



Mr. Baseball--From the Mail Bag

Dear Mr. Baseball:

I'm a basketball fan, I like football, but baseball leaves me cold. It's so boring. I go to a game (seldomly), and am virtually asleep by the sixth inning. It sucks! How can you defend, let alone name yourself, after this waste of time. I just don't understand your fascination for this mind-numbing game.

Yours, B.D., Topeka, KS

Dear Mr. (Rude noun deleted) For Brains:

I long ago resigned from the job of defending baseball. The elegance of the game does not need someone as insignificant as me to uphold its many virtues.

However, my editor, who is a great fan of the game, came to me on bended knee, a tearful eye, and a roll of cash that would choke a pelican. Although you are an NBA fan, you actually did write a letter so I assume you to be at least an advanced Neanderthal.

And so, for the last time, I descend from the heights of Coogan's Bluff, with the Six Commandments, inscribed on horsehide, from Alexander Cartwright.

**One)** M.L.B. Inc. is NOT baseball. It is the professional arm of a game, I repeat, a game. Baseball is hitting a few to your kid when you get home from work. It's playing catch with a friend on a fine summer day. It's a bunch of cronies playing ball (hard or soft) around a keg and a bar-b-que. M.L.B. Inc. has no more copyright on baseball than McDonald's has on that burger on that bar-b-que. And, by the way, if Bud "Huh" Selig and his band of thugs had been doing their job, children in Taiwan would be making \$2.15 a day making Frank Thomas "Big Hurt" baseball shoes instead of "Air Jordan's."

**Two)** Go to a game, and PAY ATTENTION. Get a red hot, popcorn, and a beer. This is the thing: baseball is action without motion 50% of the time. Which leads us to...

**Three)** Know strategy. This is not a game which is a relic of warfare, where one team seeks to acquire territory from another. It has no clock. The team without the ball does the scoring. If these three things are starting to make a cosmic connection, congratulations, you're paying attention.

**Four)** Know the rules. The basics are easy; three strikes, four balls, three outs, and so forth. But if you really want to appreciate this game, you must put in a little effort. Rules on interference, obstruction, fair & foul rules for particular parks, assists, SF's, Sac's, fielder's choice and so on. Mr. Baseball is EMINENTLY proud that Mrs. Baseball knows what the infield fly rule is.

One thousand years from now, history will judge the American nation as making three real contributions to the world culture; democracy, jazz music, and baseball.

**Five)** Invest a little time in exploring the history of this game. Flood vs. MLB Inc. Would make a formidable doctorate thesis, if you have the ill fortune to desire to be a lawyer.

The lives of the greats are truly inspiring, warts and all: Ruth, Gehrig, Musial, Cobb, Speaker, Williams, and so forth.

And then there are those who shattered under the pressure: Wally Hershberger, Don Wilson, Donnie Moore, Rod Scurry, and the rest. God rest their souls. Their stories are equally interesting. In its long and weird history, baseball has characters that make Dennis Rodman look like your pool boy.

**Six)** When you do go to game (See Two), make it easy on yourself. Relax. On a fly ball, look at the fielders, not the ball. This is particularly important in a mausoleum such as the King Dome.

Buy a program and keep score. It involves you and puts you into the game more than anything, be it a Reds' game at Riverfront, or a Rockies' game at Civic (I still want to call it Multnomah) Stadium.

If you don't know how to score a game, you can send for a free pamphlet to: Mr. Baseball, P.O.Box 442, Manzanita, OR 97130. Please include \$2.99 to cover shipping & handling.

Progress might have been all right once, but it's gone on too long. Ogden Nash

## At the Country Fair

by Dean Bonde

Days are hot, nights are great  
Water's sprayin', children playin'  
Folks talking, communities walking  
Bright stars, no cars  
What sound, music all around  
Ingenious art, lots of heart  
Baby grand in the showers  
Baby Gramps in the flowers

Bird sing, do your thing  
Heavenly food, all is good  
Drums rage, burning sage  
Working teams, lifting beams  
Efficiency everywhere, people really care,  
Dancing feet, feel the beat  
Humans share  
At the Country Fair

Back to Bill's, more cheap thrills

## Counter Culture

by Sandy Rea

One of the first maxims I recall hearing was, "Speak softly, but carry a big stick." As a Baby-booming, Hopalong Cassidy-believing child, it was unthinkable to speak ("children should be seen and not heard"), or consider carrying a weapon, regardless of its inherent practical value to conversation at the item. I was a Good Little Girl.

At forty-nine (and holding), I have adopted the above maxim, with certain alterations: 1. I speak at whatever volume I choose, and, 2. I prefer a chainsaw. Ask City Hall.

It took years to come into owning the person I am, and in 20/20 hindsight, it seems that the educational system might have had something to do with that delay. Perhaps it might serve creativity and curiosity better if children were shot, much as cannonballs, directly from elementary school into college, thereby avoiding the mind-numbing sludge of the junior and high school experience. I recall wondering why we were required to spend those years, Memorize/Test/Forget, like cellular Xerox machines with zits, in hallways that will always smell the way they did in 1958. It still puzzles me. It's as though it were a giant practical joke. "I know (Ha-Ha!!) -- lets throw several hundred kids together at their most anti-social stage, and make them sit still for 7 1/2 hours listening to men who part their hair just above the ear (and comb those 10 inch strands over) talk about isosceles triangles. And just to make it more annoying, let's yammer on about how IMPORTANT this stuff is going to be to them for the rest of their lives!" And they wonder why so many of us dropped out in the sixties. Drugs weren't the only reason for some.

Once free of the educational system, I began to learn, the way so many of us do, from life itself, other people, music, literature, hard knocks. It was by far the better experience. Of the lessons offered, an odd mix of altruism and independence seemed the most attractive, and the one I have managed to hang on to, through various stages, the past few decades. Some of the most satisfying pseudo-post graduate work done was via the privilege of volunteering with our own VOCA (Victory Over Child Abuse) Camp, here in Clatsop County. One of the VOCA songs goes like this;

How could anyone ever tell you  
You were anything less than beautiful?  
How could anyone ever tell you  
You were less than whole?  
How could anyone fail to notice  
That your loving is a miracle?  
How deeply you're connected to my soul!

The first time I heard it I cried, hard, thinking of all the kids who would never hear those words spoken to them, regardless of their truth. Since then, when it's sung it brings to mind the power of healing that comes with believing those lyrics, and how rich our society could become if it were to embrace the kindness it encourages. Maybe it will someday. Our kids sure need it more than they do another semester of verb conjugation.

Until then, I'll practice the different aspects of continuing education as a near-geezer; reading, listening, watching, caring and keeping the chain saw well oiled.

### Northwest Best Places



(503) 738-8108 Seaside, Oregon

One Block From Turnaround

47 N. HOLLADAY DR.  
SEASIDE, OR 97138  
738-8877

**UNIVERSAL VIDEO**

"ALL THE USUAL CRAP  
AND LOTS OF GOOD STUFF  
Too."

STEVE HAUGEN  
JIM HAUGEN



GOURMET PIZZA

A selection of  
OREGON WINES &  
fine BEERS  
always on hand.

Come join us for  
dinner near the  
pounding surf at  
Laneda & Carmel  
in Manzanita

503/ 368-5593

FEATURING MID SIEGEL. BLUES, FRIDAY NIGHTS

### Takilma Forge & Wagon Works

Traditional Hand-forged Iron Work

Gates & Railings

Fireplace Tools,  
Screens & Andirons

Tool Dressing  
& Tempering

Jim Rich  
(503) 592-2681

Hinges & Latches

Horsedrawn Vehicles  
Built to Order

Horseshoeing &  
Hoof Trimming

9345 Takilma Road  
Cave Junction, OR 97523

### WHEEL PRESS, INC.

28 S.W. 1st Avenue  
Portland, Oregon 97204  
(503) 223-4027

JoAnn Honeyman Arthur Honeyman



436-1885



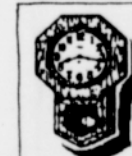
Memorable  
Meals Of  
Honorable  
Mention

RESERVATIONS: 436-2661  
263 N. TIEMLOCK • CANNON BEACH

### Cannon Beach Room Service

Delivering From The Area's Finest Restaurants  
To Your Door

Telephone  
(503) 436-2230



### Clock Doc

Pendulum & Striking Clocks

Cliff Sowle  
AWI No. 26033  
NAWCC No. 0120664

Sales  
Housecalls  
Packing & Shipping  
Service on Grandfathers  
Set-up, Adjustment & Repairs

(503) 436-9515  
Always Call first

155 Elliot Way - POB 974  
Cannon Beach, OR 97110

The poor may inherit the earth, but it  
appears that the rich will inherit the  
church.  
Rev. James A. Pike

## A School for Self & Energy Awareness



An educational  
opportunity for all  
your life times.

Director: Erin Lassell  
4712 SE Belmont • Portland, OR  
503-234-7735

Clairvoyant Readings,  
Classes, Acupressure,  
Bach Flower Remedies