

NOW WHAT?

“So, I Was Talking to My Buddy Jack”

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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.

As Linda and I recently lost a very dear friend, Marlen Lenton, this issue is dedicated to him. A poem written in remembrance is in the Muse Section.

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

“So, I Was Talking to My Buddy Jack”

The other day in Scottsdale, Jack and I were delivering some mail to the UPS store. As we watched from the pickup a couple were taking their dog to the pet groomer located nearby. This is an everyday thing that happens a thousand times a day down here. The thing that made it painful to watch was it just so happened to be very hot that day and the asphalt was hot enough to burn a dog's feet. Neither of the people seemed to notice that their dog was literally hopping up and down because his feet were painfully hot. Jack wants me to remind you humans that you wear shoes. Try taking them off and going for a walk on hot asphalt and you will be more aware of the problem a dog can have on a hot Arizona day. If you still want to walk your dog on burning asphalt maybe you should get your dog some booties. Jack pointed out to me they are for sale in most pet stores.



Movie Stars are Sooooo Smart???



In view of the fact that virtually every day we are assailed with this or that movie star telling us what is right and wrong and how we should act or feel on any given event, I thought it would be worth a thought to put down the reported education levels of some of these folks. At least then a person could weigh the genius proclamation they have on any given issue with the degree of education they have earned outside of the make believe “plastic world” they live and operate in. I think the particular celebrity that really gets me is the guy flying around in his private jet giving speeches on global warming. Seems this particular genius is a high school dropout.

Un-vetted By Chuck, But Reported Celebrity Education Levels

Reported High School Dropout or no GED:

Leonardo DiCaprio, Scarlett Johanson, Quentin Tarantino, Katy Perry, Seth Rogan, Cameron Diaz, Whoopi Goldberg, Chris Rock, Christina Aguilera, Beyonce', Jay Z, Kevin Bacon, Miley Cyrus, Ryan Gosling, Joaquin Phoenix, Pierce Brosnan, Courtney Love, Jim Carey, Charlie Sheen, Cher, Uma Thurman, Pink, Johnny Depp, Eminem, Charlize Theron, Neil Young, Jude Law, Russell Crowe, Jennifer Jason Leigh, Robert DeNiro.

College Degree:

James Woods, Jon Voight, Omarosa, Joe Piscopo, Jim Caviesal, Brooke Shields, James Caan, Adam Sandler, Julie Bowen, Tom Selleck, Jeff Foxworthy, Andy Garcia, Duane Johnson, Dennis Miller, Craig Nelson, Tom Clancy, Rip Torn, Sylvester Stallone, Jon Lovitz, Robert DuVal, Patricia Heaton, Sela Ward, Ron Silver, Mark Valley.

Of course education isn't everything but looking at the names above and what they have to say about the world, it kind of gives you pause for thought. I see at least a couple of the dropouts were going to leave the country if they didn't like the results of the last presidential election. Too bad they didn't follow through on that.

The Misty Mists of Time: A Nose Wax Story

As a person ages there are certain bodily things that happen. Wrinkles develop, muscles lose their tone, and jokes about never trusting gas are not necessarily jokes anymore. The passing years quickly teach us that the jokes about aging are not nearly as funny as they used to be. It seems I went to bed one day approaching middle age and woke up an older man. I was not aware of it right away it came to me a little at a time, but one of the first things I noticed about 'being older' was my nose hair seemed to be growing at an alarming rate. Even though I tried to keep it trimmed and presentable, Linda was constantly reminding me to "trim your nose hair." It was getting to the point I was becoming self conscious of it and more than once cut myself while trying to hack the stubborn hairs out of my nose with a scissors. Also, while trying to look into a magnifying mirror in the attempt to get all the unruly hairs, I discovered a whole bunch of new wrinkles I hadn't noticed before. To say the least, the nose hair issue was beginning to ruin more than one of my days.



Luckily, or so it seemed at the time, Linda and I were in Scottsdale, AZ for the winter, and as Linda was having her hair styled, I noticed a sign "Hair Removal by Lyla" or "Leslie's Wax" or something like that on the wall of the hair stylist place. I resolved to get myself an appointment next time Linda was in for a style and see if they could remove the offending hair that was making me look like an old walrus.

Sure enough next time we stopped down for Linda's appointment with Erin, I too had an appointment with "Layla Wax." We chatted a bit about "waxing" and the girls told me it could be "quite painful." All I said was I had a "high threshold for pain." When I told Linda and Erin I was headed downstairs for my appointment I thought at the time they were laughing a bit more than was necessary, but I was in a good mood and thought nothing of it as I headed off to "Larisa's Wax Emporium."

Like most of life's experiences this one started off easy enough. Lydia turned out to be a nice girl and had soothing comfortable music playing in her wax removal salon. She assured me the offending hair could be removed and would not grow back near as fast as she had me lay down on the comfortable bed provided. While making more small talk she mixed up a batch of warm melted wax. This along with some string for removing the wax when it hardened she somehow ladled into my nose. Although the wax was warm it didn't burn or anything and all the time Leslie was chatting away relaxing me and putting me at ease. I was beginning to think this was a far more pleasurable way to remove the offending nose hair than a crude scissors or painful tweezers. Also, reminding myself the nose hair would grow back "at a much slower rate," and thinking if it did the nice lady could get rid of it, was a comforting thought.

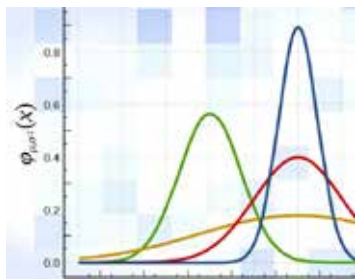
It was while all these thoughts were running through my mind, and listening to the soothing music and chatting with "Lovely Leslie" that I noticed she was checking to see if the wax had hardened enough for the "removal procedure" to begin. Sure enough after tapping the mixture in my nose a few more times she kind of seemed to tense up a bit and suddenly RIPPED; not pulled, not jerked; RIPPED the plug of wax out of my right nostril. Wow! The sudden violence of the yank lifted my head up off the pillow and it felt like my nose was stretched out like Pinocchio's! A bolt of white hot pain tore through me and tears shot out of my eyes. Furthermore, before I could even react "Larissa the Beast" RIPPED the plug out of my, now cowering, left nostril. New streaks of pain radiated from my shocked nose and more tears rolled down my cheeks. Of course when "Latoya the Pain Merchant" asked me if it hurt, like any man, I lied through my teeth and said "nah, not much."

After quickly assuring me the pain would soon go away "Lorinda the Dominatrix" asked if I would like to see how much hair had been removed. Before I could even decide if I wanted to see "the body" or not she showed me one of the newly removed plugs of wax. I couldn't believe it. The amount of hair removed was amazing and reminded me of a piece of sod that been newly dug up from our yard. If you haven't seen one of these hair plugs you can't imagine how long the roots of nose hair can be. Now that I think of it I have a new bald spot on my head directly above where the nose hair was removed and I am wondering if nose hair is so long it actually extends to your head. Probably not but a person should look into it. I don't remember having any baldness issues before.

Anyway, after I paid "Lola the Barbarian" the \$40 fee, and to put her mind at ease, I gave her a \$10 tip. Then I wobbled my confused but nose hair clear old body back up stairs. Linda and Erin asked me how it went and as I told my tale of woe they openly laughed till they cried. Women can be so cruel. Apparently the reason they had been so giggly when I went to "Lottie's Torture Salon" was they were well aware of the impending pain I was going to experience and my dumb remarks about me "having a high pain threshold" had only added to their mirth.

The postscript to this story is the nose hair quickly grew back with a vengeance. Not daring to chance another visit to "Lanni the Destroyer," I was back working with the scissors and tweezers. However, lucky for me, Linda and I were shopping in Target and found that for \$14.95 you can get a nice painless rotary electric shaver from Remington. Works like a charm, doesn't hurt, and keeps the nose hair at bay. "Lona" is a nice girl, but now the only time I see her is when I wake up in a cold sweat after a nightmare dream of being in her waxing salon once more.

Statistics Don't Lie, but Liars Use Statistics



How about the recent headline in one of our national news papers that proclaimed over 30% of college students are not getting enough to eat? The article described this as “The New Crisis on College Campus.” Are you kidding me? Who is it that vets the accuracy of these stories before they are released? Furthermore, who did the study? Was it an extra credit report put together by a student with an eating disorder? What were the questions asked on the survey? It’s been quite a few years since I was a college student but if I had been asked all those years ago if I was hungry, I suppose about 80% of the time I would have said, **“Yeah, now that you mention it, I could certainly use something to eat!”**

Although I have not read the questions asked on the survey that “discovered” that over 30% of college students in the United States don’t get enough to eat, Linda and I have made up a list of questions that no doubt are similar to those asked. Thinking back to my own college years, I added the likely answers for a college age person.

1. Are you hungry at the present time? **Hell yah!**
2. Are you ever hungry? **Hell yah!**
3. Do you think you get enough to eat each day? **Hell no!**
4. Do you have enough food in your refrigerator? **Hell no! The beer takes up all the space!**
5. Would you like have something to eat right now? **Hell yah!**
6. Do you have enough money to buy enough food? **Hell no!**
7. When you go to Starbucks do you have enough money to buy food? **Hell no!**
8. When you go to a bar do you have enough money to buy food? **Hell no!**

These questions are of course made up, but back in the Misty Mists of time when I was in college, we literally starved so we had enough money for the real necessities of life such as beer, car gas, apartment rent, entertainment and of course tuition. My roommate, Gary Jung and I worked night jobs to get enough money to stay in school and we found we could eat for 50 cents per day. Of course to eat that cheap we lived on toasted cheese sandwiches, made with day old bread and American cheese which we bought in bulk. Many days we had toasted cheese for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Whoever got up first in the morning would usually yell, “How many toasted cheese do you want, one or two?” Were we occasionally hungry? Of course; probably even well over 30% of the time. Could we have given the answers to the above questions? Except for the one about Starbucks, Absolutely! I guess my point is what the hell difference would it have made. Now; would the people and organizations who keep printing this stupid, sensationalist, un-vetted, slanted, so-called news; generated by lies, innuendo, and poor research; and funded by other people and organizations with hidden agendas; please shut the hell up?

Shorts

What’s wrong in this picture? It is reported that the United States Postal Service is losing \$1.76 on average for each package it delivers for Amazon. Not only that but the Amazon packages go out Express Mail so they receive priority delivery; many times getting delivered before the one you the average postal customer paid full price for. Of course change in how business is conducted is inevitable and occurs all the time. Internet buying is no doubt here to stay but will be proven to be one of the great disrupters of the century in that it will change how retail sales are conducted. It is projected that largely due to these changes in retail buying; over 3800 stores in the United States will close in the upcoming year. To mention just a few: Walgreens is closing over 600, and Toys R Us is closing over 700. I agree change is inevitable but I do have to question the logic in killing thousands of jobs, leaving thousands of storefronts empty, and losing billions of property tax dollars while at the same time giving literally billions in profits to Amazon, and all the while having the taxpayers foot the bill?

#1 Small Town Bar in North Dakota: The “A Frame Bar and Grill,” located on the shores of beautiful Lake Metigoshe, has been voted the “#1 Small Town Bar in North Dakota.” Congrats!



Shingles and New Vernacular: I was talking to a friend the other day and she indicated she had contracted shingles. Thinking she was telling us she was installing a new roof on her home, I inquired how old the prior ones were, and what type of new shingle she had ordered. Before she could reply, I mentioned that Linda and I really like our tile shingles, but that cement shingles, asphalt shingles and of course cedar shake shingles are also nice. In addition I mentioned many folks are now installing the new metal shingles which are very attractive as well. As I was taking a breath, our friend was finally able to explain she was not buying shingles; she had CONTRACTED shingles. Opps! Linda reminds me I had too much coffee that morning. Get well soon!

But wait there's more: On a serious note, the other day my doctor's most excellent assistant, Deborah Hainline, informed me that there is a new shingles vaccine now available. This new vaccine is far more effective than the prior vaccines. This new product is administered in a two part process. You get the first shot and then in six months get a second vaccination to complete the procedure. The shot is covered under part D of Medicare and is available in most major pharmacies and of course your doctor's office. Also, since there is only one maker of this drug the quality of the vaccine should be the same no matter where you get it.

Flicker Woodpecker Damage: Many homeowners in the Phoenix area have constant problems with Flicker Woodpeckers drilling holes in the sides of homes. The majority of desert homes are constructed with stucco siding and it seems this type of siding has become a particular target for this type of woodpecker. In many cases the birds will drill completely through the exterior wall of the home and build a nest in the wall. It is reported shooing the birds away is nearly impossible, but applying a mixture of Icy Hot crème combined with Cayenne pepper in the area the birds are attacking is effective. It has also been reported but not substantiated, that a Tarantula .22 cal air rifle with a 15X Bushnell scope is even more effective.



Good Book: A friend of ours John Christman has written a new book 'Sleeper Bet'. The book is a most excellent mystery novel, well worth the read, and can be purchased on Amazon.



Are Wives Always Correct? Well, I was talking to my buddy Tom Middleton about it and he reminded me that in most commercial buildings if the bathrooms are located, for instance, in a hallway, the women's bathroom is almost always on the "right" side. We're just sayin...

Do Angels Have Wheelchairs?

Linda and I recently lost a very dear friend, Marlen Lenton. Marlen had been confined to a wheelchair from early childhood and later on had suffered a near fatal brain aneurysm. It seems when something like this happens so many times a poem will come into my head, but the problem with a poem for Marlen is that it simply is not enough. A mere poem can't describe his heart of the purest spun gold, his integrity, his amazing courage, his unbelievable humbleness, or how he inspired people. How, in spite of his own disability, he always tried to help others, and how terribly kind a man he truly was.

The poem also falls woefully short of saying that before that terrible brain aneurysm, Marlen was an extremely competent Insurance Professional. He learned his trade and was very, very good at it. There is no doubt that without the aneurysm he would have ended up being one of the top professionals in his field.

In so very many ways, Marlen was the kind of person all of us strive to be; but seem to forever fall short of. Linda and I are so very proud to have been his friend, and accompany him for a small part of his journey. There is simply no doubt in our mind that he is with God, and is reunited with his great friend Lloyd, his dad, grandparents, and other many friends.

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

Chuck

THE CRAPPER MUSE

Do Angels Have Wheelchairs?

Do Angels have wheelchairs? I said; "I think so."

There was one in my life I was privileged to know.

Maybe early in his journey; he did not yet have wings,

But was tasked with setting an example: From his chair, of all things.

From a hyper active childhood of running around,

Cancer took his legs; tried to pin him to ground.

He reached out with his mind, used his chair to be mobile,

Showed us a great stubborn spirit; steel strong, yet King noble.

His word was his bond, his friendship forever;

He showed up for work, no matter broken bones or bad weather.

This was a man you wanted, to have in your life.

Instead of problems, he saw opportunities; where others saw strife.

In spite of challenges that would have driven me down,

This man soldiered on, and refused to give ground.

As each challenge came, he somehow fought his way through.

With his will unbending and a soul so true blue.

Yes, there are angels among us; met as life's journey goes on.

The problem for we mortals is, we don't realize who they are till they're gone.

Only then do we know how incredibly lucky we were;

That by being part of their world was a God given gift for sure.

Safe journey dear Marlen; throw your wheels away.

Say hi to your dad; God will show you the way.

2/9/18 - For Marlen