

**NOW WHAT?**

Cell Phone - Batteries - Bulb Problems

Back Pain

Empty "Nest" Syndrome

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Where Are Our State Leaders?

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 second newsletter of my retirement years. I am archiving all newsletters on my website at Tompkins-Publishing.com.

Cell Phone - Batteries - Bulb Problems

What do Cell Phones and Hard to Find Batteries and Bulbs have in common? They can all be hard to fix, replace, or find occasionally. The other day, for whatever reason, Linda's cell phone malfunctioned. There were no young grand children, or any of our older kids available to help. Of course other than Joannie Hill, our own peer group is of no assistance in such cases. Since her and Bobby were off on vacation, with a heavy heart, I headed for our local cell phone store. The reason for the lack of enthusiasm on my part was of course when you go to these places; the barely out of high school employees look at your gray hair, your sagging belly, many wrinkles and automatically think you are an idiot. I don't know about the rest of you but being talked down to, in the same tone of voice some use when talking to a small child is a HUGE turn off to me. None the less, I went up to the store to talk to a 'source of all knowledge' person. Bummer: The store did not open for 5 minutes. However, I saw a guy struggling with a box he was trying to get out the door. I helped hold the door for him, but instead of thanking me he said "we don't open for 5 minutes.' Gee, thanks???

Of course all of you who know me now realize my core temp was coming up. Not only that but as I stood there, three other employees of the store walked by me and went in. Two of them pointedly reminded me 'we don't open for five minutes.' The original guy I had helped with the door went over to the recycling truck driver and shot the breeze with him. Now for the best part: Suddenly, a light bulb went off in my poor old-man brain. Hey, there was another place in Minot where you could go to get cell phones fixed. Better yet, they don't use that 'cutesy' talking to a small child voice when they talk to you and the service wait time is short. Where is this place? I scampered over to Batteries + Bulbs, located at 3306 16th st SW, Minot, ND 58701 phone # 701 838 3366. A few minutes later I walked in to be warmly greeted by owner Mike Marchus mike.marchus@batteriesplus.net. Explaining my cell phone problem, he took the phone, worked his magic and in mere minutes he had it fixed. Three months later it is still working perfectly. Wow! Not only that but if you ever have a hard to find battery, bulb, or other device, they most likely either have it or know where to get it. Thanks Mike!

But Wait There's More!!! Linda's car has a push button starter. Lately when we try to start the car, it has been giving the message 'no key recognized' or something to that effect. After a few tries we have always been able to get the car going but since the process acted like a weak battery in the key fob I took it to where else... 14202 N Scottsdale Road, Ste 147, the home of Batteries + Bulbs in Scottsdale, AZ 85254. Instead of a 'root canal' trip to the car dealership the guy at Batteries + Bulbs took our two key fobs, replaced the batteries in mere seconds, and it was problem solved. Ta, ta !!!!

Back Pain

I have never had back trouble. In spite of cutting firewood, racing snowmobiles back in the day, golf, and so many other things, I have been back pain free most of my life. All that changed about two years ago. At



first the pain was simply a nagging pain, but it got worse and worse to the point I went to a Chiropractor. After being pushed and pulled by a couple of them; and since the pain kept getting worse, I upped the ante and tried 'deep muscle massage'. FAR more pain, lots less money in my billfold, and still no help: I tried a 'deep muscle ASIAN muscle massage' lady. LOTS more pain, bruises, etc. She kept telling me I had scar tissue. I bought some 'electric shock' belt, a kidney belt, and various 'soothing' creams. I don't care what the SHAQ says. They didn't work. Whatever, many hundreds dollars later, I finally got to the point, I could barely walk, could just barely get on and off the toilet, couldn't sleep, and had to have help getting dressed. Finally I did what I should have done in the first place. I went over to Mayo and got a thorough exam. Gee big surprise: My 4th or 5th lumbar, I can't remember which was pinching a nerve. They sent me to therapy. The gal there looked me over and gave me some specific stretches to do. Unbelievable as it may sound, after a couple months of this incredible therapy the pain subsided. I am extremely careful not to reinjure my back, but so far eight months later, I am doing fine and totally pain free. From what I hear, I am an extremely lucky guy to have been able to get back up and running without surgery.

Empty 'Nest' Anyone: Just last year we were talked into getting a nice new set of thermostats for the Phoenix house. Gee, it was only \$1000 or so to install the marvelous devices, but don't worry, it will save you BIG money over the years in energy savings. Not only that you can check your house temperature on your cell phone, and even set your wonderful new thermostats with your phone, etc.etc etc. The list of benefits was endless. Sadly a few weeks after the big install a few things started to crop up. First of all gee, the wonderful new thermostats were 'having trouble' talking to each other. We had to put in a Wi Fi booster. It didn't help much. Then we found if there was no activity in the house the heating/cooling system 'assumed' we were either not home or were away on a trip and would change the temperature to an 'away' setting. I tried to get the 'away' setting to really 'go away' but finally had to call the installer, have him come back, and with his help was able to simply get the thermostats to 'quit talking' to each other and do what? Simply regulate the temperature in their area of responsibility. It only cost \$100 to have the installer do what? Make the devices do EXACTLY what the old outdated, but work perfectly devices had been doing before. My utility bills are paid, on time every time. I guess I am not earning any 'leafs' for being green, but you know what? I sleep like a baby.

Right Church----Wrong Pew: Over the years I have only had one close call on forgetting our anniversary. Usually, I can come up with some sort of interesting idea or nice bling to commemorate the day. This year for some reason I was really locked on to hitting things out of the park to commemorate the day when Linda had agreed to stay with me 'for better or worse'. First off I was able to talk a jewelry store out of a most excellent bracelet. Then, since we had heard one of the best restaurants in the Phoenix metro was down at the Wild Horse Pass Casino I called down there, got in touch with the reservations people and soon had the two of us set up for 5:30 pm. dinner at Plateau. Then it was time to hire a driver to take us there and back. Things were set.

The driver Jeremy arrived right on time and whisked us off for an evening of fun. On the way down to Wild Horse Pass we were telling him about the name of the restaurant and he had not heard of Plateau. However, there was one he had heard of at the casino called Platinum, so I thought I had just gotten the name wrong. The door man had not heard of Plateau either, but he could barely speak English anyway, and once again Platinum was mentioned so we went up to check the place out. Problem: Platinum is just a cocktail bar, a very nice cocktail bar, but none the less; only a cocktail bar. The only nice eatery in the casino is Don Shula's Steak House. In talking to the lady at the desk I find out that yes, there is a Plateau Restaurant in the Wild Horse Pass Casino. The problem is THAT Wild Horse Pass Casino is in Oregon. Bummer: Two casinos with the same name. We had reservations for 5:30 at a restaurant 1000 miles away. No worries, the food and service at Don Shula's Steakhouse were fantastic. Worthy of a high recommend. The bling worked great and the evening was a huge success.

Guns vs. Cars: Both guns and cars kill many people each year. Actually, trucks as well have been major killers in recent months. Although gun deaths get more press, cars and trucks kill far more people each year when handled incorrectly or when they are in the hands of 'the wrong' people. If we are going to ban these dangerous items, I suppose using simple math it would make more sense to ban cars and trucks. But wait: What about forks and spoons? Overweight problems kill astronomically more people that guns, cars, and trucks combined. It is simply undeniable that forks and spoons are the major conveyors of this problem. Folks, they gotta go!



Good Bread Anyone? A few years ago Linda and I went to Europe. Of course we saw the usual grand cathedrals, castles, wineries, museums, and sights. The food as well was wonderful, with the wine, sausages and various cheeses leaving a lasting impression on Linda and me. However, usually when I talk about that trip invariably I will end up talking about how ABSOLUTELY GREAT the bread was. Big loaves with a delicious chewy thick crust: The type of bread you don't just use to support some jam, peanut butter, or salami. No; the type of bread you savor, roll around in your mouth; the type of bread you look forward to eating. The type of bread that simply can be eaten with nothing on it: Because this type of bread, in and by itself, IS the meal. When Linda and I would go on a daytrip over there, I had a backpack and I would buy one of those huge loaves of bread, a chunk of cheese, and a bottle of wine and I was like the Pied Piper to the rest of the people on the tour, as they followed us around, hoping to share lunch with us. Of course, the problem we bread lovers have is it is virtually impossible to find bread such as this in the United States. The reason is loaves such as these must be made in small quantities, by a 'craftsman' type of baker, and being virtually impossible to mass produce, it gets expensive. Once in a while you can find it, but by and large European type bread is as scarce as sympathy for Hillary Clinton. None the less, this newsletter is supposed to be an information source and I have located a fairly good supply of pretty excellent bread at Andrioli's Italian Restaurant in Scottsdale, Arizona. The bread is pricey at \$8 per loaf, but the loaf probably weighs a couple of pounds, and the bread is so good the cost is inconsequential. So many people come in to purchase this bread that even at this price they only will allow one loaf per customer per day.

The bad news is for those of us who spend the greater part of our year in North Dakota, we up until this time have been unable to get excellent bread. The good news is I am excited to report that this problem has at last been solved. Lucky for us, good buddy Dave Shomento, himself is a 'craftsman baker'. As we all know, he and his family have been turning out MOST EXCELLENT pizza at Sammy's Pizza for generations. In recent months, he has been diligently turning his baking expertise to

developing a good European type bread recipe. I am proud to say, I have been hounding him for years to get working on the problem and have been one of his most enthusiastic supporters and taste testers. Now thanks to Dave's efforts, you no longer have to go to Scottsdale, Arizona or Europe to get great bread. I am happy to report that the current product Dave is producing is MOST EXCELLENT!! The bread is available in limited quantities at Sammy's Pizza in Minot phone 701 852 4486. Supplies usually run out each day so I suggest giving them a call to reserve your loaf!!!

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?****MOST EXCELLENT VET:**

If those of you who are in Phoenix for the winter have yet to find a good vet for your pets, Linda and I have located one in Tiffany Boisjolie DVM. Her dad is Pat Butz from Minot and her clinic is Hopi Animal Hospital located at 5533 E Bell Road Ste 101, Scottsdale, AZ 85254 phone 602 494 4674.

The ex Jet Dog Jack loves Tiffany, and other than his crazy barking if someone rings the doorbell, she has been able to correct whatever woes he has come up with so far.

**POETRY BY "JACK":
HAPPY DOG RUNNING**

Ears flying in the wind,
bushy tail straight out.

Flying feet scrambling
over the ground; there's a
happy dog running about.

Mouth hanging open, in a
lopsided grin,

Maybe a bit of drool,
down under his chin.

Legs splaying out; tail down
low,

There's nothing quite as
joyful as a happy dog run-
ning, you know.

"Make another lap around
the yard. I'll stay out of your
way."

"Happy Dog Running,
you're making my day!"