

**NOW WHAT?**Shipping Guns and
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Since I have now sold the company and do not write their newsletter any longer, I was thinking maybe I would just do a newsletter for the fun of writing and as means of getting out general information Linda and I and our friends have found helpful or maybe even humorous once in a while. I have not decided exactly what to call the newsletter but at a get together with friends the other night 'The Crapper Chronicles' seemed to be one of the favorites. 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 first inaugural newsletter of my retirement years. I am archiving all newsletters on my website at TompkinsPublishing.com.

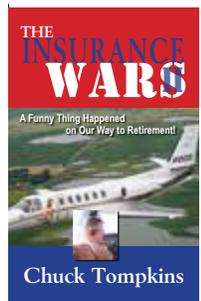
Shipping Guns and Ammunition on Planes

Sounds difficult but in fact there is nothing to it. All that is required is a hard gun case, that has approved TSA locks. The locks are not overly expensive, can be bought at sporting goods stores, luggage stores, Target, CVS Pharmacy, or such places. The hard case I purchased was from Scheels and it cost around \$200. However, it is a very good case, will last a lifetime, and I will use it quite often. The guns have to be unloaded, you can take rifles, pistols, shotguns, and the ammo too can be put in the case as long as it is in a factory box or approved ammunition type box. In other words, the ammo cannot be loose in the case. When you get to the airport just tell TSA you are transporting a gun. They will check to be sure it is unloaded and properly locked, and you are good to go. The last time I traveled with guns it only delayed me a few minutes.

Book News

My new book 'Insurance Wars II' (A funny thing happened on my way to retirement) is going to print at this time. The book will be around 300 pages and should be available in a month or so in hardcover. I am also doing a reprint of Dakota to Dakine because the new material almost doubles the size of the book. Both the hardcover versions of Dakota to Dakine and Insurance Wars II are going to cost \$40 plus shipping. If you want a copy I will include a free copy of the original Dakota to Dakine and a paperback version of the original Insurance Wars for free with your order. I also have a few copies of Minot Down Under if any of you want one of those. The price on Minot Down Under is \$42.50 plus shipping.

Also, in talking to Bill Metz I found an outfit down here in Phoenix that does beautiful leather binding of books. The reason I mention this is I am going to have several copies of the four books I have written leather bound: The original Insurance Wars, Minot Down Under, Dakota to Dakine as well as Insurance Wars II. If any of you want a leather bound copy of any of the books let me know to be sure I do enough of them. The cost to leather bind is steep so the books are going to be around \$100 a copy plus postage; not cheap.



Dog Allergies?

It seems this day so many people are complaining that their dogs are scratching, and licking themselves until in some cases they are actually bleeding. It seems the popular diagnosis from the veterinary community for this condition is 'your dog has allergies.' Vets seem to be advocating the more expensive 'natural' dog foods and telling you to 'quit giving your dog products containing grain'. Linda and I like so many others were buying this expensive dog food, and it did nothing. Then the vet prescribed an anti itch medication "Apoquil" and also gave our dog a shot of allergy medication. Although at first this seemed to help, in no time the dog was licking and scratching like mad again. His pads were actually bleeding from so much licking. Also, as time went on he started to lose hair, seemed to be prone to ear infections, and it seemed to us his skin was turning black. Also, he seemed to have more 'dog odder' than normal even after a bath. Thinking it odd that all at once virtually everyone including us who had a dog was saying their dog also had 'allergies', and they too were buying expensive 'special foods' and giving their dogs 'allergy' medications, I asked our vet if they could in fact 'check our dog for allergies' to see if he actually had any. The cost to test the dog for this was not much and low and behold.....Guess what? The dog had no allergies! Zero, none, nadda.



The vet now dug deeper and low and behold the dog had a fungal infection. It turns out this fungal type of infection is becoming very common and some think it is because of all the preventative shots pets are now being given. Long story short, the vet says that some of these shots kill certain natural bacteria in dog's digestive tracts. This bacterium naturally controls the type of fungal infection many of these dogs are getting. Without the bacteria the fungus gets out of control. What are the signs your pet may have this?

1. Dog has a stronger than normal odder even after a bath.
2. Dog licks his foot pads, scratches, and licks his hair excessively
3. Dog is losing hair
4. Dog's skin (especially on his tummy) is turning black.
5. Dog is prone to ear infections

It turns out our dog had all five of the symptoms and we had spent hundreds of dollars for pills, shots, and medications to try and cure a non-existent allergy! In talking to our friends several of them had the same experience.

The cure? Our vet gave our dog an antibiotic, an anti fungal shampoo, and advised us to continue use of the Apoquel. Within a matter of days, the dog quit licking and scratching, started to grow hair back, and quit smelling so much. What a relief! Several of our friends experienced the same thing with their pets.

Social Security Woes



Linda and I got signed up for Medicare last year. It was not too big a hassle and didn't take too long. At the same time we signed up for the Medicare Supplement insurance from Blue Cross of North Dakota. That too was not too big a problem. The problem came when we decided at age 66 to sign up for Social Security benefits. To see how to go about it I stopped into our local Social Security office. Gee, what a surprise. First of all I was instructed to go to a blue kiosk and enter my name social security number, and reason for my visit. On doing that the machine dispensed me a number. I was now 'A5' and took a seat to wait for my name to be called. I waited, and waited, and waited. As I sat there as usual I was looking at the other folks that were there. Let's see, there was a Nigerian, a Somali, two Hispanics, (only one of who could speed English), and a younger gal with a 'companion dog'. The gal with the companion dog was talking 'loudly' on her cell phone and seemed to be extremely knowledgeable about virtually anything. She had apparently not noticed the sign right above her head that admonished people to 'Use your cell phone outside the waiting room' as she blasted her every pronouncement to all of us in the room for the next hour. She was obviously in line to get special benefits available to only 'obnoxious' people.

Finally, another guy showed up who was my same age and he mentioned he too was going to apply for his social security. The two of us commented that we were the only ones in the room who had probably paid much into the program and we both wondered how much the others had put in. Also, about this time I noticed there were signs everywhere in the room exhorting people to 'apply on line', 'avoid the wait, apply on line', 'tired of waiting? Apply on line' and others about 'we want to help' etc. Finally after two hours I simply left. I asked the guard at the door when was a good time to stop with less waiting and he laughed and said, we open at 9:00am and the line starts to form outside about 8:30. I took his advice and the next day I showed up at 8:30 am got in line and was soon talking

to one of the social security folks. After listening to my story about what I wanted to do I was informed by the nice lady that I needed to get a 'special' appointment to apply for social security benefits and there was a two week wait for that but gee.....I could go online and get it done in no time. So reluctantly, that is what we did. In do course I got a notice 'the check was in the mail', but Linda did not. Back I went (early) one morning to the Social Security office. After only about a half hour wait I went to the window to find out...opps!....Linda was not with me so I could not check on her stuff for her. A week later she and I went through the line again, and finally were told her check too was supposed to be coming. Man, what a huge amount of BS to sign up for a program we have already paid for. I find it amazing that many of the people in the room who cannot even speak English are able to get through the system so easily. I was thinking bummer! I should have taken Spanish when I was in high school maybe I could have gotten taken care of better. We still haven't received our check but are hopeful it is on the way. We will keep you posted. In the meantime, if you need to talk to these people, get in line early.

Home Security System Woes

My advice? Don't sign any long term contracts. Though the system service we have at the Arizona house is alright, Linda and I signed up for a home security system at our North Dakota home and it has been a total disaster. First of all the system we signed up for has many little batteries in the various sensors. Within days of installing the system we kept getting false alarms and notices this and that battery was dead. I was thinking gee, it's a new system the batteries should be ok for awhile? Then it turns out the system is cell phone and wifi based.



Since we have terrible cell phone service in our area to get things to work better we were advised to get a cell phone booster. Gee, that was only \$1000. We bought one, it didn't do much good. Then we were told our wifi needed to be stronger, we purchased a better modem and booster for that as well, it didn't do much good either.

We kept getting surveys about 'how can we help you?' and 'how do you like your system?' and etc. I kept sending back notes that if they wanted to help me they could cancel my contract. Long story short, I made a few calls to the company to try and drop the service but they refused. Finally, after yet another false alarm to report a non-existent fire, I called our bookkeeper, told her to cancel any payments to the worthless 'security' company and stopped at my attorney's office to have him deal with them. I decided he needs to keep busy and the money he will charge us is better spent in getting rid of these clowns.

Cautions for Concert Ticket On Line Sales

Adele Concert 8/17/16. Since Linda's birthday is so close to Christmas, back 12/15/15 I was starting to try and figure out what I was going to do for her Christmas and birthday presents. About this time of course we were in Arizona and the singer Adele announced she was going to have a concert at the Walking Stick Arena 8/16,17/16. Tickets were to go on sale 12/16/15. I happened to go on line and there was a web site billed as 'The Official Adele Website'. Of course since it was the official site and they had tickets for sale I went ahead and looked up what was available. Several of the seat sections I looked up were booked as 'already sold out'. In a panic I found some seats available in section 218 row 4. The price was listed as \$1010 per seat but I thought gee, maybe a big name gal like Adele commanded that kind of money. What I did not realize was that I had somehow gotten myself onto a 'secondary ticket resale' website. However, a few moments later I got a confirmation saying I had purchased a couple of tickets in section 218 row 4 but note it did not mention 'what' seats it were I had purchased. Also, it said 'No action is needed at this time'. 'You will receive a notification soon after your order is confirmed'. The following is what happened.

Since I had gotten the message no action is needed at this time, I basically just forgot about it and other than mentioning to Linda I had purchased us tickets did not think about it for a few months. About spring of 2016 I mentioned to Craig Fink I had purchased the tickets and he said I must have been scammed if I had paid that much, since he had gotten better tickets for only about \$160 each. Of course since all I had was a few e mails and I couldn't even remember when I had done the deal, I just figured he was probably correct and put it down to another life learning lesson. Linda and I just decided not to plan on going to the concert and I started looking for another birthday present for her.

Fast forward to 8/16/16. It was now less than 24 hours before the Adele concert in Arizona. I had been out in the pasture fixing fence and Linda and I were sitting on the deck having a glass of wine. The phone rings: it is 'Steve' 602 741 6193 from Arizona. Gee, he has my Adele tickets and I am supposed to meet him at The Hard Rock Café the next night to get my Adele concert tickets. To say the least his call was not well received because by now I knew at the very least I had paid \$1000 a seat for tickets that were priced at around \$160 per seat. To put it bluntly I was

not polite, profanity was used and I called good old Steve a scammer, a fraud, and told him he had already robbed me once so why would I meet him at the Hard Rock Café to maybe get a knife in the ribs. He said no one else could claim my tickets and no refund was available. Using more unprintable words, I hung up on him.

Low and behold, Adele had to cancel her concert the next day. Wow! Now I was thinking since apparently I actually had a valid ticket I could maybe get a refund. No dice. By now I had dug through all my old e mails and found a number for Tickets-Center.com the outfit I had apparently purchased the tickets from. They informed me since Adele had rescheduled her concert for 11/21/16 I still had a valid ticket and could not get a refund. Bummer!

However, I did send a long e mail to an Arizona TV station, Channel 3. One of their reporters Gary Harper does a segment called 3 On Your Side where he tries to expose scams. I sent him an e mail explaining what had happened, and the next day he responded. Since Linda and I were in Arizona for a few days the end of August they sent a TV crew to our house and interviewed us. LiAna Enriquez and camera man Todd did a fine job of reporting and the segment was aired on 3 On Your Side at 9:30 pm 8/29/16. They too did some investigating and found that Tickets-Center.com has an F rating with the better business bureau. Unfortunately they too had no luck in getting our money back.

Again: the whole event is just another life lesson but there are a few pointers I think should be mentioned.

1. Be extra cautious about any site that advertizes tickets for sale before they are 'officially' available. Remember, these scammers are selling tickets they don't even have. They make their profit by charging you so much extra they are confident they can buy a cheaper ticket later and profit the difference.

2. If you get on one of these websites to buy tickets and you see anything about 'Secondary Ticket market' call your credit card company and void the sale. I waited too long until there was nothing that could have been done.

3. If you thought you were buying a specific seat and you get a confirmation of a section and row but no specific seat number. Call the credit card company and cancel the order.

4. If the tickets say 'special delivery' but do not specifically say WHAT KIND of special delivery it is a huge red flag. In our case I was told special delivery 'could' be by mail, will call window, e mail, or delivered in person anywhere within two miles of the event venue before the event. Of course in our case the later 'special delivery' method was used. If 'special delivery' is mentioned, I would call the credit card company and cancel the order

These websites are set up to create an urgency for you to buy immediately and lull you into NOT getting worried about where your tickets are until it is too late to cancel your order. Neither the TV program that 3 On Your Side did or this newsletter will ever stop these scammers but at least a few of us will be more cautious. Oh, by the way, I ended up getting Linda a nice present anyway. She remodeled our upstairs bathroom in the North Dakota house. To say the very least even with scam tickets and airfare, the Adele deal would have been lots cheaper!

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

CRAPPER SHORTS?

CLIMATE CHANGE

1. If it's unseasonably hot we call it "Global Warming." If its unseasonably cold we comment that it is a cold day or casually remark it is colder than usual.

2. If it is unseasonably dry, once again, we call it "Global Warming." If it is unseasonably wet, it is a tropical depression, El Nino, a low pressure system or, if all else fails, it is simply raining.

3. We obsess over a few parts per million of pollution in the air from a coal powered power plant, but completely ignore an erupting volcano that is putting cubic miles of pollution in the air.

4. It is time we realize that the attempt to compare geologic time frames to human life span is an utterly ridiculous endeavor. Yet we listen to it, spend trillions trying to stop it, and give it credence every day.

5. Even proof that Global Warming exists is based largely on "smoke and mirrors" conjecture.

6. Climate Change, how ever, has been going on since our planet was created. It will always be happening, it cannot be altered or stopped, and it is by and large; NOT caused by man.

7. There are experts out there who say if we double what we are spending to stop Global Warming we could possibly alter our planets temperature by a mere one degree in the next 100 years. Think: if we spent this much money on things we CAN accomplish, it is entirely possible we COULD eradicate many deadly diseases, such as malaria, aids, cancer in a mere few years.