



Ned Hickson

No butts about it, coffee choices are getting really weird

As some of you may remember, I made a New Year's resolution to quit drinking coffee back in January. Though I gave what I feel was a strong effort, my love of coffee eventually won out following the most challenging four hours of my life. So instead of denying myself the pleasure I decided to fully embrace my coffee!

Unless I'm driving. In fact, I wanted to take it a step further by expanding my caffeinated horizons and exploring what the world of coffee has to offer!

As it turns out, this was a huge mistake.

Elephant sized, actually. But we'll get to that.

Many of you probably already know about a coffee that is harvested from the droppings of civet cats called Kopi Luwak — which, loose-

ly translated, means "Butt Coffee."

OK., I made that part up. It actually means "coffee" (Kopi) "weasel" (Luwak), which isn't much better — and a name advertising agencies didn't rush to represent.

Although I think my slogan *Good to the last dropping* had potential.

For those of you who were unaware of civet coffee until now and who are, at this moment, rushing to the sink to spit out that off-brand you grabbed from the bulk food section, don't worry! Chances are you couldn't afford this marsupial-enhanced brew, which averages \$200 per pound.

Now that you have spit out your coffee for a second time, I'll give you a brief history of Kopi Luwak so you can fully appreciate something even stranger. Let's start with a little history.

Bean growers on the Indonesian islands of Sumatra, Java and Sulawesi

have long regarded civet cats as pests because of their propensity to climb coffee bean trees, eat only the choicest berries, and talk incessantly about their stock portfolios — all while emitting a shrill sound similar to an espresso machine.

However, at some point, someone suffering from the biggest case of caffeine addiction in the history of man decided he was desperate enough to "harvest" the civet droppings as a way to get his coffee fix. Though the trail leading to the identity of this "pioneer" is not complete, coffee genealogists have determined that it was some-

one visiting from the Seattle area.

From those humble beginnings came Kopi Luwak, and the inspiration for Canadian investor Blake Dinkin's, uh... "elephant-cured" Black Ivory Coffee. Like its predecessor, Black Ivory coffee beans are harvested from droppings — in this case, those left behind by elephants that have consumed coffee beans and sugar cane.

Throw in some creamer and who knows? Producers might be able to streamline the process and simply hand out demi-tasse cups at the source?

However, at a cost of \$50

per cup — or \$550 per pound — Black Ivory Coffee is only available at a select few luxury hotels within the Golden Triangle of Asia, where the coffee is produced. My guess is probably each morning.

Sadly, it's only a matter of time before someone comes up with an even more unique "flavor profile" process demanding an even higher price, such as feeding Arabica berries to gazelles, who are then eaten by lions, whose droppings are carefully harvested for beans by hand.

And "by hand" I mean separating beans from the hands of harvesters who got too close to the source.

I honestly don't know what direction the future of coffee will take. What I DO know is the potential market that could open up for us here in the Northwest, where pre-digested black berry jam left by bears can be found in abundance along most logging roads in the spring.

For anyone interested in pursuing this venture, I wish you the best. As for me, I'm content in just bringing you the straight poop.

Ned is a syndicated columnist with News Media Corporation. His book, "Humor at the Speed of Life," is available online at Port Hole Publications, Amazon Books and Barnes & Noble. Write to him at nedhickson@icloud.com

Meek to speak at City Club

Austin Meek, sports columnist for the Eugene Register-Guard, will be the featured speaker at City Club on Friday, March 6.

Meek started as a sports columnist at The Register-Guard in October 2013 after moving from Kansas City, Mo. He worked previously at The Topeka Capital-Journal and graduated from Kansas State University in 2008.

Come with friends and neighbors to hear him speak about the human side of sports.

The City Club program will begin at noon at Ocean Dunes Golf Links, 3345 Munsel Lake Road.

A limited lunch menu is



COURTESY PHOTO

Austin Meek

available for purchase prior to the program.

For more information, call Roger Johnson at 541-902-5135.

TSUNAMI SIREN WARNING INFORMATION

If you are on the beach and the Tsunami Sirens are activated, move to high ground immediately and tune into FM 106.9 KCST

If you are in the inundation zone and the Tsunami Sirens are activated, you should consider precautionary evacuation to one of the assembly areas and tune into FM 106.9 KCST

If you are not on the beach or in the inundation zone, you do not need to take any action

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