

Bob's Corner

Years ago there were signs in restaurants that read, "Watch Your Coat and Hat" because it wasn't uncommon for your hat or coat, or both, to get up and walk away from the coat-and-hat rack on the person of someone who wasn't you. Which reminds me of the guy who claimed that he watched his coat and hat while he ate, and when he finished, his shoes and socks were gone.

All this talk about food also reminds me of a job I had years ago in San Diego, working for a large catering company. I was going to talk this week about clothing, and my problems with color combinations and wearing clothes that should be thrown away. But maybe that topic will hold whilst I discourse on one of my episodes in food service.

The firm for which I slaved ... er ... worked, used a foreign-made van to deliver food. It was, to put it mildly, underpowered. Also, the engine was worn out. Once loaded with hundreds of pounds of food in stainless steel containers, the rig was about as speedy as a damp moth. Plus, it didn't handle well. And "No," if you're wondering, it was not a VW.

One catering job was in Balboa Park, and the quickest way to the site was up Laurel Street. As most anyone knows who has been to San Diego, Laurel is the steepest street in the city. We loaded the "truck," a laughable term in this case, and headed out. I knew we'd need a running start to make the hill, but hit a red light at the base of Laurel. As it was still early in the a.m., I backed up about half a block and took a running start.

Got about 30 feet up the first part of the steep portion, still in first gear with my foot stomped on the gas pedal, and the dang rig stopped. It simply could not maintain forward progress. I don't recall what I said, but it probably wasn't nice. Backed down and decided to try again. Waited about a block away, watching the traffic light sequence, then gunned that beast and got into second gear before hitting the base of the steepness.

Unfortunately, the suspension at that speed did not jibe well with the storm drain that stretched across the roadway. The front of the van rose like "Shamu" on drugs until the rear wheels crossed the drain, and then the van sort of shuddered while the front bounced down. Hard.

Meanwhile, the food and I were having a tough time staying in one place, as this was before safety belts. In an unfortunate occurrence, two of the stainless steel containers bounced off a shelf, hit some other stuff, and the lids popped off. It was not a pretty picture. Had baked beans and potato salad all over the bare, not-real-clean floor. I was a little fearful that the wave of vittles would come forward and overpower me.

Adding to my chagrin, the van had been unable to keep moving forward again; and now I was blocking one lane. Fortunately a kindly cop held up traffic behind me so I could back down, as I could not go forward to make a U-turn because of the weak-sister rubber-band engine.

I did eventually make it to the catering site by going south toward Downtown San Diego on Kettner Blvd., then onto a couple of side streets (not steep), and then up the main road, the name of which I can't recall right now, to the park.

Everyone seemed to enjoy their lunch. Although I did hear a couple of comments about the unusual crunchiness in the beans and potato salad.

(Editor's Note: Views and commentary, including statements made as fact, are strictly those of the letter-writers.)

Typed, double-spaced letters written solely to this newspaper are considered for publication. Hand-written letters that are double-spaced and legible also can be considered.

Cards of thanks are not accepted as letters.

'Just the facts, folks' From Carmen Burgess Cave Junction

"What we are doing to the forests of the world is but a mirror reflection of what we are doing to ourselves and to one another." (Mahatma Gandhi)

"How fortunate for leaders that men do not think." (Adolph Hitler)

There is a battle brewing in the forests of America; the issue at hand being whether to manage, mismanage, or not manage our country's protected resources. It seems that no one can agree on the one best answer, so the campaign to conquer these pristine, ancient lands has become a free-for-all brawl.

Will the special-interest parties divvy up the booty, while imposing criminal restrictions upon its rightful owner? Or, will the People wake up and defend their birthright, the one thing we all have in common, and our national treasure?

As Americans, we are free to make personal moral choices. Go ahead: love, or hate your neighbor. However, we are not, under any circumstance, permitted to covet or steal our neighbor's stuff, especially his earthly inheritance, his Heaven on Terra. If we do, we expect to pay strict penalties, simply because this is a Universal Law.

Perhaps the current sad state of affairs is what President Theodore Roosevelt envisioned while penning the following words:

"Defenders of the short-sighted men, who in their greed and selfishness will, if permitted, rob our country of half its charm by their reckless extermination of all useful and beautiful wild things sometimes seek to champion them by saying that 'the game belongs to the people.' So it does; and not merely to the people now alive, but to the unborn people.

"The 'greatest good for the greatest number' applies to the number within the womb of time, compared to which those now alive form but an insignificant fraction. Our duty to the whole, including the unborn generations, bids us restrain an unprincipled present-day minority from wasting the heritage of these unborn generations.

"The movement for the conservation of wildlife and the larger movement for the conservation of all our natural resources are essentially democratic in spirit, purpose, and method." (From "A Book-Lover's Holidays in the Open," 1916).

It stand to reason then, that I cannot take your portion of our national forests, wilderness, etc. And you cannot give away your portion because you are charged with protecting it for the unborn; of which there are potentially more than the born.

In terms of the local battle brewing on Fiddler Mt., part of the Biscuit Timber Sale in the Siskiyou National Forest, specifically in terms of whether to salvage the burn in/near and old-growth reserve, or protest the logging thereof, let this serve as a reminder that behind the division, hate, blame, and anger is a plethora of facts that dispute the fiction, prejudice, and negativism whose sole purpose is to hide the truth.

All the while, the truth and the one best answer lay hidden awaiting discovery, if only we do not delay. This should be a wake-up call.

For example, are people aware of the history behind the preservation of our coveted lands? In his 1913 autobiogra-

Letters to the Editor

phy, Teddy Roosevelt gives us a rare glimpse of the political climate that spurred him to fight for the protections laid forth in his newly created Forest Service (1905), headed by Gilford Pinchot, its first chief.

"While the Agricultural Appropriation Bill was passing through the Senate, in 1907, Sen. Fulton, of Oregon, secured an amendment providing that the President could not set aside any additional National Forests in the six Northwestern States. This meant retaining some sixteen million acres to be exploited by land grabbers and by the representatives of the great special interests, at the expense of the public interest.

"But for four years the Forest Service had been gathering field notes as to what forests ought to be set aside in the States, and so was prepared to act. It was equally undesirable to veto the whole agricultural bill, and to sign it with this amendment effective.

"According, a plan to create the necessary National Forest in these States before the Agricultural Bill could be passed and signed was laid before me by Mr. Pinchot. I approved it. The necessary papers were immediately prepared. I signed the last proclamation a couple of days before by my signature; the bill became law; and when the friends of the special interests in the Senate got their amendment through and woke up, they discovered that sixteen million acres of timberland had been saved for the people by putting them in National Forests before the land grabbers could get at them.

"The opponents of the Forest Service turned hand-springs in their wrath; and dire were their threats against the Executive; but the threats could not be carried out, and were really only a tribute to the efficiency of our action."

Given this, it is reasonable

and plausible to infer that the lands, originally set aside for protection by any President, cannot be removed, nor manipulated without the express permission of the People. The bottom line is that it is illegal, as well as immoral, to make choices for the People without their consent.

If so, or if not, I hope that people ponder this thought: What legacy will they leave their descendants when the owl -- the symbol of death in Northwest Coast Native American legends -- calls their name?

(Editor's Note: A fee was paid for the preceding letter).

Soccer team help From Laurie Prouty Cave Junction

The Illinois Valley High School soccer team appreciates all the people who helped its members raise \$760 in our last

raffle, donors and raffle ticket-buyers alike.

We are at least half-way toward purchasing new, portable goal posts so the team can play on the new football field at the school. Currently the team plays at Evergreen Elementary.

Practices would continue there, but games could be held at the high school.

Wonderful prizes were donated by Charlie Stoop, a set of custom golf clubs; Kauffman Wood Products, a log-framed mirror; Oregon Caves Chateau, accommodations and dinner for two; Kathi Pistone, handcrafted cards; coach Gary Enoch, a guided fishing trip; Out 'N' About Treehouse Resort, ropes course/zip line for two; and Precision Glass, windshield ding repair.

Donations still can be made to the soccer team at the high school.

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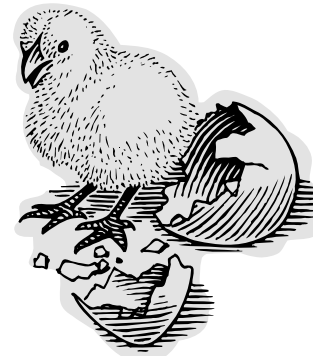
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