

**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.

Hopefully, all the information will be accurate, helpful to some, and occasionally funny.

This is the fourth newsletter of my retirement years. I am archiving all newsletters on my website at www.TompkinsPublishing.com.

By Way of Explanation

I really hate to open up this issue of Crapper with an excuse for it coming out so late so I will just call it an explanation. The reason for there not being a summer issue of Crapper was early last summer my siblings and I lost our mother June Tompkins. Mom was simply one of the world's best people, who devoted her entire life to her husband, family and friends. She was articulate, had a great sense of humor, was a steadfast friend and since she was 100% Irish, also had a temper you did not want to mess with. We four children and indeed all who knew her were blessed. When she passed all of us kids were with her; as she had wished she was in her own home, did not spend a day in the hospital, and was at peace. Her being able to be at home was made possible by, and our many thanks go out to, the people from Dakota Traveling Nurses and the Hospice folks who helped us. The memorial service was done by Chuck Kramer and he too put our minds at ease as we laid our mother to rest. In discussing her spiritual strength, I told Chuck, "If mom doesn't get into heaven: no one does." She is out of her pain, she is at peace; and mom, if you read this, until we meet again, say hi to Lonnie and the others for us will you?

**Trans Canada Train Ride and Eagles**

Linda and I took a memorable train ride these past few weeks with our friends, the Reilings, the Hellands, and the Carmacks. The trip started with all of us spending a few days in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada while staying at the Hotel Vancouver. We ended our journey with a two day stop in Banff at the Fairmont Springs Hotel. Of course sightseeing was a big part of the time spent in Vancouver, with one of the high points for me being the aerial tour of the Vancouver area in a turbine powered Beaver floatplane. Even though

I had forgotten to take my ever present jack knife out of my pocket, I was allowed to fly co pilot. The easy availability of excellent seafood in the various restaurants was, at least for Gene and I the big attraction. Topping the list was the variety of oysters available, from raw, to baked, to fried; all were delicious. Everyone's favorite restaurant was the Sandbar on Vancouver's Granville Island.

Of course the main event of the trip was a two day train ride on the Rocky Mountaineer Line from Vancouver to Banff with an overnight stay in Kamloops, BC. We viewed stunning fall Rocky Mountain scenery along the way from our most spectacular perch in a comfortable dome car. The excellent meals and

beverages were included in the trip package, with the fabulous service in our car #4 provided by Brandee, Candice, and Amie. Along the way we spotted a wide variety of wildlife including, deer, Big Horn sheep, and many types of birds. However, to our delight, due to the abundance of migrating salmon in the rivers lakes and creeks along our route; the most commonly sighted birds were eagles. Imagine our delight in seeing not just one or two majestic Bald Eagles, but dozens. Furthermore, I was also surprised and amazed to see many other related varieties of eagle such as the Slightly Balding Eagle, the Receding Hairline Eagle, the Bad Toupee Eagle, the Rogaine Eagle, and even the seldom seen, Hair Club for Men Eagle. Kidding aside, Linda and I highly recommend the trip aboard the Rocky Mountaineer. It is well organized, the food and beverage service is unsurpassed, and it provides magnificent views of the Rocky Mountains in a comfortable, relaxing atmosphere. The phone number is 1-800-653-4105 and the person I talked to was Klia Magtibay, ext 8425.

Minot: Once More the Magic City



In recent months I have been doing quite a bit of cycling. I started to pedal in Phoenix for exercise and because it was easy on my back. Soon, I realized it was both helping me take off the pounds and was a relaxing and fun way to do exercise. On returning to Minot last spring I continued my cycling and found Minot to be a most excellent place to cycle. Traffic is light, streets are wide and recently installed recreation paths are well placed. Furthermore, cycling gives a person the chance to really look over the area.

But now the reason for this article: For years we have called Minot the Magic City. When we were hit by the terrible flood of 2011 for a few years it was hard to think of our city as magic. However, far from being destroyed by the 2011 flood, now days it is great to see neighborhoods for the most part put back in place even better than before. Lawns are green and by far newly renovated homes outnumber ones still needing work. Congratulations to all for returning the 'Magic' to our wonderful Magic City!

Why Do We Have Zoos?

Way back in the misty mists of time, the only way a person could see exotic animals was to go to the country where they lived, or see a stuffed example of one. Somewhere along the way, someone decided, in the interests of people being able to see these animals in person, they should start a facility called a ZOO, where the animals could be caged and observed close at hand. Never mind the poor animal, instead of running free, would now be confined to an impossibly small confined space that in most cases had no resemblance to a natural habitat. At least the public could benefit by seeing the 'cute' lion, or monkey, or bear, standing close at hand.



Unfortunately, most likely, the creature would be standing in a pile of their own dung. Then along came TV and Video. Now a person can not only see the animal, but effortlessly observe its behavior in the wild. In my mind, video has effectively removed the reason for even having a Zoo. The other day I was riding my bike through Minot's Roosevelt Park, and I could hear the Lion roaring. As I got closer, I was able to make out that what he was really saying was: "Shoooooot me! , shoooooot me!, pleeeeee, shoot me!" Just a thought: instead of pouring more millions into the local zoo, maybe we could construct more bike and walking paths, additional green space, picnic grounds, swimming pools and recreation areas. We would be healthier; the cost would be far less, and if someone wants to look at a lion, or giraffe, or monkey: GEE, they can turn on the TV.

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



Jack is our 'rescue dog'. You know: the dog that was rescued not once but two times. His first rescue was when he was initially adopted by Ryon and Kristi Boen, but the problem that developed, was Jack became waaay too protective of his new family. So much so that he developed a taste for human flesh. Simply put he wanted to take a bite out of anyone he thought was threatening them or their children. Long story short, they were going to send Jack to the Big Doghouse in the Sky but in the 11th hour Linda and I took him off their hands shortly before he 'took the long ride'.

After a short period of time where we were deciding who was going to be in charge around the house, Jack finally decided since Linda and I owned the place and more importantly: we supplied the grub, we could be in charge.

Now six years later, the three of us are best friends and Jack has given up taking a nip out of anyone new who wants to pet him.

The reason I even bring this up is that several of our other friends have dogs who in the past year have died. We have lost Tucker, Roger and Michelle Tollefson's beagle, Piper, Rob and Mary Dick's beautiful golden retriever, and Dan and Gina Schwartz' irrepressible black lab Jackson. I don't know if dogs communicate with each other after death or what but shortly after both dogs had died, when Michelle Tollefson

and a few days later Mary Dick were out here at the house, Jack, who seldom goes to anyone, jumped right up in both of their laps. When I asked Jack about it later that day he said he knew they both were sad about losing their dogs and he just wanted to help. However, Jack did bring up that Tucker had recently communicated to him in a dream about how he missed ridding on Chuck's plane and was wondering if Roger could redeem any of his 'Westy Air' frequent flyer miles.

More on Golf

I usually have a round of golf with my golf buddies a couple times a week. Of course, since my game is so bad, I appreciate them letting me go along. However, we always have a few side bets on how the game goes and needless to say, I usually lose. Lately I have been wondering if its because I always lose that I keep getting invited back. The reason I got to wondering about this is the other day, one of the guys suggested: "Why don't you pay in advance, and in the unlikely event that you win, we'll give you a refund."



A Few Messages from the Silent Majority

Politicians: It's not about Democrat v/s Republican. It's about socialism v/s capitalism. Both political parties have changed so much over the past years that by today's standards John F. Kennedy; who was in his day viewed as a liberal Democrat, could these days be judged a conservative Republican. We, the silent majority, no matter if we identify as democrat or republican, heartily believe that "all men are created equal;" however, what they do after being created equal is THEIRS to accomplish. It is not up to the rest of us to do it for them.

Job Seekers: It's not about getting the PERFECT job. It's about getting any job and working up to the perfect job. It's not about being DISRESPECTED. It's about being able to take orders. It's not about working the hours YOU want. It's about working the hours your employer needs.

Message to Both: Minimum wage means minimum skill level, minimum experience level, minimum ability level, entry into the job world, starting up the career ladder level of work. Minimum wage employment was never intended to be CAREER work. You want a big high minimum wage? I'm just curious, have you noticed all the new SELF CHECKOUT lanes everywhere? People; those jobs are gone and will never come back. Politicians who are pushing for higher minimum wage do not care about their constituents. They are simply buying votes. They are not creating jobs: in the vast majority of cases, they are killing them.

And Finally, to NFL Players: Even though you keep trying to make it that way, it's not about racism, or alleged police unfairness: It's about respect for our country and those who have fought and died to make the opportunities you take for granted possible. You want to 'take a knee' during our national anthem? Linda and I and many of our friends have cancelled our season tickets, and when you NFL clowns come on the TV our answer to you is a simple 'CLICK': We either change the channel or shut off the TV.

Back in the Misty Mists of Time: Apple Juice Memories



Way back in the "Misty Mists of Time," Linda and I and a group of our friends headed out on a four day ski trip to Big Sky, Montana. We borrowed my dad's big Ford diesel van, loaded up our gear and headed west. Since the drive was a long one, we made very few: read VERY FEW stops along the way, with the last pause being the truck stop in Belgrade, Montana. We had to fuel up the van, and of course by then ALL passengers were demanding a pit stop. For some reason as I was waiting to pay the fuel bill, I noticed a big cooler of drinks nearby and low and behold, one of the drinks offered was Apple Juice. Yeah; I thought to myself, Apple Juice: I love Apple Juice and that is exactly what I need to cool my raging thirst! I scampered over, picked up a quart bottle of the ice cold, amber liquid and added it to the fuel bill. A few minutes later I herded my newly 'relieved' passengers into the van and headed up the mountain for the last 50 mile drive to the condo we had rented in Meadow Village. Buzzing down the road, I happily rifled down the entire quart of the ice cold delicious apple juice beverage in the space of a few minutes and settled in to drive us up the hill.

As all of you know who have been on this route, it is a long twisty turny drive up Montana Highway 181 to the Big Sky Resort. In the winter the roads can be a bit slick and it is a slow drive. That day was no exception and it was slow going as we wound our way up to the resort. I suppose it was about ½ hour into this final leg of our journey when I began to get slight rumblings in my gut. Nothing big, just a gentle reminder that possibly I had not only drunk the apple juice a bit too quickly, but that maybe an entire quart of the beverage on an empty stomach can be a bit much. However, anticipating a super fun weekend, we were all in a jovial mood and I paid little mind to my somewhat disturbed digestive tract.

None the less, as we neared the resort I was getting increasing messages that in the not too distant future, I needed to check out the bathroom facilities of our rental. Soon, we were turning into the Big Sky resort and all crowding up to the desk to get our condo keys and complete

the registration process. By now I was getting literally constant messages from down below that an eruption was imminent and I needed to get to a bathroom immediately. Lucky for us the registration went quickly and we were soon at the appointed condo. Leaving the unpacking to my passengers I ran up to find a restroom. It was not to be a quick pit stop. About a half hour later, I joined the rest of my compadres and apologized for being the cause of the bad smell in the condo: Thinking of course I had the problem solved. Wrong: Over the next many hours, while the others played cards and enjoyed themselves, I spent most of the evening in solitary. It was only late that night; that like Elvis; "the cider had left the building."

Now these many years later, as all of us have to periodically endure colonoscopies; instead of the evil tasting brew we are forced to drink a person wonders why the good doctors can't simply prescribe a nice quart or so of ice cold Apple Juice. Although since that fateful day so many years ago I have not tasted a drop of that beverage, I am thinking it would certainly be better than the horrible concoctions prescribed these days in the interests of preventative medicine. I can assure you that Apple Juice in that quantity will most assuredly 'drain the swamp'. Come to think of it, I think I am going to go pick up a quart of good old Apple Juice today. The only difference is this time I think I will drink it over a period of a few days. Bon Appetite!!

Shorts

Immigration Thoughts: America already is great. I hate to keep hearing 'make America great again'. It's funny, if America is so bad it seems odd everyone wants to come here. Personally, if they come here legally, adopt our laws and learn our language, I think it is a great idea. Maybe we should re open Ellis Island so people could arrive legally, get registered, be vetted to be sure they are not terrorists, and get a job so they can start paying their fair share of taxes.

Gun Ownership: It is estimated that LEGAL gun owners in the United States own over 300 million guns. These same people have over a trillion rounds of ammo. Seriously folks: If legal gun owners were the problem, you would know it. The recent tragedy in Las Vegas was a horrible event committed by a crazy insane fool with a gun. Yet, if he had taken a semi tractor and run it through the same crowd he would have killed and maimed countless people as well. I do believe that full automatic weapons, and large capacity magazines have no place in civilian hands. However, acts such as this from a deranged human being are not part of the gun ownership debate. They are merely rock solid proof to me that Satan exists.

Climate Change: They say the eruption of Mt Etna put 10,000 times more CO2 in the air than mankind has in their entire time on this earth. This does not even count the Mt St Helens eruption and dozens of others. Do we have climate change? Of course; we have had climate change since the world was created. Is it man caused? Although it is not popular to report it, many top scientists report man's impact on climate change has been miniscule. Where is the common sense? If we took a fraction of the money we are spending trying to fix something we did not cause and cannot change we could cure cancer, AIDs, countless other diseases, and provide clean drinking water to millions: actually accomplishing some good in the world and saving millions of lives in the process.

Thanks for taking the time to read "The Crapper Chronicles," and remember: "We have our families, our friends, our health, and time. The rest, my friends, is smoke and mirrors!"

THE CRAPPER MUSE

The June Berries are Ripe!

The cell phone buzzes...
It's the guys; and of course they want to play.

Problem is, so do I but not with them. No way!

"Where are you at?" "The golf games on." "We're teeing it up today."

"Sorry boys, I'm out in the Shaw, the June berries are ripe, hooray!"

The berries big and plump are ready; with their special waxy sweet.

I'm picking berries purple and full, they'll all be gone this week.

The breeze so perfect, is light on my face; the clouds float on azure skies.

The finches are chirping, the hawk wheels above; the prairie is a happy beehive.

I'm picking berries, you crazy fools, no stress missing a putt for me!

You're holding me up, you're delaying MY game, go steal some strokes for free.

Trade a beautiful day, picking nature's best, for a game where no one wins?

Go whack that ball, leave me out for the day: I'm picking, I'm happy: The end!

Chuck - 6/28/17 (In the Shaw picking June berries)