



The Bunkhouse Chronicle

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Columnist

A weenie for the win

The field of candidates for the 2020 Presidential Challenge Blowout is taking shape just in time for pitchers and catchers — they report for spring training in early February — and what makes this timing so marvelous, so utterly serendipitous, is that it also beginning to look a lot like a mid-season Sausage Race.

The Sausage Race is a baseball tradition born in Milwaukee where, during the seventh inning stretch of Brewers games, mascots dress up like different sausages and go racing around the park. It's a fan favorite, because nothing beats watching a ten-foot kielbasa faceplant on the infield, or a tottering chorizo slamming into an andouille, or an out-of-control bratwurst veering off course and flipping wildly over the dugout rail.

It's hard not to see the burgeoning field of candidates for the American presidency in much the same way.

To wit: video posted by *Mother Jones* magazine of Texas congressman Beto O'Rourke wearing a onesie, and what appears to be a pig mask, while covering "Blitzkrieg Bop" — an otherwise terrific song by The Ramones. To be fair, Beto hasn't formally announced, perhaps because he was too busy live-streaming from a dental chair while getting his teeth cleaned, but I sincerely hope he runs, if only

to see how low the bar is actually set for contemporary American candidates for the White House.

Not to be outdone, software gazillionaire John McAfee has announced his candidacy, albeit from exile on the high seas. McAfee has not paid taxes, by his own admission, for eight years, and has some trouble with the IRS. As to his platform, McAfee told reporters by satellite phone while bobbing around in a nor'wester: "...do not ask me about immigration, foreign relations, education etc. I have no idea."

At least he's honest. Other candidates in the field will undoubtedly wax endlessly about their brilliant solutions to these problems, but on the heels of a month-long government shutdown it's quite clear that no one in American politics has any solutions anymore. For anything.

Instead, it's every weenie for himself.

What's most intriguing about McAfee is his doppelganger strategy, which is to run in absentia by hiring thousands of actors to wear McAfee masks and to make random appearances on the campaign trail. This is an idea he borrowed from Asian nations typically run by military juntas, where the practice

is merely practical. Alas, McAfee has other issues, including a notorious paranoia, and a larger question remains about the unsolved homicide of his neighbor in Belize, for which he remains the prime suspect.

There's also Kamala Harris, who flunked the bar before having an affair with San Francisco's "Downtown" Willie Brown, and then rode those coattails into the Attorney General's office where she set about destroying California law enforcement. Harris likely has the inside track to the nomination, but only after shoring up her bona fides as a soldier in the Army of Savonarola by strapping Justice Kavanaugh to the Judas Cradle during his confirmation hearings.

One might expect a former prosecutor to understand the requirement for evidence before putting Kavanaugh to the test, but its apparent that large numbers of American voters no longer care about such mundane details as due process.

And, if political genealogy still matters, it's probably worth noting that Harris' guru and benefactor, Downtown Willie, once gave a speech where he lauded Jim Jones, of Jonestown fame, as "a combination of Martin King,

Angela Davis, Albert Einstein (and) Chairman Mao."

Uncle Joe Biden might still jump into the race, though at this point the chances of a white septuagenarian serial groper surviving the myriad temptations of the campaign trail seem a bit slim. Also, there is the problematic issue of him recently admitting that he likes Republicans, which isn't going to sit well with the perpetually furious and congenitally offended DNC.

Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders are interesting sausages, in the same way that Lenin and Trotsky were interesting. Warren will no doubt forever regret her attempt to appropriate a Native lineage, which probably killed her shot at the Oval Office, and it's doubtful Bernie will ever overcome his image as a burned-out church deacon pounding the rostrum and wielding a dog-eared copy of *Das Kapital* like Moses come down the mountain.

One thing I love about

the Sausage Race is that my pick never wins. This is also true of presidential elections. Maybe its because I just put my money on the plain old weenie. You know the one, the great tasting dog with a little bit of ketchup, a little bit of mustard, a decent bun, and maybe a dash of relish. Last time around I bet the farm on Jim Webb — me and five other people in America — but its fun to imagine just where we might be if that reliable old dog had actually found the finish line.

Sadly, the plain old hot dog has no chance in modern America. Zero. Zip. Zilch. Which is too bad because that dog still tastes great, and rarely gives anybody heartburn.

While the chorizos and the kielbasas have all the flash and speed, the plain old weenie has neither. He's just reliably good, and is usually found running a quietly brilliant race, well behind the pack, off camera and off course, right into the wide-open gap in center field.



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SMOKE RULES: Support for the changes has not been unanimous

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rule-making process.

Still others asked for even more flexibility to use fire to restore forests.

Communities interested in promoting prescribed burns will also be able to apply to state regulators for exemptions to occasionally allow higher hourly smoke totals, which would provide even more flexibility.