



## NOW WHAT

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## JUST SAYING!

Since I have now sold the company and do not write their newsletter any longer, I have decided to do a personal newsletter, once in a while, just for the fun of writing and as means of getting out general information Linda and I and our friends have found helpful and maybe even humorous. After discussions with friends at a recent gathering, the name "The Crapper Chronicles" seemed to be a favorite. Wine was, however, involved; but for now that will be the name.

This is the eleventh newsletter of my retirement years. I am archiving all newsletters on my website at [www.TompkinsPublishing.com](http://www.TompkinsPublishing.com).

## "So, I Was Talking to My Buddy Jack"

The other day Jack the dog and I were out walking. He looked up at me and said, "Dad, whatever happened to common sense?" On questioning him further, of course the subject was one of our very favorite ones, "climate change." This day's discussion was to discuss the results of more "official" surveys. Not surprising, as is the current fad, this official survey places the blame for climate change on man. What bothers Jack and I is that in the past 1000 years it is absolutely PROVABLE that we have had ocean fluctuations of many feet. In the time of the Roman Empire Ocean depth had increased dramatically and was far higher than it is now. Conversely, as recently as the late 1930's continuing through the 1940's and into the 1950's these same "climate experts" that are now predicting drastic earth temperature increases, were referring to growth of the polar icecap as a "mini ice age."

Again, Jack and I wonder: Where is the common sense? I can assure you with absolute certainty that in the time of the Roman Empire, man's carbon imprint on the planet was miniscule. At that time man's impact on the Earth's climate would have been very akin to trying to put out the recent California fires by peeing on them. The Earth has always changed; it always will. The current hysteria we are having is by and large caused by the availability of new scientific gadgetry, combined with our human arrogance, and of course the Scientific Communities constant search for more "Grant Money." But in a larger sense, no matter how much data you have; when you attempt to explain and reconcile Geologic Time which is measured in tens of thousands of years with human lifespan which of course is miniscule, your efforts are doomed to be nothing more than a WAG.



**What Ever Happened to Steamed Asparagus?** After our rant on climate the subject, as usual, turned to food. I said that it seems to me that lately chefs around the world are literally ruining great food by attempting to constantly improve on already good products, simply to be different. In many cases their culinary fumbling is lauded by "celebrity" folks who ooh and aah over these various weird concoctions and pronounce them

"EXCELLENT." Who knows why you would call some of these concoctions even edible, but maybe it is just because of ignorance, or maybe these "celebrities" just to go along with any fad. Whatever the reason and whoever promoted it, one of the most insane new fad "preparations" is the process of no longer steaming asparagus but instead "searing" this tasty plant. The problem with "searing" asparagus is now, instead of a nice succulent morsel, you are left with a burnt, charred, oily, charcoal tasting wad of gunk that leaves you with a bad taste in your mouth. Jack remarked he was a poor one to give an opinion on this one so we will rely on my taste buds. Seared asparagus tastes like crap!

**Cheese on Everything:** At least this food fad is easier to explain. The folks in the dairy industry, in a remarkably successful campaign, have now days gotten chefs around the world to smother virtually everything in cheese. Hell, both Jack and I like cheese but not on absolutely everything! My God, the other day I ordered chili and it came absolutely smothered in cheese!! Is nothing sacred? Time after time I order a PLAIN HAMBURGUR and invariably get asked, "Do you want cheese on it?" Had I wanted it, might not I have ordered it? On this one Jack and I disagree. Jack loves cheese and does want it on everything. What-a-ya-gonna-do? From Jack and I... Bon Appetite!



## Sammy's Pizza Comes to Scottsdale



For years I have been trying to find excellent pizza in the Phoenix metro area. Linda and I have visited pizza emporiums near and far and although we are always assured "this place makes great pizza," we always go away disappointed, uttering the now standard response of "It's OK pizza but it's not as good as Sammy's Pizza in Minot." Well, it just so happens that although Dave and Tarryll Shomento, have sold Sammy's Pizza to their daughter, Angela, and her husband, Shannon Osborne, Dave can still craft a most excellent pizza. In a recent trip to visit Linda and I in Scottsdale, Dave and Tarryll brought along a spare suitcase stuffed with enough ingredients to build 5 most excellent Sammy's family sized pizzas! We called a group of friends and threw a Sammy's Pizza party that very night. Dave and Tarryll rolled the dough and built the pizzas, and after cooking them in the oven, I crisped them up on the barbeque. How do you know when the pizza is excellent? Not only did we devour ALL of the pizza, but on finding there were only three small pieces left one of our guests actually put them in a Ziploc bag so she could take them home to have for breakfast the next day. That folks is good pizza!!!! A giant thanks to Dave and Tarryll from all of us!

## Anderson's D&S Bootery

Minot has several small businesses that have been with us over the generations. One more such business is Anderson's D&S Bootery. This most excellent shoe store; not part of any big chain, but a personal family owned business, has been part of our Minot business community since 1936 and has been owned by the Anderson family since the very early 1950's. I have always had problems finding shoes that fit well, but after talking to one of my buddies I stopped in to D&S Bootery one day to talk to 3rd generation owner Bryan Anderson about getting a good fit. A short time later, I left the store with not one but three sets of shoes that all fit me perfectly. Wow! That doesn't happen much!!! D&S Bootery sells the New Balance, Birkenstock, Naot, Bravon, Taos, Dunham, Rockport, Haslinger, and Wolky brands of footwear as well as several brands of excellent socks. So many times it seems we feel we have to leave town or "look on the internet" to get a quality product. At least in Minot, if you are in need of a good fit on some footwear, that is not the case. Next time you want a good fitting pair of shoes, do yourself a favor and help our local business community out at the same time: Stop in to see Bryan.



## Crooks Are Getting Smarter

**Where do you leave auto registration and garage door opener?** A car was parked in long term parking in San Jose, CA. Someone broke into the car. Using address information on the registration card and the garage door opener they drove to the people's home in Pebble Beach and robbed it.

**How about Portable GPS and garage door opener?** A car is parked at football stadium. Thieves break into the auto and steal a portable GPS from dash and the garage door opener. When the car owner gets home, the house has been located from the "home" screen on the GPS and the garage door opener used to gain entry into house. Thieves not only knew where the home was but roughly when the owners would be back. This home was literally stripped.

**How about your cell phone?** A lady has her purse stolen. She calls her husband 20 minutes later from a pay phone. (Gee, where did she even find one?) He says "I got your text wanting to know our PIN# and replied about 15 minutes ago." They rushed to the bank. Their account was already cleaned out. Thieves had looked up 'Hubby' on the phone and sent the phony text to the husband. Good idea not to use easy codes for sensitive information and NEVER give out sensitive information based on a mere text. Call and confirm first.

**Finally:** A lady has her wallet stolen. She reports it to the store personnel. On arriving home she gets a call from "mall security" telling her wallet has been recovered minus her cash. She runs back to the store to get the wallet. When she gets there "mall security" does NOT have her wallet. While she was gone thieves who had gotten her address etc from her wallet broke in and robbed her house.

Special thanks to my buddy Bill Metz for the above information.



## Paddy's Prayer



Its 1/5/17. I'm in my Phoenix, AZ office, praying. I'm praying for forgiveness from my tired old riding horse Paddy. Paddy is far away on the bitter cold prairies of North Dakota. It is lethally frigid and windy up there today, with the vertical rainbow sundogs standing tall in the morning signaling arctic winds, swirling blowing snow and a chill factor of nearly -31 below. The reason for my prayers and the fact the tears are running down my cheeks is a few minutes ago the vet gave Paddy a shot that sent him away to join his good buddy Burt in Horse Heaven. I should have been there. But here I sit in Phoenix with a horrible cold and airline tickets for a couple days from now. Lucky for me, my brother Casey is my worthy stand-in today, someone I am so eternally grateful for, and a far better person than I am anyway. He was with Paddy this morning and made

sure the old guy got all the damn carrots he could eat before the vet got there to punch his ticket to move on.

I suppose I should explain the reason for having to get this terrible chore done today is because Paddy's old buddy and inseparable companion Burt, died last night in his sleep. Burt, even at the advanced age of 32, and certainly getting long in the tooth, was still the unquestioned leader of their herd of two. He was a steady, kind Morgan gelding with an insatiable appetite for sweet feed, and in his prime had been one fancy fellow. When we first got him he had been owned by a lady who was kind of a city cowgirl. We had found him in a small corral full of horse manure standing in muck well over his hooves. He was a bit overweight, and needed some work, but behind those deep brown eyes, you could tell there was a strong, steady, intelligent horse.

Once we got him home we found he was extremely intolerant of bits and he got VERY finicky going up hills. After that first short ride out in the pasture, when we got back to the barn I removed his bridle, and took a much longer look in his mouth. Hell, after a close examination, the reason he hated bits and was finicky going up hills was totally obvious. Funny, isn't it, how you can CSI something like this and it's like you were there when the event happened. I never did call the Urban Cowgirl to get complete chapter and verse, but I'd bet considerable money that what occurred was probably on some cute little trail ride: Probably while going up a steep hill, she had dropped the reins. After what I saw in his mouth I could just see Burt stepping on those damn long, loose reins, and having the bit nearly cut his tongue in half! No wonder he was intolerant of bits and nervous going up hills! Linda and I put a hackamore on him, took him back out for another spin, and it was problem solved. Funny what information folks will leave out of a horse deal isn't it.

A few years later Paddy came on the scene. He was an Anglo-Arab gelding. Linda and I had been doing some endurance riding and the Anglo-Arab mix is one of the very best horses for this type event. True to his breeding, Paddy had unbelievable endurance, and was also a very smart, kind and trusting horse. Linda and I were not hard core in the endurance riding sport but in all the events we did enter, Paddy won every single time. Being a Morgan, Burt was a far smoother ride, but no matter how hard Linda would train him, he could never come close to beating his stable mate in the sport Paddy was born for. He could also not come close to matching Paddy for speed. What he could do was be in charge around the ranch. In short order there was no doubt Burt was the Boss; Paddy was not. For the first couple years, once in a while Paddy would kind of bring it up that maybe it was HIS turn to be boss. Within seconds, Burt would remind him he was most definitely NOT.

Most likely Burt would not have even made it through the previous winter, but Mother Nature had been in a benevolent mood that year. Furthermore, the summer of 2016 had been one for the record books. North Dakota saw record crops, with lush hay fields brought on by timely ample rains and endless sunny days. Many times over this past summer, as Linda and I would see the two old boys standing together out in the pasture chomping away; we had commented on how great it was they could have one more glorious season together. However, where the winter of 2015 had been an unusually mild one for North Dakota, in stark contrast, the next year's winter of 2016 found Mother Nature in one of her evil, terrible, killing moods. Starting in late November, she unleashed the killer wolves of a true North Dakota winter who came howling into the state with winds gusting to over 50 miles per hour, constant subzero temperatures, blinding blizzards, huge snowdrifts, and deadly chill factors of over -30 below for days and weeks on end. So far in spite of the weather, both horses had been doing ok, but last night Mother Nature completed her inexorable work, and Burt's tired old heart just gave up. This morning when he checked on the horses, my brother Casey had found Burt lying cold and still by the bale feeder, and Paddy running around trying to figure out how to help his old buddy get going.

Hell, I don't know where they went but it seems, like the water quietly trickling in the creek behind the house, the years flowed away from the four of us. Just like the two old boys, time was slowly inexorably running away from Linda and me as well. Gradually we rode horseback less and less, and finally we just had to admit that over 20 years had flown away. By this time, like I said before, the two Old Boys had become simply inseparable. Burt was too frail to be ridden anymore, and if I tried to take Paddy for a spin once in a while, of course Burt would create a hell of a ruckus when he was left alone. Then, a couple years ago, Paddy had gotten an aneurism in his sinus and although it had finally healed,

since he too was getting up in years, it seemed to really slow him down as well. Burt and Paddy were the last horses on the ranch. Linda and I had talked many times about how to handle the fact that one of them would inevitably head for Horse Heaven sooner than the other. Being they were basically Siamese twins and both were on life's most slippery of slopes; the decision had been made, whichever one went down first, rather than leave the other old fellow to stand in the pasture lonely, sick and alone, we would keep the boys together. Today, it finally happened. I hope my prayer finds them standing side by side in tall lush grass, under a sky of robin's egg blue, with puffy clouds drifting by and no mosquitoes, horseflies, or ear gnats.

I don't know why I write stuff like this down. Hell, I suppose it's to try and explain why a silly old horseman would be sitting in his office sniffing like a damn kid. Maybe it's because I'm feeling sorry for myself and two loyal, wonderful, old horses that did their very best their entire lives and are now gone. Crap, Linda and I are getting too old to ride and like the Old Boys, I suppose we won't be replaced either. Anyway, when Casey called me to say "Paddy is back together with Burt," and he had buried the two of them together out in the pasture, the tears just started up and the words came along with them. Sometimes doing the right thing can be damn tough. Guess I'll end this little story with a phrase that keeps running through my head... You ask me, would I have done it any other way? Ya know, if'n I'd a had the chance? Son, the decision had to be made and I made it. Years ago folks used to say, "Ol' Elvis has left the building." Well, today I guess Ol' Burt and Paddy have done left the ranch.

## Christmas Greetings!!!

From the editor and staff (basically Jack, Linda and I ) here at Crapper Chronicles, we wish you and yours a most joyous Christmas and a Happy New Year!!



As we reflect on this past years events we mourn the passing of good friends but know we will see them again and rejoice in their freedom from pain and suffering. We thank God for our many and manifold blessings, our wonderful circle of friends, and our loving families. We stand and salute our flag in remembrance of the incredible sacrifices others have made that make it possible for us to live in this wonderful country. We absolutely understand that we will never live in a perfect world but there is no place else in the world we would rather be and as I end this issue of Crapper the song, "God Bless America," is running through my mind.

*Thanks for reading The Crapper Chronicles, and remember, we have our families, our friends, our health, and time... the rest is just smoke and mirrors!*

Chuck

## THE CRAPPER MUSE

### Old Cowboy Anniversary

We were drivin' down the highway,  
And I'm thinkin' hey, let's turn here.  
We can enjoy the scenic route,  
And maybe see some deer.

But you know, I'm just thinkin' this to  
myself,  
As we're drivin' down the road.  
Then I look over at you and laugh;  
Hell, fore I turned you already knowed.

The other day we had some company out,  
Had a Pizza, Sammy's; it was fine.  
We had a fire in the fireplace,  
A couple glasses of wine.

When it come time to throw the boxes out,  
Hell, I just threw them pizza boxes in the  
fire.  
Seemed like the thing to do,  
Till I seen them flames a gettin' higher.

We got kind of excited for a bit there,  
The fireplace she kind of blew.  
The fire got busy cleaning out the chimney,  
With flames shootin about two feet above  
the flue.

Well, you got a little disgusted with me,  
But hell, neither of us said a word.  
If you want to know, I was kind of disgusted  
with myself,  
Dumb old fool; turd.

Problem was I was sorry I disappointed  
you,  
And covered it up by gettin' mad.  
Truth was the chimney held up well,  
Hell, the house was still there. Of that I  
was glad.

It's just this simple fact honey,  
We aren't allowed to have a private idea,  
We been married so long and loved so hard.  
I know you're there before I even see ya.

I love it and look forward to it.  
Test it out ever other day.  
Its amazing, fun and excitin',  
Havin a pretty good idea about what  
you're goin to say.

I love you girl, more now than ever,  
All these years; that no ones countin'  
And this love is fine and regal,  
Like a special pretty mountain.

Chuck for Linda, 12/2/09