



Percy Cerutti, health and fitness sage, tossed off his sedentary, white bread living habits and went about reclaiming his heart and body late in life. Percy, Arthur Lydiard, Bill Bowerman, Adelle Davis, Dr. Kenneth Cooper, and others proselytized, lectured, and jogged aerobic fitness into contemporary culture. I have always considered myself the fortunate beneficiary of their legacy.

Percy describes his visit to a tribe of Australian Aborigines in Arnhem Land. During his stay the tribe engaged in a hunt. A young boy hurled his woomera (a hunting spear) at a kangaroo, missed the creature, then chased the animal cross country for 60 miles before dispatching it. The episode stunned Percy. Few of his urban contemporaries could walk ten miles, let alone run short distances. He vowed to change his life after retirement, set a remarkable course of exercise and personal fitness in the remaining decades of his life, and pioneered the fitness movement that began in the early 70's and continues today.

I stumbled into an essentially regular pattern of exercise partly by predisposition and largely by fortuitous happenstance. The prospect of becoming a house sloth, confined to a televised landscape revolted me. I savor participatory sport. I believe in the intrinsic value of aerobic exercise. It's damn good fun. Cheap. Available on demand.

At twelve I first tasted the exhilaration latent in a distant run. The red sky glow of a house afire caught my attention one evening at dusk. A friend and I sprinted three miles to the site, arriving winded and full of ourselves.

Jim Babson, Lifeguard Emeritus of Cannon Beach, lifetime friend and citizen-athlete par excellence, established a running partnership we've shared for nearly thirty years. Jim and I jogged the sands at Cannon Beach regularly in the early 60's running barefoot, occasioning stares and odd comments from passersby. We were oddities. Jogging was a decade away. No Nike, Reebok, or Adidas companies yet produced running shoes. Our early running peaked one still August morning at low tide, when Jim and I ran from Elk Creek to Arch Cape and back barefooted--a distance of about 14 miles. Our feet were sandpapered raw, but our spirits soared.

Drafted in 1969, I attended Officer Candidate School at Fort Sill, home of the field artillery. Rigid and disciplined, the school ran a West Point program, grinding its candidates down to nubs physically and mentally. Demerits and the "honor system" cut the frail down to size. Lower classmen ("maggots") competed in the mile run while upper classmen jeered and needled from the sidelines. My first mile time was 5:25. A tactical officer challenged my time for purposes of harassment, forcing me to re-run the distance two hours later. I faced off a 5:23 mile under close scrutiny, avoided expulsion, and gloated quietly.

Excessive demerits meant candidates ran a "guided tour" on Saturday. The runs, in formation wearing full field gear, were termed "Jarks", a name derived from an infamous General Jark who piled up heaps of demerits. Candidates Renzullo, Adams, Howard, and Lindsey ran their initial "cherry Jark" three miles uphill and back, lugging a 256 pound rock in a duffle bag, a record I trust still stands at Fort Sill.

During the years 1970-73 I attended graduate school at the University of Oregon. Bill Bowerman's track and jogging programs gained national attention. Steve Prefontaine, Arne Kvalheim, Kenny Moore, and Gerry Lindgren circled the track and hills of Eugene. In the golden era of track and field they were friends and contemporaries, available for beer and banter at Duffy's Tavern and Maxie's. I was hooked.

In the years since I've jogged and biked consistently. The activity preserved my sanity and pered away the dark beer, milkshake, and lamb chop calories.

Accompanied frequently by Jim Babson and Laurie Beers I've completed the Seaside Trails End Marathon, participated in the first Nike Marathon in Eugene (1971), taken part in the Hood to Coast Relay (1989), triathlons, biathlons, mountain bike races, a criterium, 20 years of Seaside Beach Runs, and seven years of Columbia Crossings.

I don't normally prescribe for others, but fitness has rewards. Sweet is beautiful. If your interest in aerobic exercise seeks direction, contact: Sunset Parks and Recreation in Seaside, Dennis Braun or Rich Fenscak at Bikes and Beyond, Mike Stanley at Mike's Bike Shop, or Neal Bramson at the Seaside School District.

Peter M. Lindsey

If you ask three out of twelve people who have had four or more beers, to meet you in a quarter hour, they'll show up in twenty five minutes, drunk.



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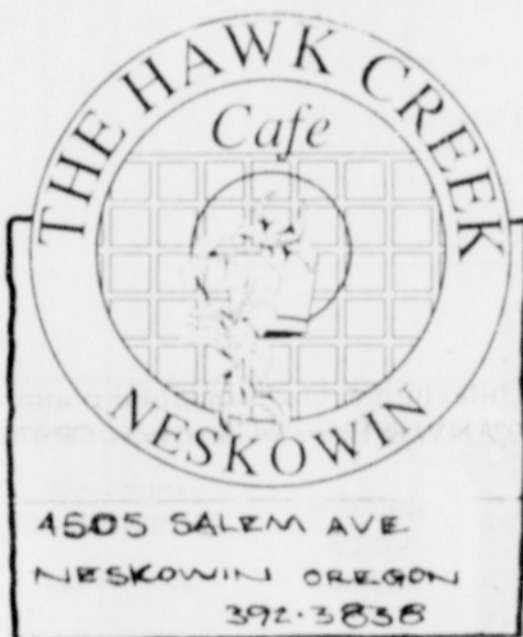
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Inverted Man
by Archie Buchanan

I came upon a man.
He was standing there, without moving, on his
head.
His hair flowed down, down to the ground and
nurtured there.
Roots grew of hair.
Hair, turned into roots, finding new life within
the earth, sending energy back into the body of
the man who stood on his head.
How long had he stood this way when I came
upon him with his feet in the air? So, I asked
him, "Sir, how do you move about; with your
feet in the air and your roots grown from
hair?"
He looked at me and he frowned a bit
(remember a frown is just a smile turned
upside down) before he replied, "I move my
feet slowly and I walk on the sky."



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