



## Offbeat Oregon History: Car chase at Crater Lake

By Finn JD John  
For The Sentinel

Race Williams, the most popular fictional private detective in the pages of Black Mask Magazine throughout the late 1920s, had a personal motto: "Anything is possible today."

Having presumably never visited Crater Lake National Park, Williams may not have known how right he was.

Crater Lake is an odd spot. Strange things just seem to happen there — often enough to be noticed, and more often than is the case at other national parks. Supernatural suggestions have been suggested from time to time — a curse of the Native American spirits of the place, perhaps. Others say it's a combination of random chance and a variety of unfriendly characteristics of the park — its remoteness, its winter weather, its attractiveness to people seeking seclusion, and so on.

Whatever the reason, the place seems to come in for more than its fair share of strange events.

Quite possibly the strangest of all these events happened on a sunny summer morning of Aug. 29, 1982.

On that day, around 7 a.m., Patrol Ranger Alice Siebecker was on her way back to the lodge on Oregon Highway 62 when a brand-new Volvo sedan raced past her, doing about 65 miles per hour, going in the opposite direction.

Siebecker turned quickly around and gave chase. The highway in that spot was a 45-mph zone. Rangers in national parks such as Crater Lake are law-enforcement officers, charged with making sure park visitors don't break the rules and empowered to ticket them when they do.

But when Siebecker pulled in behind the Volvo, its speed increased. It wasn't a high-speed chase, not yet at least — but clearly the other driver wasn't pulling over.

They drove on, a little less than a mile. Then the car lurched and swerved sharply. And then —

A big explosion lit up the interior of the Volvo, blowing the glass out of all the windows. Out of control, it flew off the road and into a gully, went airborne, traveled about 500 feet and crashed to a stop on a pumice embankment.

Then the car lay there. The driver never moved. But, considering the size of the explosion Siebecker had seen, she likely didn't expect him to. The shock of the blast had actually bellied out the sheet metal of the car's roof.

Siebecker, of course, called for backup immediately, and soon other rangers were on the scene. Worried that the car might have more bombs in it, they stayed well away from it while they waited for the Jackson County Sheriff's Department and FBI bomb squads to arrive.

The Volvo's driver, they learned, had been in-

stantly killed by the explosion. And the cause of the explosion? A hand grenade. The driver had pulled the pin out of the grenade, possibly intending to throw it at the pursuing ranger's vehicle; but he apparently dropped it beside the seat and was unable to retrieve it in time. Or, maybe he intended to blow himself up with it; investigators couldn't exactly ask him what his intentions had been.

Inside the car, investigators found a knife, an automatic pistol tucked in an easily accessible spot in the door pocket; two rifles; three fake IDs, each with a different name and address on it, and two sets of California license plates. The car was traced to a rental agency in San Diego, and it had been reported stolen.

It took the FBI some time to figure out who the man was; the grenade had blown his left hand clean off and had rendered his face unrecognizable. Eventually, though, they identified him as a German national named Amdris Merzejuskis, who was wanted on a Texas warrant for drug smuggling.

Possibly the strangest part of the Merzejuskis story was how completely it seemed to vanish. Coverage of the incident in the Portland Oregonian — the content of which is searchable through the libraries at OSU — was limited to a small and carefully worded item on the cover of the North-

west section. "Mark Miller of the FBI's Medford office said a hand grenade pin was found in the car and the grenade apparently was activated by the driver," it reads.

Similar stories, or versions of the same story, ran in several other daily papers as well. But then ... nothing.

So, what was the real story? Why was Merzejuskis so desperate to avoid contact with a park ranger — so much so that he was prepared to either kill her or himself to avoid it? Or was there something in the car, some evidence, that he destroyed with the grenade? And most of all, why didn't the newspapers follow up on the story?

The truth may be out there, or perhaps we'll never know; but it will probably take filing a Freedom of Information Act request with the federal government to find out for sure.

As for Ranger Alice Siebecker, well, she seems to have concluded that the job of patrol ranger at Crater Lake was more than she wanted to take on. She left the park soon after the incident to devote her attention full-time to her other job — that of a violin maker. Later she rejoined the National Park Service — but at Yellowstone this time. One imagines she'd had enough of Crater Lake.

## Dr. Fuhrman: Preventing acne with a better diet

By Joel Fuhrman MD  
For The Sentinel

Acne is the most common skin condition in the U.S. About 85 percent of people in the Western world experience acne during their teenage years, but it can occur at any age. Acne is more than just pimples and it can leave permanent scars. In many people, acne can seriously affect quality of life, causing low self-esteem, withdrawal from social situations, anxiety and depression.

A pimple or lesion forms when a pore in the skin begins to clog with old, dead skin cells. Usually these cells are simply shed from the surface of the skin, but if too much oil is being produced, the dead cells can stick together and become trapped inside the pore. Bacteria also play a role; they can grow and multiply inside the pore, resulting in inflammation.

Scientific studies have demonstrated that the diet is very important, because what we eat can affect the hormones that contribute to the oil production, hyperproliferation and inflammation that cause acne. The two acne-promoting dietary factors that have been most extensively studied are dairy products and high glycemic load foods. These factors influence hormonal and inflammatory factors increasing acne prevalence and severity. Hormonal influences that raise insulin and insulin-like growth factor 1 (IGF-1) levels are key. Elevated IGF-1 levels lead to changes in gene expression that cause inflammation, hormonal changes, increased oil production and development of acne lesions. Of important concern is that the same hormonal milieu of high IGF-1 and high insulin also promotes breast and prostate cancer, so it is important to maintain a diet that is hormonally favorable all through life.

In addition to dairy and high glycemic foods, excessive oil production by the skin can be exacerbated by oil intake. Vegetable oils drives omega-6 intake up, which have pro-inflammatory effects, and high omega-6 intake is associated with the development of acne. The effects of oil intake on acne is exacerbated by the con-

sumption of high glycemic carbohydrates, such as commercial baked goods. Higher intake of omega-3 fatty acids is associated with reduced likelihood of acne, as omega-3s counteract the pro-inflammatory processes that drive acne. Just because overeating nuts and oil (especially peanuts and peanut butter) can contribute to sebum production and acne does not mean nuts and seeds need to be eliminated from the diet to help acne. It is the combination of the glycemic load of the diet and other hormonal promoters acting together to produce acne. So excessive intake of fat may increase sebum production, but this tendency is permitted and exacerbated by the glycemic effect of the diet. When your diet has more beans, greens, seeds, onions and mushrooms and is free of high glycemic carbohydrates, it can tolerate more fat, without any acne-promoting effects on sebum production, because the antioxidant and phytochemical exposure is higher, and the glycemic load of the diet is lower. So up to two ounces of raw nuts and seeds can generally be eaten by those on an oil-free high-nutrient (Nutritarian) diet without creating acne. But once you start eating refined and high glycemic carbohydrates, your body will be more sensitive to the fat in your diet, maybe even from nuts.

The two most important hormonal factors that drive acne are IGF-1 and insulin. In addition to avoiding oils, to prevent or resolve acne, avoid dairy products and high-glycemic load foods, especially sweeteners and commercial baked goods and make sure to get an adequate supply of micronutrients. Remember, high glycemic carbohydrates can raise both insulin and IGF-1.

Protein intake is the major factor that determines circulating IGF-1 levels, especially protein from dairy products. A three-year prospective study of 9-15 year old girls found a 20 percent increase in acne prevalence in girls that had two or more servings of milk per day compared to less than one per week. This association held true for total, whole, low fat and skim milk. The same researchers found a similar association in boys who drank skim milk (milk highest in protein). Furthermore, in the Nurses' Health Study, dairy products

eaten during high school were associated with acne during women's teenage years.

Glycemic load (GL) is a measure of the effect of a certain food on blood glucose levels. High-GL foods like refined carbohydrates produce dangerous spikes in blood glucose, leading to excessive insulin levels in the blood (hyperinsulinemia), which contribute to diabetes, heart disease, and several cancers. Hyperinsulinemia not only promotes inflammation but also raises IGF-1 levels, further contributing to acne. A low glycemic load diet has been shown to improve acne symptoms, and decrease IGF-1 and skin oil production in several studies.

Blood levels of zinc, carotenoids, and vitamin E are known to be lower in acne patients compared to those without acne, suggesting that maintaining micronutrient adequacy may help to prevent acne. Carotenoids are abundant in green and orange vegetables, and vitamin E is abundant in nuts and seeds. Although pumpkin seeds and hemp seeds are rich in zinc, zinc absorption efficiency may be low on a plant-based diet, so a multivitamin and mineral supplement is recommended to assure optimal levels of zinc, iodine, vitamin D and B12.

Hundreds of people with severe acne, of all ages have resolved their acne, and gained a healthy colorful glow to their skin with a Nutritarian diet. Not only does the richness in antioxidants protect against acne, but it gives skin a healthy color and more youthful appearance as one ages.

Dr. Fuhrman is a #1 New York Times best-selling author and a family physician specializing in lifestyle and nutritional medicine.

Visit his informative website at [DrFuhrman.com](http://DrFuhrman.com). Submit your questions and comments about this column directly to [newsquestions@drfuhrman.com](mailto:newsquestions@drfuhrman.com). The full reference list for this article can be found at [DrFuhrman.com](http://DrFuhrman.com).

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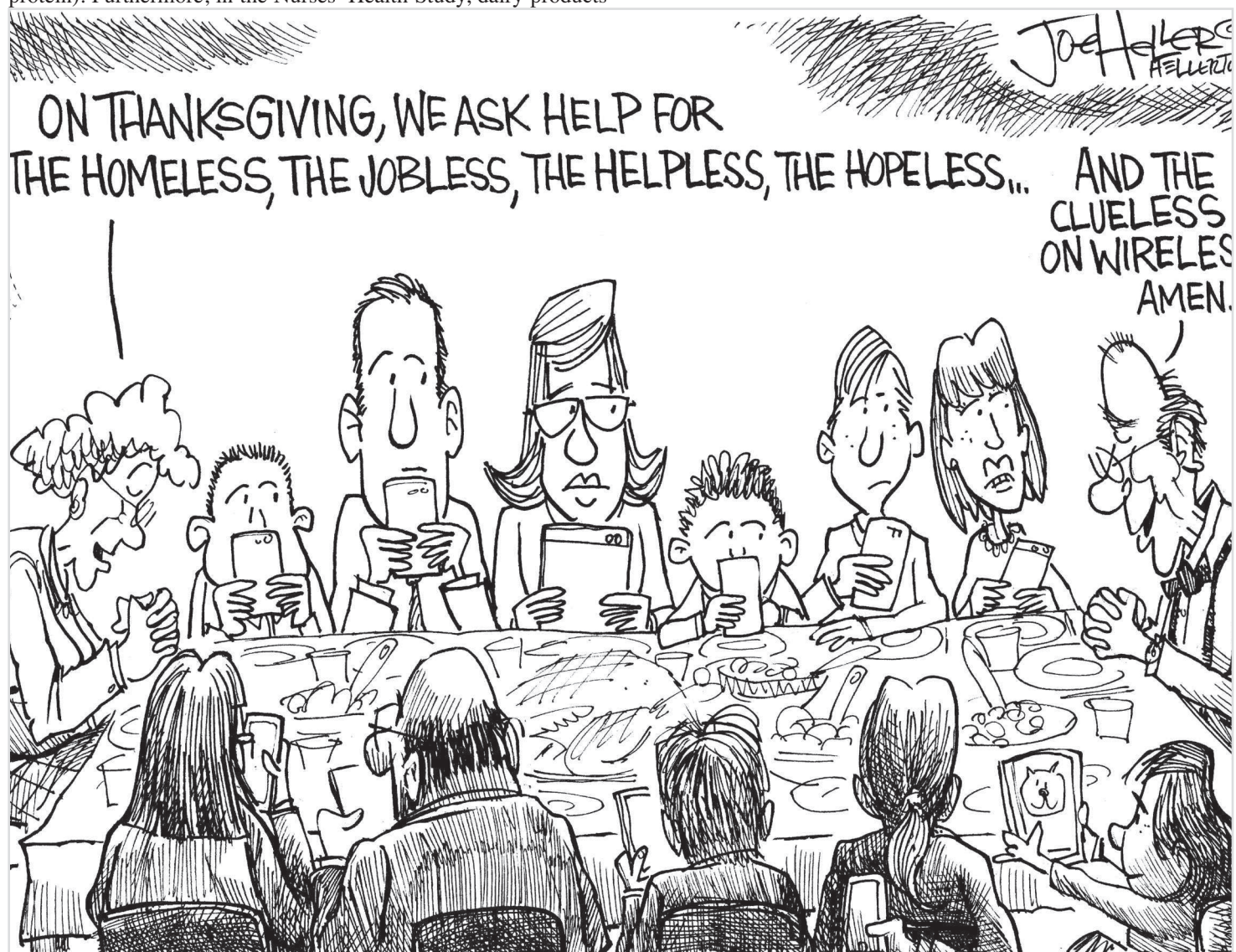
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