

Doc Keiski

Dear and distant,

Howdy from Travis County, just about the middle of the Republic of Texas, and the eastern side of the famous hill country - Luckenback et al.

Before the new wears off, a few impressions. Jeff and Doc started from PDX early on a Monday afternoon. Daybreak Tuesday showed us Rock Springs, Wyoming - a landscape the gods made a long time ago and is mostly worn out. Pick a Voyager photo - any one.

Leaving after dark, we struggled for a few hours through a nearly blinding snowfall on I-80, then turned south and were in and out of the white stuff till Colorado Springs. Daylight around Pueblo, beautiful country still at 6-7000 feet, Trinidad, then into Raton, New Mexico for "coffee" (they mostly don't understand the beverage in these parts). Then came the really good part, as the snow chased our trail into Texas.

The vast expanse of the western Panhandle reminds one of the open sea. The purplish-blue of the Rockies descending over your left shoulder while 40 knot snow blows across the ultimate 2-lane -- it all leaves plenty of room for imagination. Tiny towns, great spare country until the corner of Oklahoma is a mere 10 miles away. After Vernon, it could be anywhere on the Plains and seems, well, unremarkable until one nears Austin and the Hill Country.

Austin itself - well, I don't believe anyplace on the planet has more music per whatever. There's too much for any of it to pay well, almost everyone's real good and then there's the great stuff.

Chris is hooked with the wonderful Sarah Brown (playing bass between Freddie King and Muddy Waters when she was 18) and with his buddy Tony Villanueva & the Derailers (Tony will be noticed!)

Doc, here, will stay as close to the Edge as possible, and try to hook up with the bands that don't give a shit about being stars but make very good money playing everywhere from West Texas to the Gulf. There are monster players here to listen to and learn from, and everything from Psychabilly to Jimmy Vaughn to groove to. Wages are low, but the fever runs high.

So...stay dry, pass the love around and I'll check in when I'm ready for another 2,200 mile drive.

Doc

Stop Fort Clatsop Land Grab

In 1978 Congress authorized Fort Clatsop to include adjacent parts of the original Lewis and Clark trail that led from the fort to the coast, so long as the total area of the park (including any piece of the old trail they chose to include) not contain over 130 acres. In a case of unrestrained empire building, Fort Clatsop's current administration wants to expand tenfold to 1,376 acres, by adding 1,246 acres (or over eighteen-fold per an alternate plan that would add 2,315 acres) to build a new trail on a route that lacks any historical basis, including a mile long section along Sunset Beach Road.

Flexing their power of eminent domain to condemn and take private property, the National Park Service included in its expansion plans property miles from the present park that we clearly told them we do not wish to sell. As environmentally conscious small woodland owner-operators, we take good care of our family farm forestlands, and have paid taxes on them for 40 years, while providing wildlife of every kind sanctuary from harassment.

The Fort Clatsop administration runs a lovely tourist facility, but shows an incredible lack of comprehension about wildlife protection. Quoting from their draft environmental impact statement:

"Evidence shows that elk use of the Memorial is declining. Possible causes could be due to the attraction of open land in adjacent areas, black powder firing demonstrations at the Fort, and/or growth of trees within the park. For whatever reason, it is clear that the park alone cannot sustain elk habitat. Yet the presence of elk have both natural and historic value to the park."

Their less than brilliant solution to having driven off all the elk is to take over a place elk do still find refuge, and run a hiking trail through the middle of it.

Fort Clatsop is a good neighbor as a 130 acre educational tourist facility. They should stay that way, and leave our forest alone, as a place to earn a sustainable livelihood in harmony with nature. If you would enjoy a guided walk through our forestlands, just call.

- Robert C. Stricklin, Stricklin Farm, Pte 2 Box 539, Warrenton 97146 / 503 861-3277



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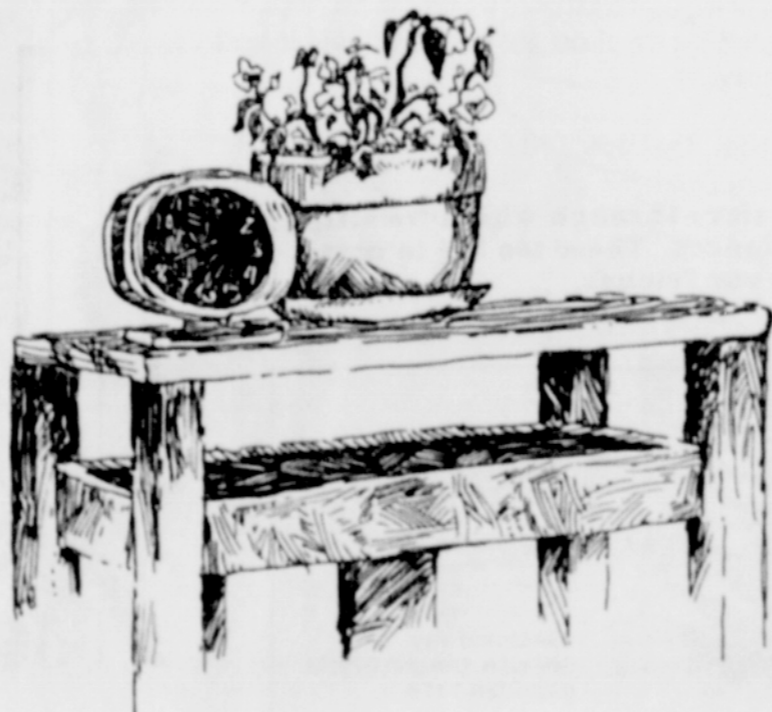
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