

Bob's Corner

This was the week I was going to talk about typographical errors and similar situations that give editors ulcers and premature gray hair and can sometimes get reporters fired. (Terminated from their jobs; not become excited). And typos can lead to corrections, which sometimes get goofed up, which leads to even more hilarity. (If you call threats of libel suits hilarious).

A famous case involves a certain weekly publication whose initials are "Illinois Valley News." It happened years ago before Jan and I arrived, but it's typical of what can happen. An elderly woman brought in a "free" ad for a bunch of kittens. A former employee, messing around, typed an alternate account of the ad, which read that the kittens "would make good stew." And guess which ad was printed? Give up? Of course, I mean of course, it was the "funny" version that got the employee and his co-workers into a stew of their own.

Meanwhile, back in San Diego, a story about a Miss San Diego many years ago had a typo so that one sentence read, "As she began to enter the room, she discovered that she had a pot on her dress."

Another true story from my birthplace (San Diego, in case you haven't read this newspaper for the past 20 years) involved an extremely disgruntled typesetter. Disgruntled heck, he was as angry as a wet cat. What happened is that the guy had been notified that he was being laid off because of automated equipment. Being a sore loser, on his last day he "fixed" a huge employment ad for General Dynamics by incorporating, in large letters, the "F" word in a most creative manner. It was an act of sabotage, and he probably should have been arrested or something.

Another time, a sports writer, unhappy with the publisher, wrote his final column in what some would call an imaginative manner. What he did was to begin each paragraph with a particular letter so that if you read only those letters they spelled a rather nasty exclamation directed at the publisher. No one noticed until the paper was printed, and the writer had moved away. Good thing: the publisher was not real happy about it.

OK, one more. Not exactly a typo, but read on. There was an art beat writer at the former San Diego "Evening Tribune," who had been there around 90 years I think. She rarely spoke, and was known for being in the newsroom as little as possible. On her last day on the job, she hung around though, which seemed really strange to us.

As the presses began rolling off the first edition, she grabbed one from the copy boy who brought them to the newsroom. She opened the paper to the front page of the section with her final story and photo and let go an outrageous cackle. We had never seen her smile before, but wow, she was smiling now. Then she left.

A short time later, and I mean like within 32 seconds, the city editor was on the squawk box shouting, "Stop the presses!" Crews were dispatched to retrieve all the copies that had been loaded into trucks and those already placed in the newsstands downtown. The whole place was in an uproar.

Turned out that the photo, one of those artsy kind of blurred shots of a painting, depicted a naked woman in an odd position. You couldn't tell what it was unless you studied it closely. So the old gal (the writer, not the woman in the photo) had the last laugh.

As for the copies that got away, they became somewhat collectible.

At the beginning of this piece, I was going to only mention one typo situation, and then switch to our four cats and two dogs. But that'll have to wait. And no, they will not make good stew.



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Feed to be
rescheduled
due to
unavailability of crab



What?! No crab?

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Letters to the Editor

(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.

'Thank you' submissions are not accepted as letters.

About Patriot Act, 'It's them or us,' From Ed Zick O'Brien

Everyone should note that our Democratic Sen. Ron Wyden again has voted wrong, this time about renewal of the US Patriot Act.

He gives as reasons his concerns about provisions, which he says are numerous, that could compromise American privacy rights, but I wonder. The act was enacted in late October 2001: four years, two months ago.

Everyone knows that we were terribly susceptible before then, but what terrorist act has been perpetrated since in the USA? None.

Have the worldwide radical Muslims changed? No. They're still devoted to the destruction of what western nations believe. Make no mistake: It's them or us.

They will accept no compromise, and neither can we. So what has changed since the inhuman destruction of the World Trade Towers on 9/11/01 with its 3,000+ people? The answer is the US Patriot Act, and of course, the fact that we now are taking the fight to them wherever they are.

We Americans are jealous of our rights and freedoms, and we need to remain so while continuing to promote similar rights and freedoms throughout the world. But shouldn't the Democrats pull their heads out of the sand and realize that what we fight now is a different type of enemy?

This isn't a country we fight with defined boundaries. Some of them are among us right now, and more are trying to come. This isn't hysteria, for we are catching some of them.

We know that they like big catastrophes that kill and maim as many as possible like the Trade Center. What's next?

Nothing, we hope, but we won't realize that unless we protect ourselves. I believe that the act necessarily infringes on some American's rights, but I also believe that it is temporary; only for the duration.

Our checks and bal-

ances work. The act is for no other reason than to make it possible to locate, identify and capture those willing to do us great harm.


In the four years and two months that the act has been in effect, have we had even one charge of abuse? Come on -- have we? You know that the Democrats wouldn't keep it a secret.

They take great pains and even invent things to be able to point an accusing finger at the Bush admini-

stration. The mainstream media would be all over any hint of such abuses like ants on ice cream.

So far we haven't had one abuse of the act, and not one complaint, so what is Wyden's problem?

Knowing that we need the act, and knowing that there haven't been any abuses, my opinion is that he simply is joining other Democrats in obstructing anything that is done during this Republican administration.



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Correction

There was an error in a Dec. 28 page 1 story about a celebration of Lorna Byrne's 100th birthday Thursday, Jan. 12.

It incorrectly was stated that the RCC Kerby Belt Bldg. is the former Kerby Union High School.

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