

Voices In My Head: Day of the Dachshund

By P.J. O’Leary

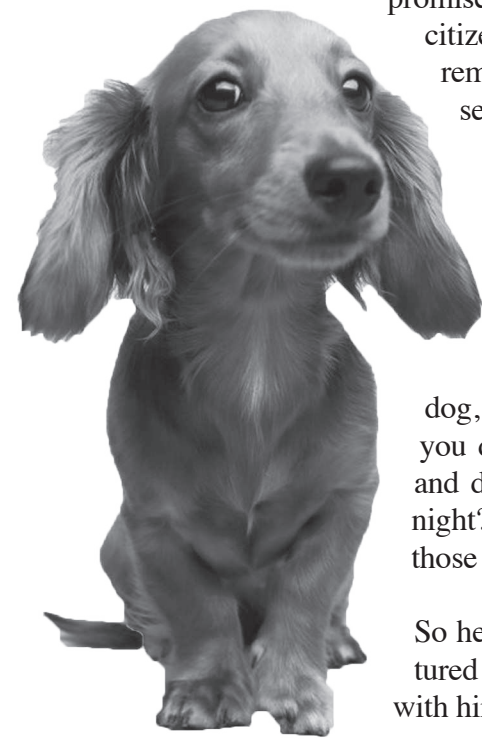
Thanks to the twenty or so of you who have hit me with the “hi sign,” that crazy wave that I mentioned in last month’s column. It has been both gratifying and entertaining. Had I known you would be so accommodating, I would have asked for baked goods instead. But enough of that – we have more ground to cover.

There was an old “Far Side” cartoon which pictured a rather uptight, scholarly looking fellow sitting at a bar next to a kangaroo. The kangaroo, beer in hand, says, “I may not be a zoologist, but I think I know a little bit about marsupials myself.”

Well, I may not be a comedian, but I like to think that I know what’s funny. Monkeys, for example, are hilarious. No film or television comedy has ever been made which was so bad that it couldn’t have been saved by a monkey in a strong supporting role.

Wiener dogs are also quite funny. Also known as Dachshunds, or “porch piranhas,” these stubby legged quadrupeds are funny mostly because they take themselves so seriously. They were spawned in the mind of some unscrupulous eighteenth century German breeder who thought it would be good sport to watch them chase vermin down a hole.

From day one they have been cranky and self-conscious because of their stature. Let’s just say they’re not comfortable in their own natural casings. These days they normally run in packs, much like middle-schoolers, and for essentially the same reasons. They feel that there is strength in numbers. If you get one alone, he typically lies on his side and pees on himself (the wiener dog, not the middle-schooler.) Take heart, middle-schoolers, for you are bright and have great promise. You will grow to become productive citizens. The wiener dog, meanwhile, will remain suspended in an unhealthy state of self-loathing.



Can we really blame the dachshund for his cantankerous nature? I don’t think so. Can you imagine the humiliation if every time you met someone new you wet yourself? That’s no life. Consider this scenario. “I’m a wiener dog, and I’m not dorky enough. Why don’t you dress me up in a Darth Vader costume and drag me all around town on Halloween night? Oh, it’s raining? Maybe I should wear those little vinyl boots, too.”

So here’s to the wiener dog - that funny, tortured little canine. May he one day be at peace with himself.

Remembering Deb’s Dad...

In attending Judge McLean’s Celebration of Life, I realized how much I had missed since being away from Vernonia...the people I’d missed, and the relationships. Memories of Rod McLean and his family bounced in and out of my mind during the celebration, resulting in a sense of loss, but also joy; happy that I’d known this great man being honored – and the family that he loved so much.

Growing up, Rod was my best friend’s dad. Deb’s dad. He was also Danny and Lynnette’s dad, Sandy’s husband, and a brother to what seemed like countless others (if you’d been to a McLean family gathering you’d know what I mean).

For many years the Mclean’s house was my home-away-from-home, and during this time Rod wasn’t a judge, he was a logger. I remember him, Friday evenings, sitting by the fire, decked out in his hickory shirt, red suspenders, highwater pants and wool socks. He’d always hang out long enough to tease us girls about something.

I can hear his voice clearly “Hi Vangiel!” He was always happy to see you – with a big grin that lit up his face.

I will never forget Rod or the warmth his family showed me growing up.

Love to you all. --Vangie

Safety Matters

By Chief Mathew Workman

Now that school is back into full swing I want to remind everyone that the 20mph School Zone Speed Limit (7am to 5pm) is also back in effect. I have been monitoring traffic before/after school and have seen very few violators with most drivers exercising caution. Please be aware of numerous pedestrians (children & adults), vehicles, and buses in the area. Traffic can and will back up especially in the morning. Vehicles will make numerous starts and stops due to the seven crosswalks in the school zone area. Also remember that even though the speed limit goes back up to 25mph at 5pm there are numerous events going on in and around the schools all evening as well as the constant use of the playground equipment by the grade schoolers. Be vigilant, be patient, and be courteous.

The Internet is an amazing medium for keeping in touch with family, friends, business associates, people in government, for socializing, for expressing opinions, and for shopping. All of these can be accomplished from anywhere in the world on most any type of device. During my recent hospital stay I was no more than an hour out of surgery and I was answering emails on my cell phone, much to the dismay of my nurse mind you! Though the Internet is convenient it is definitely not without numerous pitfalls and ways for people to victimize you. The Oregon Attorney General’s office recently announced that they pursued a Milwaukie man for “taking money over the Internet for goods and services never provided.”

Attorney General Hardy Myers stated, “Although shopping online can be convenient and offer a large variety of items, it also can be devastating to your wallet if you pick the wrong retailer.” After receiving numerous complaints and conducting an investigation, the DOJ filed an Assurance of Voluntary Compliance (AVC) with Todd Grange doing business as TheUSSSportsClub.com, AmericanPokerChampion.com, ToddSoft.com, and Bluetooz. Amongst other items, Grange took money for iPods, 2006 Super Bowl tickets, and entries into a poker game featured on a reality television show, computer tech services and laptop computers with no intention of providing what he offered. Under the agreement, Grange will be required to pay back victims in Oregon, Washington, Pennsylvania, New York, California and Texas. He must fulfill orders or refund money within thirteen days of the agreement. If you believe you were a victim of Grange or anyone else you should call the AG’s consumer hot line at 877-877-9392 or the DOJ on line at: www.doj.state.or.us

Some quick tips offered by the DOJ Financial Fraud/Consumer Protection section for shopping on the Internet are:

- Never place an Internet order before checking with the Attorney General’s consumer hotline for complaints about the particular retailer.
- Shop in stores for the same item at a comparable price.
- If an Internet company cannot fill your order in the period of time advertised, they must send you a written notice of delay and allow you to cancel and receive a refund or agree to wait another designated period of time.

You can also use a service like “PayPal” as a middleman so none of your account or credit card information is ever given to the retailer. Use common sense when shopping online and do some simple research of a company before giving any personal or financial information. If you have further questions or need advice you can contact me at the police station 503-429-7335, or send an e-mail to: chief@vernonia-or.gov.

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