the *shamash*. Each night, one additional candle is lit by the *shamash* until all eight candles are lit together on the final night of the festival. Other Hanukkah festivities include playing the game of dreidel and eating oil-based foods, such as latkes (which are like thick potato pancakes) and sufganiyot (which is like a round jelly donut), and dairy foods. Since the 1970s, the worldwide Chabad Hasidic movement has initiated public menorah lightings in open public places in many countries.

Although a relatively minor holiday in strictly religious terms, Hanukkah has attained major cultural significance in North America and elsewhere among secular Jews as a Jewish

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alternative to Christmas, and is often celebrated correspondingly fervently.

The **Talmud** says that after the forces of Antiochus IV had been driven from the Temple, the Maccabees discovered that almost all of the ritual olive oil had been profaned. They found only a single container that was still sealed by the High Priest, with enough oil to keep the menorah in the Temple lit for a single day.

They used this, yet it burned for eight days (the time it took to have new oil pressed and made ready).

Megillat Antiochus (probably composed in the 2nd century) concludes with the following words:

...After this, the sons of Israel went up to the Temple and rebuilt its gates and purified the Temple from the dead bodies and from the defilement. And they sought after pure olive oil to light the lamps therewith, but could not find any, except one bowl that was sealed with the signet ring of the High Priest from the days of Samuel the prophet and they knew that it was pure. There was in it [enough oil] to light [the lamps therewith] for one day, but the God of heaven whose name dwells there put therein his blessing and they were able to light from it eight days. Therefore, the sons of Hashmonai made this covenant and took upon themselves a solemn vow, they and the sons of Israel, all of them, to publish amongst the sons of Israel, [to the end] that they might observe these eight days of joy and honour, as the days of the feasts written in [the book of] the Law; [even] to light in them so as to make known to those who come after them that their God wrought for them salvation from heaven. In them, it is not permitted to mourn, neither to decree a fast [on those days], and anyone who has a vow to perform, let him perform it.

To be succinct ... Hanukkah is a grand party that lasts eight days to celebrate the victory over the Seleucid Empire and God's

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praise for the sons of Israel with His miraculous lighting of the menorah in The Temple for eight days with only enough oil for one.

What's really fun about Hanukkah is that the Jewish folks I know love to celebrate Christmas at the same time by putting up a Christmas tree and giving everyone in the family a present for each of the holiday's eight days of celebration.

Oy - those Jews really know how to party!

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Monday, December 21, 2020

No Santa?

Vicki Dais posted this on Facebook early this month. A great story for the Season that I just couldn't let go ...

I remember tearing across town on my bike to visit Grandma on the day my brother dropped the bomb: "There is no Santa Claus," he jeered. "Even dummies know that!"

My Grandma was not the gushy kind, never had been. I fled to her that day because I knew she would be straight with me. I knew Grandma always told the truth, and I knew that the truth always went down a whole lot easier when swallowed with one of her "world-famous" cinnamon buns. I knew they were world-famous, because Grandma said so. It had to be true.

Grandma was home, and the buns were still warm. Between bites, I told her everything. She was ready for me. "No Santa Claus?" she snorted, "Ridiculous! Don't believe it. That rumor has been going around for years, and it makes me mad, plain mad!! Now, put on your coat, and let's go."

"Go? Go where, Grandma?" I asked. I hadn't even finished my second world-famous cinnamon bun. "Where" turned out to be Kirby's General Store, the one store in town that had a little bit of just about everything. As we walked through its doors, Grandma handed me ten dollars. That was a bundle in those days. "Take this money," she said, "and buy something for someone who needs it. I'll wait for you in the car." Then she turned and walked out of Kirby's.

I was only eight years old. I'd often gone shopping with my mother, but never had I shopped for anything all by myself. The

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store seemed big and crowded, full of people scrambling to finish their Christmas shopping.

For a few moments I just stood there, confused, clutching that ten-dollar bill, wondering what to buy, and who on earth to buy it for.

I thought of everybody I knew: my family, my friends, my neighbors, the kids at school, the people who went to my church.

I was just about thought out, when I suddenly thought of Bobby Decker. He was a kid with bad breath and messy hair, and he sat right behind me in Mrs. Pollock's grade-two class. Bobby Decker didn't have a coat. I knew that because he never went out to recess during the winter. His mother always wrote a note, telling the teacher that he had a cough, but all we kids knew that Bobby Decker didn't have a cough; he didn't have a good coat. I fingered the ten-dollar bill with growing excitement. I would buy Bobby Decker a coat! I settled on a red corduroy one that had a hood to it. It looked real warm, and he would like that.

"Is this a Christmas present for someone?" the lady behind the counter asked kindly, as I laid my ten dollars down. "Yes, ma'am," I replied shyly. "It's for Bobby."

The nice lady smiled at me, as I told her about how Bobby really needed a good winter coat. I didn't get any change, but she put the coat in a bag, smiled again, and wished me a Merry Christmas.

That evening, Grandma helped me wrap the coat (a little tag fell out of the coat, and Grandma tucked it in her Bible) in Christmas paper and ribbons and wrote, "To Bobby, From Santa Claus" on it.

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Grandma said that Santa always insisted on secrecy. Then she drove me over to Bobby Decker's house, explaining as we went that I was now and forever officially, one of Santa's helpers.

Grandma parked down the street from Bobby's house, and she and I crept noiselessly and hid in the bushes by his front walk. Then Grandma gave me a nudge. "All right, Santa Claus," she whispered, "get going."

I took a deep breath, dashed for his front door, threw the present down on his step, pounded his door and flew back to the safety of the bushes and Grandma.

Together we waited breathlessly in the darkness for the front door to open. Finally it did, and there stood Bobby.

Fifty years haven't dimmed the thrill of those moments spent shivering, beside my Grandma, in Bobby Decker's bushes. That night, I realized that those awful rumors about Santa Claus were just what Grandma said they were -- ridiculous. Santa was alive and well, and we were on his team.

I still have the Bible, with the coat tag tucked inside: \$19.95.

May you always have LOVE to share,
HEALTH to spare and FRIENDS that care...

And may you always believe in the magic of Santa Claus!

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Thursday, December 24, 2020

A Christmas Story

By
Harvey Patterson

November 17, 2019

It was Christmas Eve 1942. I was fifteen years old and feeling like the world had caved in on me because there just hadn't been enough money to buy me the rifle that I'd wanted for Christmas.

We did the chores early that night for some reason. I just figured Daddy wanted a little extra time so we could read in the Bible. After supper was over I took my boots off and stretched out in front of the fireplace and waited for Daddy to get down the old Bible.

I was still feeling sorry for myself and, to be honest, I wasn't in much of a mood to read Scriptures. But Daddy didn't get the Bible instead he bundled up again and went outside. I couldn't figure it out because we had already done all the chores. I didn't worry about it long though I was too busy wallowing in self-pity.

Soon he came back in. It was a cold clear night out and there was ice in his beard. "Come on, Matt," he said. "Bundle up good, it's cold out tonight." I was really upset then. Not only wasn't I getting the rifle for Christmas, now he was dragging me out in the cold, and for no earthly reason that I could see. We'd already done all the chores, and I couldn't think of anything else that needed doing, especially not on a night like this. But I knew he was not very patient at one dragging one's feet when he'd told them to do something, so I got up and put my boots back on and got my coat. Mommy gave me a mysterious smile as I opened the door to leave the house. Something was up, but I didn't know what..

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Outside, I became even more dismayed. There in front of the house was the work team, already hitched to the big sled.

Whatever it was we were going to do wasn't going to be a short, quick, little job. I could tell. We never hitched up this sled unless we were going to haul a big load. Daddy was already up on the seat, reins in hand. I reluctantly climbed up beside him. The cold was already biting at me. I wasn't happy. When I was on, Daddy pulled the sled around the house and stopped in front of the woodshed. He got off and I followed.

"I think we'll put on the high sideboards," he said. "Here, help me." The high sideboards! It had been a bigger job than I wanted to do with just the low sideboards on, but whatever it was we were going to do would be a lot bigger with the high side boards on.

Then Daddy went into the woodshed and came out with an armload of wood - the wood I'd spent all summer hauling down from the mountain, and then all Fall sawing into blocks and splitting. What was he doing? Finally I said something. I asked, "what are you doing?" You been by the Widow Jensen's lately?" he asked.

Mrs. Jensen lived about two miles down the road. Her husband had died a year or so before and left her with three children, the oldest being eight. Sure, I'd been by, but so what? Yeah," I said, "Why?"

"I rode by just today," he said. "Little Jakey was out digging around in the woodpile trying to find a few chips. They're out of wood, Matt." That was all he said and then he turned and went back into the woodshed for another armload of wood. I followed him. We loaded the sled so high that I began to wonder if the horses would be able to pull it. Finally, he called a halt to our

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loading then we went to the smoke house and he took down a big ham and a side of bacon. He handed them to me and told me to put them in the sled and wait. When he returned he was carrying a sack of flour over his right shoulder and a smaller sack of something in his left hand.

"What's in the little sack?" I asked. Shoes, they're out of shoes. Little Jakey just had gunny sacks wrapped around his feet when he was out in the woodpile this morning. I got the children a little candy too. It just wouldn't be Christmas without a little candy."

We rode the two miles to Mrs.Jensen's pretty much in silence. I tried to think through what Daddy was doing. We didn't have much by worldly standards. Of course, we did have a big woodpile, though most of what was left now was still in the form of logs that I would have to saw into blocks and split before we could use it. We also had meat and flour, so we could spare that, but I knew we didn't have any money, so why was he buying them shoes and candy? Really, why was he doing any of this? Widow Jensen had closer neighbors than us; it shouldn't have been our concern.

We came in from the blind side of the Jensen house and unloaded the wood as quietly as possible then we took the meat and flour and shoes to the door. We knocked. The door opened a crack and a timid voice said, "Who is it?" "Lucas Miles, Ma'am, and my son, Matt, could we come in for a bit?"

Mrs. Jensen opened the door and let us in. She had a blanket wrapped around her shoulders. The children were wrapped in another and were sitting in front of the fireplace by a very small fire that hardly gave off any heat at all. Mrs.Jensen fumbled with a match and finally lit the lamp.

"We brought you a few things, Ma'am," Daddy said and set down the sack of flour. I put the meat on the table. Then he handed her

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the sack that had the shoes in it. She opened it hesitantly and took the shoes out one pair at a time. There was a pair for her and one for each of the children - sturdy shoes, the best, shoes that would last. I watched her carefully. She bit her lower lip to keep it from trembling and then tears filled her eyes and started running down her cheeks. She looked up at my Daddy like she wanted to say something, but it wouldn't come out.

"We brought a load of wood too, Ma'am," he said. Then turned to me and said, "Matt, go bring in enough to last awhile. Let's get that fire up to size and heat this place up." I wasn't the same person when I went back out to bring in the wood. I had a big lump in my throat and as much as I hate to admit it, there were tears in my eyes too. In my mind I kept seeing those three kids huddled around the fireplace and their mother standing there with tears running down her cheeks with so much gratitude in her heart that she couldn't speak.

My heart swelled within me and a joy that I'd never known before filled my soul. I had given at Christmas many times before, but never when it had made so much difference. I could see we were literally saving the lives of these people.

I soon had the fire blazing and everyone's spirits soared. The kids started giggling when Daddy handed them each a piece of candy and Mrs. Jensen looked on with a smile that probably hadn't crossed her face for a long time. She finally turned to us. "God bless you," she said. "I know the Lord has sent you. The children and I have been praying that he would send one of his angels to spare us."

In spite of myself, the lump returned to my throat and the tears welled up in my eyes again. I'd never thought of my Daddy in those exact terms before, but after Widow Jensen mentioned it I could see that it was probably true. I was sure that a better man than Daddy had never walked the earth. I started remembering all

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the times he had gone out of his way for Mommy and me, and many others. The list seemed endless as I thought on it.

Daddy insisted that everyone try on the shoes before we left. I was amazed when they all fit and I wondered how he had known what sizes to get. Then I guessed that if he was on an errand for the Lord that the Lord would make sure he got the right sizes.

Tears were running down Widow Jensen's face again when we stood up to leave. My Daddy took each of the kids in his big arms and gave them a hug. They clung to him and didn't want us to go. I could see that they missed their Daddy and I was glad that I still had mine.

At the door he turned to Widow Jensen and said, "The Mrs. wanted me to invite you and the children over for Christmas dinner tomorrow. The turkey will be more than the three of us can eat, and a man can get cantankerous if he has to eat turkey for too many meals. We'll be by to get you about eleven. It'll be nice to have some little ones around again. Matt, here, hasn't been little for quite a spell." I was the youngest. My two brothers and two sisters had all married and had moved away.

Mrs. Jensen nodded and said, "Thank you, Brother Miles. I don't have to say, May the Lord bless you, I know for certain that He will."

Out on the sled I felt a warmth that came from deep within and I didn't even notice the cold. When we had gone a ways, Daddy turned to me and said, "Matt, I want you to know something. Your Mother and me have been tucking a little money away here and there all year so we could buy that rifle for you, but we didn't have quite enough.

Then yesterday a man who owed me a little money from years back came by to make things square. Your Mom and me were

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real excited, thinking that now we could get you that rifle, and I started into town this morning to do just that, but on the way I saw little Jakey out scratching in the woodpile with his feet wrapped in those gunny sacks and I knew what I had to do. Son, I spent the money for shoes and a little candy for those children. I hope you understand."

I understood, and my eyes became wet with tears again. I understood very well, and I was so glad Daddy had done it. Now the rifle seemed very low on my list of priorities. He had given me a lot more. He had given me the look on Mrs. Jensen's face and the radiant smiles of her three children. For the rest of my life, Whenever I saw any of the Jensens, or split a block of wood, I remembered, and remembering brought back that same joy I felt riding home beside of my Daddy that night. He had given me much more than a rifle that night, he had given me the best Christmas of my life..

Merry Christmas, my friends. May yours come somewhere close to as great as this story portends.



Monday, December 28, 2020

Red Marbles

A friend Messaged me this story a coupla weeks ago. It seemed appropriate considering the situation in which we find ourselves this holiday season. It's a good read and a great narrative.

I was at the corner grocery store buying some early potatoes. I noticed a small boy, delicate of bone and feature, ragged but clean, hungrily appraising a basket of freshly picked green peas.

I paid for my potatoes but was also drawn to the display of fresh green peas. I am a pushover for creamed peas and new potatoes. Pondering the peas, I couldn't help overhearing the conversation between Mr. Miller (the store owner) and the ragged boy next to me.

'Hello Barry, how are you today?'

'H'lo, Mr. Miller. Fine, thank ya. Jus' admirin' them peas. They sure look good..'

'They are good, Barry.. How's your Ma?'

'Fine. Gittin' stronger alla' time.'

'Good. Anything I can help you with?'

'No, Sir. Jus' admirin' them peas.'

'Would you like to take some home?' asked Mr. Miller.

'No, Sir. Got nuthin' to pay for 'em with.'

'Well, what have you to trade me for some of those peas?'

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'All I got's my prize marble here.'

'Is that right? Let me see it' said Miller.

'Here 'tis. She's a dandy.'

'I can see that. Hmm mmm, only thing is this one is blue and I sort of go for red. Do you have a red one like this at home?' the store owner asked..

'Not zackley but almost.'

'Tell you what. Take this sack of peas home with you and next trip this way let me look at that red marble'. Mr. Miller told the boy.

'Sure will. Thanks Mr. Miller.'

Mrs... Miller, who had been standing nearby, came over to help me.

With a smile she said, 'There are two other boys like him in our community, all three are in very poor circumstances. Jim just loves to bargain with them for peas, apples, tomatoes, or whatever.

When they come back with their red marbles, and they always do, he decides he doesn't like red after all and he sends them home with a bag of produce for a green marble or an orange one, when they come on their next trip to the store.'

I left the store smiling to myself, impressed with this man. A short time later I moved to Colorado, but I never forgot the story of this man, the boys, and their bartering for marbles.

Several years went by, each more rapid than the previous one. Just recently I had occasion to visit some old friends in that Idaho

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community and while I was there learned that Mr. Miller had died. They were having his visitation that evening and knowing my friends wanted to go, I agreed to accompany them. Upon arrival at the mortuary we fell into line to meet the relatives of the deceased and to offer whatever words of comfort we could.

Ahead of us in line were three young men. One was in an army uniform and the other two wore nice haircuts, dark suits and white shirts...all very professional looking. They approached Mrs. Miller, standing composed and smiling by her husband's casket.

Each of the young men hugged her, kissed her on the cheek, spoke briefly with her and moved on to the casket. Her misty light blue eyes followed them as, one by one, each young man stopped briefly and placed his own warm hand over the cold pale hand in the casket. Each left the mortuary awkwardly, wiping his eyes...

Our turn came to meet Mrs. Miller. I told her who I was and reminded her of the story from those many years ago and what she had told me about her husband's bartering for marbles. With her eyes glistening, she took my hand and led me to the casket.

'Those three young men who just left were the boys I told you about. They just told me how they appreciated the things Jim 'traded' them. Now, at last, when Jim could not change his mind about color or size.....they came to pay their debt.'

'We've never had a great deal of the wealth of this world,' she confided, 'but right now, Jim would consider himself the richest man in Idaho ..'

With loving gentleness she lifted the lifeless fingers of her deceased husband. Resting underneath were three exquisitely shined red marbles.

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The Moral? We will not be remembered by our words, but rather by our kind deeds. Life is not measured by the breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath.

Today I wish you a day of ordinary miracles:

A fresh pot of coffee you didn't make yourself ...
An unexpected phone call from an old friend ...
Green stoplights on your way to work ...
The fastest line at the grocery store ...
A good sing-along song on the radio ...
Your keys found right where you left them.

Share this with the people you'll never forget.
I just Did...

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Thursday, December 31, 2020

Happy New Year

Sometimes it takes a long time to gin up the stuff it takes to create one of these narratives. This one was especially rough because there has been so much negativity this last twelve months. I deeply pine for a Happy New Year for everyone, not just for my friends and relations, but everyone!

Like many folks, I want this Covid nonsense gone! (Yeah, I know, it's not going anywhere ... and our usual New Years Rockin' Eve will never be the same.)

But, still, we - the cumulative we - need to accept that the way we practice hygiene, cleaning, sanitation and maintenance of healthy lifestyles pretty much determines whether we will become ill and how badly if we do. It could be anything from the sniffles to full-blown SARS-CoV-2 complicating something as devastating as COPD.

I believe we can all practice the very same things our mothers and grandmothers did to minimize exposure to Polio and Whooping Cough and the Measles. All three of those diseases could be deadly.

My New Year's Resolution is to practice the basic rules of personal hygiene that go back hundreds of years! Here they are again:

1. Wash your hands after coming in contact with anything foreign. Go shopping, but after you get the groceries home, make sure to wash your hands. You could also wipe down any product that is normally handled by shoppers.

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2. Wash your face a couple of times a day. Back in the day, this was almost a routine, especially in the Summer when just keeping the sweat out of your eyes could be a chore.
3. Avoid touching your eyes, nostrils and inside your mouth. Whether or not you're a carrier, this is how diseases are spread. The mucus we all have exudes and accepts germs with alarming ease.
4. Wash the dishes at least daily and rinse them in a weak solution of bleach-water. When the dishes are done and put away, take the time to use some of that bleach-water and make the grand tour!
5. Wipe down the all the counters, table-tops, cabinet handles, door knobs and handles, and then make a quick trip around the house wiping knobs, handles and surfaces in every room.
6. Think of the places you touch every day - and take the time to sanitize them. Inside and outside the car - Steering wheel, shifter, light, turn signal and window wiper stalks, door handles and switches. And the seat-belt clips.
7. Take care of yourself. Get outside in the fresh air and sunshine and do something! Take extra vitamins like A, B1, B12, C, D3, Folic Acid, Magnesium, Potassium, Zinc and 6-8 ounces of any citrus juice.
8. Lastly - when out and about, wear a mask in a close environment with other people. Keep your distance from others - six feet is good. If there is sanitizer available when you're done, use it.

My fervent hope for you and yours in the coming twelve months is that you stay happy and healthy. As Spok would say, "Be well, and Prosper." Happy New Year!

Improvise - Adapt - Overcome. Semper Fi.

Thayer's

Wild Bunch VIII

By J E Ted Thayer

