



Goodyear, Ariz

We just got here, they are having a war.

Back in Newport, February was proceeding apace, rain, wind and a pervading grey that seeps into the soul til summer seems an eon away and an open vein a reasonable alternative to the wait.

Enter Friend Joe.

"Hey, want to go to war?"

"A war? Well..."

"No, really, it's in Arizona. Ever hear of the Society for Creative Anacronism? It's a bunch of people who dress up like its the Middle Ages in armor and stuff and they carry swords and spears and just have a hell of a time."

"They drink beer and mead and stuff, then on the weekend they get out in this field wearing armor and just knock the dog pucky out of each other. It's wild."

"You'll see the damnest things, people dressed up like knights and mongols and slave girls in chain mail bikinis..."

"Hold it. Chain mail Bikinis?"

"Yep, and not a stitch on underneath."

"Arizona? Sunshine? Chain Mail Bikinis... and they let anybody in?"

"You bet. And we won't even have to pay. My brother in San Diego sells them swords and jewelry and stuff and if we help him set up and maybe help sell, we'll be right in the middle of it all. It's really interesting."

"Chain Mail Bikinis? Authentic Middle Aged Chain Mail Bikinis?"

In Friend Joe's '64 Volkswagen Beetle, we drug the rain with us the full length of sunny California and heard the San Diego weatherman say there had been 2.46 inches of rain there in the last 24 hours.

Arizona is better. Lightning jags and thunder mutters among the distant mountains, but in Estrella park, the night is warm and still. Ah, finally.

People are wandering around in costumes carrying swords, axes, spears and huge gnarley clubs. Joe and brother seem to have tent erection in hand so I appoint myself lookout. No CMB's in sight.

Then on Saturday, they had a war. Hundreds of people in armor line up on opposite sides of a big field. They aren't carrying steel, but weapons made of rattan sticks padded with foam rubber and wound with duct tape. Hmph, I think. Then someone blew a horn and they charged each other. If at that moment, King Arthur & Co. had come around a corner they would have heid themselves right back to Camelot and raised the draw bridge. Unless they saw the weapons.

Then the two armies met.

If a warrior is hit with what would be leathal with steel, he is suppose to die. I saw several cases where this rule was academic. They were knocked colder'n a wedge. One got to ride in an abulance.

Silly as it looks, you don't want one of these guys after you with his padded stick. Not unless you want the dog pucky knocked out of you, you don't.

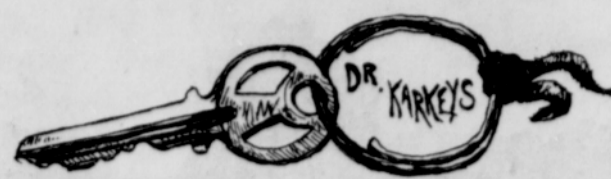
Saturday eve is party night. Costumery ambles among the pavillions, strong drink is consumed. And, finally, holding hands with a huge young man in a fur loincloth and Celtic blue paint, She came. Long, lithe, blond, wearing a Chain Mail Bikini top and a skirt of same so small there was no question. Not another stitch. If they have those in Valhalla I'm signing up to go Viking tomorrow.

COYOTE
Distribution

When you want the word out

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So, you're walking up the beach at night, maybe with your dog, maybe with your kid, or with a friend. The moon is waxing, glowing cool through wisping, swift clouds, the tide's surging whispers fading, then, without warning, a brilliant spotlight spears you as you turn, still walking, shading your eyes.

You stumble, disoriented, now unable to see the sand without the glare and harsh shadows the weapon-like light throws. Perhaps, there's some emergency, there's a search for someone, but there's no call, only the light tracking you as if you were walking a guarded border.

Maybe you're walking home at night, enjoying the warm south wind in your face, and the quiet. A passing car slows, then stops, and a police officer asks for your identification and your reason for being here. A second car appears in case the officer needs assistance. When you ask why you were stopped, you are told that your hat is out of place here. (This may be the pedestrian equivalent of, "Your license plate light was out.")

I have been in places which were under martial law. The readiness of violent force is said to be a response to serious danger to the community. Everyone walks in fear, and in a heightened state of alertness. It is a bit like being in a combat zone. People get killed.

Cannon Beach is not under curfew, and its citizens and visitors must not be treated as if there were terrorists about.

Those of us who have seen the lands of violence resent being reminded of them.

We are at peace, and are here not to fight and win, but to play, and learn.

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The Upper Left Edge is a monthly broadsheet (approximately 12"x21") publication with a current distribution of 5,000. It is circulated throughout the Oregon and Washington coastal communities and larger metropolitan areas which serve them. As stated in the upper left corner of the Edge flag, it is FREE to the vast majority of its readership; though there is a rapidly increasing number of subscribers worldwide. Now in its third year of continual growth, The Upper Left Edge relies on advertising funds to keep it in print.

Advertising rates are as follows:

Business Card Size Ad	\$25.
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