

Minnekahta eMessenger®

VOLUME II

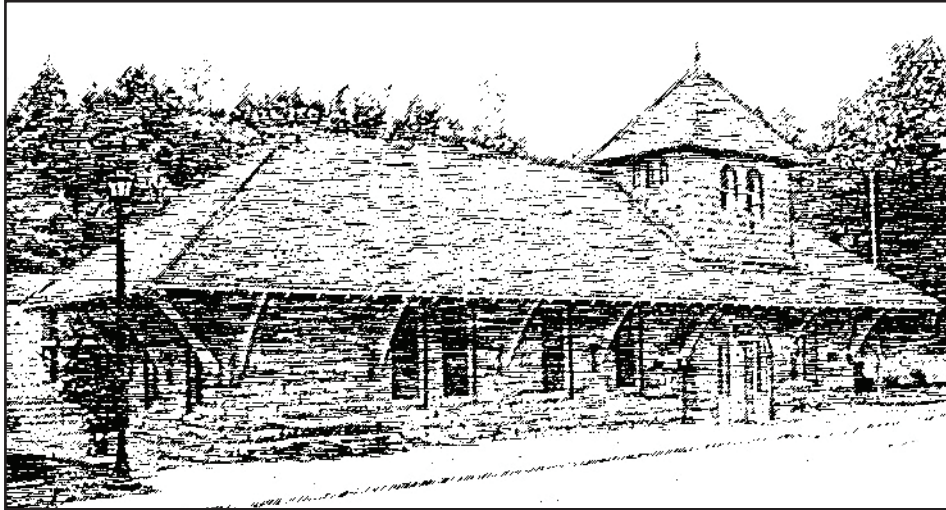
MINNEKAHTA PUBLISHING, LLC

NUMBER 12

SOUTHWESTERN SD.

BRINGING OUR COMMUNITIES TOGETHER

FRIDAY, SEP. 29, 2017



We're not against
Printing
We're against
Wasting Resources

We don't want to stop producing
Minnekahta Messenger
for readers and advertisers.

We simply think that wasting paper, ink, and toner
doesn't make economic or environmental sense.

In the next few months, Minnekahta Publishing, LLC will cease its
print-and-hand-delivery format of the *Minnekahta Messenger* to local businesses.
The *Minnekahta eMessenger* will be the only version of the popular newsletter.

eMessenger provides readers with the convenience of programmed hyperlinks
for all cited source websites, table of contents page and story titles, and
news and feature stories' (continued on/from page) cross-references.

Don't let your family and friends miss out! Email the *eMessenger* to them today!

Minnekahta Messenger



VOLUME II

MINNEKAHTA PUBLISHING, LLC

NUMBER 12

SOUTHWESTERN SD.

BRINGING OUR COMMUNITIES TOGETHER

FRIDAY, SEP. 29, 2017

WE SUPPORT OUR FIRST RESPONDERS THANK YOU ALL LIVES MATTER

A COWBOY AFTERNOON By T.L. Matt

Saturday, September 23, 2017 brought many people to the Mueller Center in Hot Springs to enjoy music and poetry—all dedicated to Badger Clark, first Poet Laureate of South Dakota. He liked to call himself a “poet lariat.”

Featured at 2:00 p.m. was Pegie Douglas and the Badger Sett Band with Pegie, main vocalist, on guitar; Cheryl Janssens, bass; Marcia Kenobbie, mandolin; Kay Lautenschlager, fiddle; and Ned Westphal, guitar.

The group started off with the popular folk song, “Red Wing,” written in 1907 by Kerry Mills and lyrics by Thurland Chattaway. It took me back to my sixth grade music class, as we sang many old folk songs and enjoyed them so very much.

“The Old Prospector” was the first poem by Badger Clark that Pegie set to music. She is so talented and sensitive in her compositions. No two tunes resemble each other. Some are toe-tapping songs with snappy rhythms and others tender melodies—but all true to Badger’s intended emotions when he authored his poems.

Next on the program was “The Free Wind,” the second title Pegie adapted to music. Ned, along with Pegie, narrated the moving life of Badger Clark, interspersed with his poems set to music. A very effective way to reach the audience.

The verses from “A Ranger” in *Grass-Grown Trails* struck a chord with me. I loved the refrain:

“As a circuit-ridin’ preacher of the law,

All his preachin’ was the sort that hit the nail;

He was just a common ranger, just a ridin’ pilgrim stranger, And he labored with the sinners of the trail.”

(see *Cowboy on back cover*)

ANCIENT ORIGINS OF HOT SPRINGS

Adapted by T.L. Matt

This article is adapted from the pamphlet, When Hot Springs was a Pup, ©1927, by Badger Clark.

A hunting party of pre-Columbian Indians of unknown origin came upon a canyon which had red walls and peculiar rim rocks at the southern edge of the Black Hills. They were all afoot, as at that time there were no horses nearer than Europe.

Being thirsty, a young man knelt to drink from the little mountain stream of beautifully clear water and spat the water out in surprise. It was sweet and good, but blood warm.

The discovery of this unusual water was communicated to their tribe and they brought their wives and children to set up a new camp, where aches and pains were relieved by soaking in the miracle water.

Hot Springs was “on the map” long before there were any maps in this part of the world.

Time passed, centuries of it. Columbus happened upon the shores of a new world, Cortez conquered Mexico, and Indians along the Atlantic seaboard began to establish their first contacts with Christianity, rum and gunpowder.

Bands of wild mustangs of Spanish ancestry appeared on the northern plains and the Indians learned to ride them... The plains tribes entered upon their period of prosperity and glory.

Many more Indians visited the red canyon of the warm springs and it became a religious shrine as much as a watering place.

One day, many decades later, Sioux invaders followed the trail

of a buffalo herd through the deep pass in the hills near the site of the present town of Buffalo Gap.

(see *Origins on back cover*)

AN INTERVIEW WITH 103-YEAR-OLD AUTHOR AND HISTORIAN CAROLINE CURL

By Carol Webb and T.L. Matt

On July 28, 2017, Carol Webb and I drove along the winding dirt road to the comfortable home of Caroline Curl.

Caroline was seated on a tan, cushy chair by the picture window in the living room where several pieces of art work of the surrounding hills hung. A giant poster-sized photograph of Red Canyon, featuring the Irishman Profile rock formation, was opposite the window. The formation was nicknamed “Andy Gump,” a cartoon-strip character from her era.

When Caroline was born on March 29, 1914, it was a cold, blustery day. She was born in the log house in Red Canyon near Edgemont and was helped into the world by “Grandma” Stevens and her father, Frank Albright.

Grandma Stevens wasn’t her real grandmother, but a wonderful lady—oldest in the area—who gave everyone help and encouragement.

Caroline remembered outside pets. There was a dog and the ever-present barn cats, who helped control the mice in the barn and house.

During her early school years, teachers boarded at the Albright home and I wondered if perhaps Caroline had wanted to be a teacher, but she said she dreamed of becoming a nurse.

It was in Caroline’s nature to take care of others. When her husband, Barney, was very ill, the doctor wanted her to give him shots at home, but she declined. He thought by her level of care-

taking, she had previous nursing training. She told us the doctor said, “You sure had me fooled!”

When asked the question, “Who influenced you the most when growing up?” Caroline answered, “Both Mom and Dad.” Her mother, Ella, helped her learn to cook and sew and to not think of housekeeping as drudgery but to look at the chores as goals to be accomplished with pride.

Caroline loved to work with her Dad outdoors. He taught her to strive “to do the best you can” and to always complete a task to the end.

Since not all their relatives lived in the area, Caroline’s family celebrated holidays with their Red Canyon neighbors. Caroline recalled many picnics with wonderful food—especially fried chicken. The children were allowed to play in the creek on those occasions.

During the Depression years, many ingredients needed for pies couldn’t be found, so women made do with whatever they had and the results were amazing. Carline told us of a Mrs. Martinson who made delicious carrot pies.

(see *Interview on back cover*)

IN THIS ISSUE

Minnekahta News.....	Page 1
If You Could Change One Thing.....	Page 2
Love is the Motivator A Moment of Peace	
There’s Something To Be Said.....	Page 3
The Kindred Spirit Lies They Tell Writers, Part 8: Don’t Worry About Grammar and Spelling	
This May Interest You.....	Page 4-5
Open Letter to Hon. Lynne Hix-Disanto Harvey, Irma and Relatives	
Special Section.....	Pages 6-7
I Discovered the Pacific Ocean	
Off the Beaten Path.....	Pages 8-9
I Paid the Gringo Rate to Chichicastenango	
Rhyme Or Reason.....	Page 10
Pulling Your Punches Growing Up	
Speaking to the Back Country Horsemen of Utah Well, If You Ask Us.....	Page 11
Minnekahta News (cont.).....	Page 12

If You Could Change One Thing

Love is the Motivator

By Andy Skadberg

This morning, as I spent some time getting ready for the day, my one-year-old son came and layed on my chest. He fell asleep again. I was doing my breathing and meditating. Then my mind was taken to a thought related to something my dear friend Desmond Green and I have been talking about.

Desmond is one of the most spiritually enlightened people that I have ever met. He seems to exist in two realities. But the point of this blog is to introduce his idea that we are physical spirit manifested from Source, or God. That is what we are. And our experiences are the point of us being here.

Our experience manifests through all of the things that our bodies do to interact with this material creation, even the ones that do not appear to have physical form. The tangible *experiences* or interactions, occur with our five senses (sight, touch, smell, hearing, and taste). The non-physical are through our thoughts and feelings. But the manifestation is from Spirit.

Now, you ask, what is so important about that? Or why does this matter? Well, from our conversations—understand the Truth is really hard to grasp with our minds so this isn't simple to relate—but what is happening to humanity at this time is that we are becoming conscious of this fact: "We are physical spirit."

We are the physical expression of the *Divine*—or God if you prefer—meaning the universe and all of creation. This is another description for what is occurring that has been referred to in many different ways, but most commonly known as ascension, the second coming of Christ, or the new age.

Desmond is a very persistent messenger, and he and I have been discussing this idea in its various implications. But this morning, as I layed heart to heart with this beautiful soul, my son Benjamin, the idea came to me that Love is the motivator of this process. It is Love that accomplishes the movement of Spirit into physical.

It is Love that performs this magic that physicists have been observing where our molecules are zapping in and out of our universe. Laboratory experiments have proven that all matter disappears and reappears, faster than the speed of light, apparently going between two places. They can see our side, physical manifestation (the universe, matter, creation) but they don't know where they go. But Spirit does.

Now, I don't really know if this idea is right. I may never know. But as it came to me, I thought I should share it here.

If I consider this idea, it does make sense. Love is ever-present, whether my experience seems positive or negative. In fact, in my life experiences, the most negative, or painful, ones have been those that pushed me to Love. Otherwise I would just stay in one place and just keep doing the same thing. I wouldn't grow. I wouldn't yearn and be in angst to express just one small portion of the Love that Jesus was able to demonstrate. I would continue to live in ignorance.

But the troubled times I have had, like my most recent traverse across the *valley of the shadow of death*, really cause me to search for the Truth, for understanding, for how I can relate better to life, and to my higher power.

I'm going to put this idea out there in the hope that it might help others. If I contemplate this—and I haven't had but more than about 30 minutes—if love is the motivator, and I make a connection or relationship with it, doesn't it demonstrate that I must take action? Isn't it really the light in the lantern? The force that brings my life, and all of creation, out of the unmanifest to what we are blessed to experience on this side of the veil, comes about through action! This is a lesson for me.

Of course, talking or writing about love is, in itself, an action. But, how can I do more? How can I, each day, seek the perfection that I know the ONE has created because I see it in the balance of nature and the cosmos? How can I continue to challenge myself to ascend this ladder, the one that Love asks, *Andy, is this the most loving that you can be in this moment?* How do I do that day to day?

I do it by being present in each moment. By resisting the patterned, habituated reactions in my relationships with the people whom I love (who, by the way, see my worst behavior). I do it by persistently and patiently following through on the dreams and aspirations that I have to make a difference. The ones that I feel have come directly from my heart. Incidentally, these are usually the ones that ask me to take the biggest risks, or to challenge conventions.

I'm not sure where this idea—Love is the Motivator—came from. Benjamin's heart, my heart, my head? Well, it doesn't matter really. But it is some food for thought.

"Love is the Motivator" is the title of a blogpost by Andy Skadberg. It was published on Apr. 12, 2010 on the author's website, <http://13lightmessages.blogspot.com/2010/04/love-is-motivator.html>.

"Love is the Motivator" was reprinted with permission from the author.

Andy Skadberg is a consultant in rural development and innovation in agriculture, with a foundation in environmental protection. He is a proponent of sustainability.

A Moment of Peace

By Debbie Daybreast

The dishes in the sink,
An army waiting to do battle.
The milk sours in the plastic bowl,
The faucet drips.

The laundry piled on the floor
Like heaps of winter snow.
Another pile to mend and fold,
The dryer thumps and bumps.

The clutter of toys and books, child's
bric-a-brac,
A carpeted path to the door.
Who can even come or go?
The vacuum stands silent.

Hush now, all can wait.
I'm holding my baby.
I rock... I sing... I kiss... Baby sighs,
All is well... Peaceful bliss.

There's Something To Be Said

The Kindred Spirit By Barbara Hauseman

What Has Stayed in My Heart

What has stayed in my heart? FAITH, HOPE and LOVE immediately come to mind.

I have a strong belief in God, I trust that good things will happen to me and those that I care about and I feel affection for my family, friends and pets. I appreciate each day that is given me and try to do the best I can for others and myself.

I've had some very special people in my life who have touched my heart forever. These are the chosen ones that stay in my memory and carry me through the easy and difficult times. Not a day goes by that I don't think of them and smile.

My mom, dad and brother were the most important people in my life. They have gone before me but are awaiting my arrival when I join them in Heaven.

Being left behind in this world without them is hard, especially with the holidays fast approaching. Many special times were spent with my family at Christmastime. Christmas Day was Mom's birthday! All the gifts I gave her, with the prettiest wrap-

ping paper and bows, could not compare in value to the gifts of life, love and happiness that Mom gave to me.

I was raised in a family of love where little money was to be had at times. I found out many years later that my mom sacrificed a new, warm, winter coat so I could have a used bicycle. Afterward, I surprised Mom on Christmas morning with a huge box, wrapped in the finest adornment, containing her long-awaited winter coat! The look on her face was priceless! That was my gift of love to Mom.

Sad moments come whether we want them or not. The unexpected loss of my beloved dad, followed by my mom and then, suddenly, my younger brother, nearly broke my heart! Sadder still was not being there to express to each of them the last sweet words they would hear from me... I LOVE YOU!

Well, they knew. Our family was tight!

Now, in my sixth decade of life, I have flashbacks of our times together. Happy thoughts of my family return to me again and again and I smile, knowing that I had the best life living with them.

The love of friends near and far is also

very special to me, and always will be, for their affection for me helped mold me into the person I am today. Sweet memories of happy times together are always close to my heart. Each friend that has come into my life has given me a gift of their own choosing and I am grateful. To my friends, I thank you from the bottom of my heart and will always cherish our special times.

My heart is also filled with the love of the pets that have come and gone in my life. Each one has touched my heart with their unconditional love. I recommend that you read *Over the Rainbow* by Eric Puybaret, for it will comfort you as it did me and my dearest friends who have felt the agony of losing a pet, a member of the family. I KNOW I will see my pets again someday.

I have traveled down many trails, even when I have felt I cannot go on. Each journey leads me in an unknown direction, but I end up where I need to be. Along the way, I have had many learning experiences and the results of each are stored in my heart.

Yes, these are a few of the special times, people and journeys that I have experienced and have stayed in my heart. Look into your own heart for the memories that are within you and discover your inner vision and the uniqueness of your life. You will be as surprised and grateful as I am!

Lies They Tell Writers, Part 8: Don't Worry About Grammar and Spelling

By Rod Miller

On more than a few occasions, I have heard people say before an audience of aspiring, and even accomplished, writers, "Don't worry about grammar and spelling. The editors will fix that. Just tell your story. Get it out there."

It could be that will work with some editors, sometimes. But I am more in keeping with Baxter Black's view that an editor's job is to keep you from getting published. And, to further that notion, the first thing editors look for when they pick up a manuscript is a reason to toss it in the trash and get on to the next submission.

It's not that editors are mean. But they are busy and overworked and haven't the time to wade through a lot of amateurish

writing—whether it be poor spelling, bad grammar, awkward syntax, a lousy plot, awful characters, dumb dialogue, or whatever.

They haven't the time to waste.

But writers do. And, in our case, that time isn't wasted. We ought to be concerned enough about our work that we want to get it right. And getting the little things right is often an indication that the big things will fall into place as well. Not always. But often enough to make it worth the effort.

Sew, sea that you're spelling and stuff is rite wen your righting.

"Lies They Tell Writers, Part 8: Don't Worry About Grammar and Spelling" is the title of a blogpost by Rod Miller. It was

published on Nov. 22, 2014 on the author's website, <http://writerrodmilller.blogspot.com/2014/11/lies-they-tell-writers-part-8-dont.html>.

"Lies They Tell Writers, Part 8: Don't Worry About Grammar and Spelling" was reprinted with permission from the author. Writer Rod Miller writes poetry, fiction, and history about the American West and writes online about writing and reading at writerrodmilller.blogspot.com. Information about Rod and his books and other works is available at writerRodMiller.com, his Amazon Author Page (<https://www.amazon.com/Rod-Miller/e/B001HCTX7G>), and at CowboyPoetry.com.

This May Interest You

Open Letter to Hon. Lynne Hix-DiSanto

From Alex Hayworth

Three weeks after Alt-Right supporter, Alex Fields Jr., plowed his gray Dodge Challenger into a crowd protesting white supremacy in Charlottesville, Virginia, murdering counter-demonstrator Heather Heyer in the process, South Dakota State Representative for District 35 (and GOP Whip) Lynne DiSanto felt it appropriate to bring humor into the topic by posting a graphic Facebook meme depicting a driver mowing over human beings with a car under the title, "All Lives Splatter," itself a mockery of the "Black Lives Matter" slogan created to bring attention to racially tinged killings by police officers.

What follows is my "Open Letter" to Rep. Hix-DiSanto reflecting the concerns of many in the nation and my adamant call for her immediate resignation.

Hon. Lynne Hix-DiSanto,

You're a public servant with tremendous power, influence and authority. When I saw the compassionless, juvenile and DANGEROUS "All Lives Splatter" Facebook message you promoted this month, I could not remain silent.

"Nobody Cares about your Protest... Keep Your Ass Out of the Road" read the meme you posted.

You know, the same people resisting the Women's Suffrage and Women's Rights Movements spat similar invectives. Are you not grateful to the brave activists of

yore who fought and died to bring you YOUR personal rights, privileges and opportunities that were previously withheld by the prevailing powers of the patriarchy?

The heroes that you suggest die horrific deaths from premeditated vehicular murder are struggling to improve our quality of life. Our world would be much darker without their help.

Ungrateful for the Sacrifice of Heroes

Progressive activists have brought you the ability to vote and run for office and even matter in a (still) patriarchal and misogynist world. These same types of activists are sacrificing opportunity, reputation and LIVES (think Heather Heyer) to bring us out of the darkness. In response, you chose to mock their death.

Having lived in the South, I can appreciate southern heritage and history, but cannot countenance publicly displayed monuments/flags celebrating legal socio-economic systems of slave labor and white supremacy that continue to strike fear and intimidation into the hearts of African Americans (and allied compassionate beings) each time they walk by them.

The human beings you wish to see splattered upon the hood of a car are opposing these symbols. So through your message, not only did you advocate activist assassination but one could interpret that you also tacitly supported the white supremacy and slave labor systems they reject.

Quote by Ms. DiSanto from *Washington Times*.

"I am sorry if people took offense to it and perceived my message in any way insinuating support or condoning people being hit by cars," Ms. DiSanto said. "I perceived it differently. I perceived it as encouraging people to stay out of the street."

For someone to say this, they are either incredibly obtuse or a semi-skilled Machivellian sociopath. Either way.....

If you still have a conscience rumbling around in your soul, you will do the decent thing and tender your resignation for this unforgivable transgression as a taxpayer funded public servant.

Harvey, Irma and Relatives

By T.L. Matt

Harvey and Irma are not the names of a quirky couple in a 60's sitcom, but rather are the titles of two of the most powerful storms to develop in the Atlantic Ocean in recent years.

My only experience with hurricanes was brief but certainly memorable. It was during the summer when I was 11 that Dad, who had been stationed at Myrtle Beach, South Carolina in WWII, wanted to show us that beautiful part of the United States. Being naive Mid-westerners, we stayed out in the sun by the ocean all day and were burnt to a crisp.

That evening as we sat in a restaurant, "Evacuate the waterfront! Evacuate the waterfront" blasted from loud speakers near us. Mom couldn't stand to let perfectly good food go to waste, so she slowly and methodically packed the food we had ordered. At the motel, the same careful packing of our clothes and supplies ensued while Dad nervously paced the room.

The wind was blowing everything in a horizontal manner as we headed out on the highway at about 10 mph with back-to-back cars—no chance to pass. The most eerie thing we experienced was the cry of seagulls, trying to evacuate as well, miles and miles inland—our escorts in terror.

We finally made it to a safer place and read the newspaper the next morning that the bulk of the storm had missed Myrtle Beach and hit a town close by. Our experience was but a slight brush with danger, but enough that I can have empathy with people trying to leave threatened areas.

In late August 2017, being mesmerized by the news on the Internet, I must have seen about 500 or more pictures of the scenes after the landfall of Hurricane Harvey, a Category 4 hurricane, in Texas.

Harvey caused unprecedented and catastrophic flooding in the southeastern part of the state and was the first major hurricane to make landfall in the United States since Wilma in 2005 (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hurricane_Wilma).

(See Harvey on page 5)



Harvey (cont. from page 4)

Harvey and Irma are not the names of a quirky couple in a 60's sitcom, but rather are the titles of two of the most powerful storms to develop in the Atlantic Ocean in recent weeks.

My only experience with hurricanes was brief but certainly memorable. It was during the summer when I was 11 that Dad, who had been stationed at Myrtle Beach, South Carolina in WWII, wanted to show us that beautiful part of the United States. Being naive Mid-westerners, we stayed out in the sun by the ocean all day and were burned to a crisp.

That evening as we sat in a restaurant, "Evacuate the waterfront! Evacuate the waterfront" blasted from loud speakers near us. Mom couldn't stand to let perfectly good food go to waste, so she slowly and methodically packed the food we had ordered. At the motel, the same careful packing of our clothes and supplies ensued while Dad nervously paced the room.

The wind was blowing everything in a horizontal manner as we headed out on the highway at about 10 mph with back-to-back cars—no chance to pass. The most eerie thing we experienced was the cry of seagulls, trying to evacuate as well, miles and miles inland—our escorts in terror.

We finally made it to a safer place and read the newspaper the next morning that the bulk of the storm had missed Myrtle Beach and hit a town close by. Our experience was but a slight brush with danger, but enough that I can have empathy with people trying to leave threatened areas.

In late August 2017, being mesmerized by the news on the Internet, I must have seen about 500 or more pictures of the scenes after the landfall of Hurricane Harvey, a Category 4 hurricane, in Texas.

Harvey caused unprecedented and catastrophic flooding in the southeastern part of the state and was the first major hurricane to make landfall in the United States since Wilma in 2005 (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hurricane_Wilma).

What was a huge impact on anyone viewing the rescue operations was the response of help that came and is still on track to arrive in Texas and Louisiana. Watching the residents of nursing homes being evacuated had a special pull on the heart, as was seeing people struggling to haul their beloved pets and young children out of harm's way.

Tragically, there have been 70 recorded deaths so far, and probably more to come. What was most heart-warming was seeing so many people of racially diverse backgrounds come together to help each other survive. The spirit of the people of Texas to unite is so inspiring.

"For many people in the Houston area, the real takeaway from Harvey has not been misery, but kindness. The crime and opportunism that often follow big storms has been a notable non-factor, at least for now" (<http://www.denverpost.com/2017/09/06/houston-harvey-cleanup-low-crime/>).

Yes, there will be some looting and price-gouging, but the majority of the people have their priorities right. All life is sacred and is to be preserved, especially in a catastrophe such as this.

FEMA Director, Brock Long called Harvey the worst disaster in Texas history and expected the recovery to take many years and up to 160 billion dollars in damages (<http://abcnews.go.com/GMA/video/fema-helping-texas-hurricane-harvey-49435117>). An estimated 93,942 homes have been damaged or destroyed. 80% of Texans don't have flood insurance. There are at least 500,000 ruined cars.

Individuals rescued people one by one in single boats in Houston and the Port Arthur area. The Max Bowl Bowling Alley offered space to evacuees. At 2:30 on Wednesday, Aug. 30, there were 80 to 100 people. By afternoon, more than 500 were there, as well as 50 to 100 dogs and cats, a lizard and a monkey—all being sheltered in the facility (<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-4844808/Inside-bowling-alley-ground-zero-Port-Arthur.html>).

Governor Greg Abbot said, "Texans really step up and protect and aide their fellow Texans" (<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-4838852/Texas-judge-warns-rising-water-Harvey-brings-rain.html>).

As if this disaster were not enough, on September 5, Hurricane Irma became a Category 5 hurricane; by early the next day, Irma reached peak intensity with 185 mph winds. This means Irma is the second strongest Atlantic hurricane by wind speed, surpassed only by Allen, reaching wind speeds of 190 mph in 1980 (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hurricane_Allen).

Irma is the strongest hurricane ever recorded in the Atlantic Basin outside the Caribbean Sea and is so far the strongest

tropical cyclone worldwide in 2017.

The eye of Irma passed over the island of Barbuda and "obliterated [its] infrastructure, flattening structure after structure. The damage is complete," said Ronald Sanders, the Antigua and Barbuda ambassador to the United States (<http://www.cnn.com/2017/09/15/americas/irma-barbuda-population-trnd/index.html>).

People were huddled in bathrooms and closets as the howling winds and debris passed overhead. Gaston Browne, Prime Minister of Barbuda, said that 90% of the buildings are destroyed.

Today, Barbudas is *uninhabitable*. "For the first time in 300 years, there's not a single living person on the island of Barbuda – a civilization that has existed in that island for close to, over 300 years has now been extinguished," Sanders said.

Saint Barthelemy and Saint Martin were next in Irma's path of devastation, causing major flooding with winds at 151 mph. The French part of St. Martin "was 95% destroyed," according to Daniel Gibb, a local official. Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte said the Dutch side sustained "enormous material damage," (<https://www.theguardian.com/world/live/2017/sep/06/hurricane-irma-caribbean-islands-category-5-storm>).

Irma passed by Puerto Rico and while not a direct hit, all of the people there (3.4 million) are without electricity and tens of thousands without water. It may take four to six months to recover electricity.

The National Weather Service said Puerto Rico had not seen a hurricane of Irma's magnitude since San Felipe in 1928, which killed a total of 2,748 people in Guadeloupe, Puerto Rico and Florida.

Florida was hit by both Harvey and Irma. A double whammy! Florida recovery has gone well, and a Florida Power and Light spokesman stated, "The company expects power to be restored to western Florida – more heavily damaged by the storm – by Sep. 22," (<http://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2017/09/13/550674848/power-outages-persist-for-millions-in-florida-georgia-and-carolinas-after-irma>).

In the Florida Keys, people are allowed to return to their properties and start to rebuild. Schools will reopen on Sep. 25, but Monroe County Commissioner Heather Carruthers said, "People need to be prepared for primitive conditions."

(see *Harvey on page 9*)

Special Section

I Discovered the Pacific Ocean

By Larry Stocker

I know a lot of people think that it was a guy named Balboa, Vasco Nunez de Balboa to be exact, who discovered the Pacific Ocean. That's what the history books say. Just like they say Christopher Columbus discovered America.

It wasn't until much later when I heard about Leif Erickson (and even guys before him!) that I started to question the foundations upon which my whole sixth grade perception of history was based.

Pretty soon I realized that a lot of the history that I was taught at St. Mary's was really just like the top layer of a birthday cake. Digging deeper into the layers I began to think I was getting smart, finding out the real stuff, the pudding in the middle of the cake.

I wanted to tell people so they could share the treasure, so we could be partners in the unending quest for a deeper-layers knowledge, thicker than before. But what I found out was that some people already knew what I had just discovered and others didn't really care. "It's just not my thing," they would say.

My enthusiasm slowed down some—"Oh, well," I said to myself. That's another kind of lesson, I suppose, isn't it?

So it was that Vasco Nunez de Balboa set out from Spain in 1500 thinking, I'm sure, that one day he would return with huge accomplishments under his belt, gold in his pocket and the favor of the king, Ferdinand the Catholic, to distinguish himself from ordinary Spaniards.

He didn't know it at the time, but, like Charlie on the MTA, he would never return. He had a wife in Spain whom he would never see again. He did write letters, but I doubt if he mentioned the new wife he acquired in the region of Panama.

Whether or not the first one watched the mailbox every day waiting for word from her soon-to-be-famous-but-nevertheless-long-gone husband, I don't know.

Vasco Nunez's father was an *hidalgo*, which means he was a kind of entry-level nobleman. Hidalgo, a Spanish word, means "hijo de algo" or son of someone. When they say "someone" they mean *someone who counts*. There were a lot of

people who didn't count in those days. It was way different then.

We don't have *hidalgos* any more. Thankfully, we live in the days of equality and everybody counts. Sometimes I have to keep saying that to myself!

Balboa didn't discover the Pacific Ocean right away. He didn't even know of such a thing. At first he just wanted to do something big, something important, something of consequence. His big discovery happened 13 years later.

In the meantime, Vasco Nunez kept himself busy waiting for his chance. For a while, on the Caribbean island of Hispaniola, he was a pig farmer—like William Muny in Unforgiven—but that didn't work out very well, just like it hadn't for William Muny.

And, though he was a terrible gambler, he was well known as an excellent swordsman. Everybody felt a lot safer if he kept that sword in its scabbard and never took it out. It was the gambling that got him in trouble. Even in those dark times before the invention of credit cards, it was still real easy to run up debts—especially if your money ran out and the price of pork bellies was down.

To be in debt is bad now, but it was even worse then. His creditors were getting ready to put our friend Vasco Nunez in prison. "I gotta get off this island," he said. That's what propelled him to stow away on a ship. He had to get away from his creditors on Hispaniola.

"A barrel," one of his friends said. "They'll never discover you if you stow away in a barrel."

"Okay," Vasco Nunez said, "but I want to take my dog."

So, Vasco Nunez de Balboa climbed into what must have been a pretty big barrel with his big sword and his dog. Couple of days later, he was discovered. The captain of the ship was pretty mad and promised to drop him off on the next desolate piece of land he found but cooled off a bit when he found out that Balboa actually knew quite a bit about the region of Panama, to which the ship was going.

Typically, Balboa never got along very well with his bureaucratic superiors but the soldiers and sailors, the regular guys, always liked him. That's what kept making those bureaucratic superiors dislike him so much: he had charisma and he was good with his sword.

It goes without saying that every one of those Spaniards in those days wanted gold. In those days, if you were crazy about gold you were considered normal. That's the way it was. Sure, you had to give the *quinto real* (one fifth of your goods) to Ferdinand the Catholic, but the rest was yours and nobody seemed to care how you got it.

And the Spaniards didn't really want to go out and wade in streams or dig in the ground to get it. They didn't want to work like Humphrey Bogart had to work in *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre*.

The one thing Humphrey Bogart had in common with these guys is that he ended up being crazy for gold, too. Just like the Spaniards were. The difference is that Humphrey Bogart's character, Fred C. Dobbs, was not considered normal while Balboa and all his conquistador buddies were.

Of the conquistadores who roamed this new world in the early 1500's, Balboa was thought of as one of the nicest. The coasts were full of native villages, some big, some small, some friendly, some not. The villages all seemed to be headed by *caciques* (or chiefs).

The region of what is now Columbia had proven to be particularly difficult for the Spaniards. The indigenous villagers there were not in the least bit friendly and they had poison arrows which they shot at the Spaniards from the cover of heavy brush. You couldn't even see them!

It wasn't funny—the Spaniards lost a lot of men. They had to get away from there. It was, apparently, a little easier on the coast of what is now Panama.

The reason Balboa thought of himself as nicer than many of the others was because he didn't just kill or make a slave out of every native he saw. He made some attempt to "win over the hearts and minds" of the indigenous peoples he encountered. He only destroyed whole villages when he really had to. There had to be a reason.

There were three things Vasco Nunez didn't like. He didn't like cannibals, he didn't like violent tribes that insulted the king or the holy catholic faith and he didn't like homosexuals (he would loose the giant mastiffs on homosexuals and they would be viciously devoured on the spot. There was no hesitation in these situations.)

(See *Pacific* on page 7)

Pacific (cont. from page 6)

Balboa usually got along with caciques that would let themselves be baptized. Along with the baptism would come nice Christian names like Juan or Pedro or Javier. Then he would get them to betray caciques of other tribes.

None of the caciques ever seemed to get the obvious point—that if just a few of them would unite and fight together they could have rid themselves of these crazy, narrow-minded, violent, gold-seekers in no time. But that, apparently, was not their nature.

They must have liked living in small communities where organizing for their own defense was not a big priority. They fought amongst each other, it's true, but they were way more peaceful than the Spaniards, who seemed completely given over to holy-wrath-of-God rampages if provoked. They justified their deplorable acts by rationalizing that the making of Christian slaves was better than leaving these people to be self-sufficient pagans. A Christian slave would be eligible for heaven while a pagan would not!

One thing you have to give these Spaniards credit for is that they were downright determined—totally convinced of their own righteousness, doggedly determined in dumbness, you might say!

Balboa is given credit for founding the first permanent European settlement (1510) on the new continents of North and South America. It was called Santa Maria la Antigua del Darien on the isthmus of what is now Panama.

That is a pretty long name for a town, so the Spaniards started calling it Santa Maria, or Antigua, or Darien. Made it seem like three different places but, believe me, it was only one.

Unknown to the Spaniards at the time, there were plenty of permanent settlements on the continents of North and South America at that time—some way more fantastic than you would find in Europe—but Balboa has been remembered for founding the first European permanent settlement.

Is there something wrong with that? If you were keeping score you would have to count the already-there settlements he and his countrymen destroyed. I'm just guessing but I'll say that they probably destroyed twenty settlements for every one they built.

That would mean that, by objective measure, Balboa would actually have founded minus-nineteen settlements. Yet he is still remembered for the one with three names, or was it four.

Balboa's many rivals soon converged, discredited him, and took over the gover-

norship of the new town. Using lies, they kept bringing up charges against him, sending letters to the king, trying to make him look bad or get him in trouble so they could get what he had.

To avoid being shackled in irons Balboa had to leave again, find something else to do, discover something. One of the baptized caciques named Comagre kept talking about a totally new ocean and Balboa thought that would be a pretty good thing to discover so he wrote to the king to get supplies for an expedition. The king said "No" because he has read the mean, poisonous letters his enemies sent.

So, Balboa threw together what he could in terms of supplies (which means he probably stole supplies and manpower from the native populations who were foolish enough to try to be his friends) and headed across the isthmus, bringing his dogs. He always brought his dogs and these were big dogs, mean dogs. The natives had never seen anything like them.

It took them 28 days to cross a 60-mile piece of land, so you can imagine there must have been some obstacles. If it weren't for the nice indigenous tribes feeding them along the way Balboa would have never made it. (Again, it is so weird that these indigenous people always feed the very people who have a transparent plan to destroy all that they have.)

Balboa fought battles with the natives, the mosquitoes, fever and difficult terrain, to say nothing about the deadly intrigues among the Spaniards themselves, until he finally climbed a hill and looked out on what he calls El Mar del Sur, or the South Sea. (It was another guy named Magellan who renamed it The Pacific Ocean in 1520.)

Vasco Nunez de Balboa's men were so happy to have discovered the South Sea that they started to dance around. They built pyramids out of rocks and they carved crosses into the trees just to show how happy they were. The cacique's men who led them there must have wondered what the heck was wrong with these people.

The next day was September 29, 1513. That was when Balboa got dressed up in his shiny armor, with his sword in one hand and a banner depicting the virgin in the other; that's when he officially claimed the whole cotton-picking ocean and every river that drained into it and all the lands that it touched, for the King of Spain.

How great can that be! The only problem was that more than half the world already knew where it was. In a sense, you could say that Balboa was just proclaiming his ignorance, heralding the Europeans general

inability to listen to or accept the knowledge that other peoples already had.

When I discovered the Pacific Ocean, it wasn't like that. Sure, I walked in knee deep just like Balboa and I thought about all the lands that were touched by these waters but, to my own credit, I did not make any grandiose claims.

My discovery was in San Juan del Sur, Nicaragua, on March 6, 2014, and I didn't have to commit one violent act to get there. Nevertheless, there are a lot of monuments to Balboa and none to me. I think my essential claim is equal to Balboa's, except he didn't have any regard for the fact that so many people already knew where that big ocean was. It's like—you can't miss it! He was living in a bubble.

So, if I apply that same principle—which we shall call the Balboa Principle—I assert my claim as a secondary discoverer of the Pacific Ocean, just like he had been.

That puts me in the same category as Vasco Nunez de Balboa. The only differences are that there are no statues with my likeness on them in parks all along the Pacific, I never stowed away with my dog in a barrel, I don't have two wives on different sides of the Atlantic, and I am no good with a sword.

After he got back to Darien, or Antigua, or Santa Maria—whatever you call it—Vasco Nunez wanted to go back to that big ocean. On his second trip to the South Sea, he brought ship builders with him. Right away they started chopping down trees to build ships right there on the shore of the South Sea.

You have to admire those Spaniards for that. They just start chopping down trees and building ships if they don't have any. Only problem was, they used wormy wood. Still, they managed to sail those ships out into the bay to discover an island which they called Isla Rica because it was rich with pearls.

Unfortunately, the ships started leaking faster than they could bail so they had to quit (otherwise they might have beat Pizarro to Peru). Comagre's son, Panquico, told them about Peru. I'm pretty sure he was thinking that would be the end of the Spaniards and it should have been, but it wasn't.

The king was pretty happy to hear about the new ocean. I don't know if he danced or not, but he did confer the title of *Adelantado* (a military title given to conquistadors allowing the bearer the right to become governor or justice of a region) on Balboa and gave him the governorship of Panama. (*See Pacific on page 9*)

Off the Beaten Path

I Paid the Gringo Rate to Chichicastenango

By Larry Stocker

SLEEVELESS STEVE runs the open mic at La Palapa on Wednesday nights. I walked in carrying a harmonica holder in my hand and saw Sleeveless Steve fooling around with microphones and cords, his big guitar laying on the Palapa floor. Once he saw me he came out to greet me, asking if that was a harmonica holder. I confirmed his suspicion.

There were four performers last night—three guitar players and a joke-teller. The guitar players all used Sleeveless Steve's guitar. Sleeveless Steve, on this cold, wet night, was dressed in a thin sleeveless t-shirt. His gut is a little big but his arms look strong. Outside of that he looks like an old man, but you put that old man behind a microphone and his features acquire a timeless look. He smiles all the way through his song set.

He started out with a Leadbelly song about the Titanic, one of my favorites. He sang songs about chicken buses, breaking down on the highway and the characters who live in this town of Panajachel. I think he got free cervezas for his work because he kept walking up to the bar and getting fresh bottles of Gallo.

The other performer was Joe. Joe is a great singer and blues guitar player. He told me he just leased a house in Pana for five years. "I guess I live here now," he said.

The joke teller was off. He wasn't funny. Fortunately, he knew it and bailed out quick. I have respect for him for that. A lot of guys keep going, thinking the next one will work.

I sang some of my songs and the ones that went over the best were, "The Times We're Living In" and "I Just Wish (I Was Riding On That Train)."

In the middle of my performance a guy, probably drunk, came in and started to berate all of us for singing the wrong songs in the wrong language. "We speak Maya and Spanish around here," he said in Spanish. I told him that I sing only my songs and that they come from the country of me.

He seemed to accept that; like most drunks when confronted with reason, he saw the logic of it and left quietly, no longer angry. An international crisis was avoided.

Sleeveless Steve invited me to a gig on Saturday and I looked at my agenda and saw an empty spot so I said, "I'll see you there."

There are a lot of good guitar players and singers here—Americans, I mean. There is a nice blend of traditional blues, folk and new music juxtaposed in this green, tropical, thickly cultured, and totally tolerant environment.

Today, I got on the buses again. Saved up my strength and I took off. It rained all night, nice and gentle, so I didn't know if I would go. It stopped not too far into the morning, the rain.

I walked out of the apartment wearing two shirts and a jacket over them. I walked directly to the chicken bus stop. Got a ride up the hill (mountain, really) to Solola. Got off and mounted another to Los Encuentros. Los Encuentros is a serious crossroads on the InterAmerican Highway—an exchange point. An exchange point for people, mostly, but for all the junk they are carrying, too.

Some people might wonder if chicken buses really have chickens. Well, today a young Maya woman carried four boxes of pretty big baby chicks out of the bus at Los Encuentros. She had bought them in Solola.

All the people are carrying big bundles of stuff to sell, stuff to take home, or babies. There a lot of babies. The real little ones hook on to the backs of their tiny-framed moms in colorful woven blankets—about the size of a table cloth. Everywhere you look there's a mom nursing her little baby. It contributes to the prevailing atmosphere of busy, noisy calm.

Everywhere these people are present, there is a tolerant, patient, steady, unbreakable calm. It's true. I'm not kidding you!

There is a big metal structure to help people cross the busy highway in Los Encuentros. I climbed up there so I could get a good look around at the parts to this low-buzzing phenomenon. That's when I discovered it. And it is accompanied by so much color.

I made a mistake and climbed into a colectivo van to get to Chichicastenango and I will tell you that no fewer than thirty people were stuffed into that thing as it whirled around the mountain roads. It was the longest 20 kilometers I have ever gone. Extremely intimate. Still, the driver will not pass anyone on the road who wants a ride.

The Mayas have nicknames for everything—especially places. I thought I was hip when I asked if the van was going to "Chi Chi" but I was corrected by the assistant who used the word "Cheeeeh" to designate Chichicastenango. It sounded cool, so I am trying to incorporate that new word into my vocabulary.

This is the same dude who, I'm pretty sure, overcharged me on the fare. I paid 10 quetzales—which seemed high to me. I found out later the ride should have been 5Q. That means he made an extra 65 cents at my expense.

Or maybe that's the Gringo rate. I was the only gringo on these vehicles. Most of the gringos take tourist buses which run 50 to 75 dollars for the trip. It doesn't make much difference. They are still crowded into them. Maybe smells a little different. Worse, probably.

I was lost once I got to the crowded little town. I couldn't get my bearings and the sun had broken out—starting to get hot. Narrow, narrow streets crowded with people. It's amazing that there are no accidents.

I wandered around trying to figure things out. Finally sat down in a hotel terrace restaurant and had a good breakfast. Nice Guatemalan coffee. I felt better. I decided I needed a bolsa to put my thin jacket and my sweatshirt in.

The place was way different than I thought it would be. As I walked out of the restaurant I saw a guy named Kurt who lives in Guatemala City and sells Guatemalan goods without profit to support the local weavers. He sells stuff in Las Cruces, New Mexico, so it was really coincidental that I ran into him in a busy market far from our homes.

Kurt gave me his phone number in case I needed anything. My phone is still turned off but—who knows—maybe I'll turn it on again now that I have someone to call.

(See Gringo on page 9)

Gringo (cont. from page 8)

I ended up with seven bolsas. Kurt was right—this is the best place to buy stuff. And each transaction feels like an uplifting experience. That is, except for one dude. I bought two bolsas from a guy that charged me more than twice what I should have paid. Even with that loss, however, I paid about \$100 dollars for the seven. I should have had my eyes open and checked around before dealing with that one guy. The bolsas here are very, very special. The best I have seen.

Every place you go in the market is a squeeze. No one loses their patience, however. No loud music, either. Just a nice tolerant hum goes over everything.

Foolishly, I jumped on another colectivo to get back to Los Encuentros. I had to stand this time. I am about five foot eight. That's tall here. I tower over most of the Maya women and men. The van's ceiling was about five feet four inches above the floor. Man, that made the mountain ride a serious pain-in-the-neck. This time the asistente only charged me 5Q. Maybe he was used to me by now.

When I got back to Solola I sat down in the beautiful central park for a few minutes before getting on another chicken bus for Pana. I realized that it's not just the women and girls, but also the men who wear their traditional garments in this area, too! Especially the older men, who wear colorful weavings on their coats and shirts, and flowers on their pants, which come down to just below the knees. They often have another intricate weave around their waists.

This is a strong culture. It makes me smile to see it and it fills me with hope for all of us.

This travel story was written by Larry Stocker. It was published on May 29, 2014 in the author's weekly email. This story was reprinted with permission from the author.

Harvey (cont. from page 5)

Monroe County officials will open U.S. Highway 1 all the way to Key West on Sep. 24. Roman Gastesi, Monroe County Administrator, said "We know there will be many challenges ahead, especially for our hardest hit areas in the Lower Keys. But we want our residents and business owners

Pacific (cont. from page 7)

Vasco Nunez figured that this would scare away the bureaucratic guys that were always creeping along behind him but it didn't. They really must not have liked him because they kept eating away at his sides just like worms eating away the sides of his ships.

In January 1519 they had a common, illiterate soldier, a former friend of Balboa, arrest him on the charge of treason—always a useful catch-all when everybody knows this person really hasn't done anything that can be pinned down.

This arresting soldier was a thug named Francisco Pizarro who would soon write his name in the book of great historical cruelties as the conquistador of Peru. Balboa was tried in ausencia and convicted by his chief tormentor, a man named Pedrarias.

So, in January of 1519, much to Pedrarias's bureaucratic satisfaction, the axe man chopped off Balboa's head. It is said that the axe needed three swings before its mission was complete.

Pedrarias, then, took the Discoverer of the Pacific Ocean's head and the heads of four of Balboa's friends and put them on

to come back... We are prepared to restore the Keys back to the special paradise we love." (<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2017/09/16/florida-keys-re-open-after-punishing-hurricane-irma/673584001/>)

Little brother, Hurricane Jose, was acknowledged on Sep. 6, 2017 and wandered in circles in the Atlantic until it swung north, turning into a tropical storm that missed the east coast of the United States, but still created dangerous surf conditions.

On Sep. 23, 2017, baby Tropical Storm Lee was wandering around in the middle of the ocean, trying to decide whether to become a hurricane or simply disappear.

Next, Hurricane Maria, super-strong sister to Irma, dumped almost 40 inches of rain on parts of Puerto Rico—still reeling from Hurricane Irma—with winds of 155 mph. The National Weather Service declared the anticipated failure of the Guajataca Dam was "imminent" and officials are racing to evacuate thousands of people who are endangered (<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/weather/puerto-rico->

display in the plaza of Darien to impress upon the citizenry the terrible power of his office.

Pedrarias faded into obscurity but, as you know, Pizarro would go on to conquer Peru and encounter on that mission more gold than his ambitious heart could dream of and, incidently, wound up way crazier than Fred C. Dobbs would ever be.

When I look out onto the vast Pacific from the shores of these lovely Central American countries, I see surfers. They are not like the Spaniards of old. They are not looking for gold. They are just trying to find a wave.

The surfers paddle out, ride a few waves and then come back to the shore to look at their iPhones, push a few buttons, and then go back to the Pacific. They are always looking for a better wave.

I write this story for the surfers so that they will know that their discoveries of the great breaks on the Pacific beaches are just as valid as anyone else's discoveries and so that they will understand that Balboa had to pay in blood for something which had already been discovered more than a thousand times before.

s-failing-guajataca-dam-endangers-thousands-n804096).

There is difficulty contacting some people who need evacuation along the Guajataca River because of no communication. 70,000 people were told to evacuate.

President Donald Trump has declared states of emergency in Puerto Rico, a U.S. Territory, as well as the U.S. Virgin Islands.

"With Hurricane Maria striking Puerto Rico as a Category 4, the season is the first on record to feature three Atlantic hurricanes making landfall anywhere in the United States at Category 4 intensity or stronger," (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2017_Atlantic_hurricane_season).

We who reside in the West or Midwest cannot imagine such catastrophes of this magnitude. But we have the ability to pray for these people and some of us can contribute monetarily to The Red Cross and other organizations that are united in the recovery effort.

Rhyme Or Reason

Pulling Your Punches

By G. Douglas Jackson

nothing
resounds as endlessly
through the chambers of the mind
as the echo
of the pulled punch.

nothing
measures as mercilessly
the mettle of the muscle
as the strain
of the pulled punch.

nothing
tests as tormentingly
the steadiness of nerves
as the tension
of the pulled punch.

when the axe spares the tree
what is felled?
when skin shies from skin
what is consummated?
when thoughts are denied voice
where are they heard?
when the hand pulls the punch

what is bruised?
and here I am,
re-editing aborted conversations
with scrapbook phantoms...

WHAM!
here I am,
rephrasing unasked questions
in the theater of memory...

BOOM!
here I am,
flirting with risks untaken
in cliffhangers unreeled
too many Saturdays ago...

SMASH!
and here I am,
flat on the mat,
gnashed by a toothless shark,
drowning by treading water,
consumed by a contained fire,
another victim of
the passive power of
that once and future champion,
the pulled punch.

Growing Up

By Michael Neuertz

what do they do where you grew up?
we played kick-the-can
and statues

I was always a robot
with herky, jerky movements
and there was a sawmill
below our house where we
could crawl over the logs and
under the spinning saw

mom always knew
sawdust in our tennis shoes
and hair
rotten apples made great
baseballs

splattering against the old stone wall
of the ancient church at the end of the block

smoking corn silk wrapped in brown paper bags
under the highway in the culvert
where we weren't supposed to play
johnny drowned one day –
we don't play there anymore

Speaking to the Back Country Horsemen of Utah

By Rod Miller

On April 10, I have been invited to speak to the Mountain Ridge Chapter of the Back Country Horsemen of Utah. It should be a good time and I am looking forward to it. One thing's for certain—everyone in attendance will be a better hand with a horse than I ever was. With that in mind, here's the biographical information I submitted to the group for publicity purposes:

Horses never much liked Rod Miller. They've bucked him off, ran away with him, tipped over backwards on him, kicked him, bit him, stepped on his toes, and otherwise abused him. As a young man he was attracted to rodeo because, he says, "At least you know the horse is going to try to dump you—it takes the surprise out of it."

Despite the fact that horses don't cotton to him, Rod grew up with the animals a daily presence. He fed them, made sure the water trough was full, and rode them regularly. He broke and trained a few with a lot of loud (and often exasperated) advice from his cowboy dad. He gathered cattle

out of mountain allotments, moved cattle from pasture to pasture, rode fence, rode drag on a two-day cattle drive behind a big herd, wallowed around in the branding pen every spring, and through it all managed to get along with his horses, mostly.

Arena events started early, as he and his brother and dad were members of Goshen Valley Riding Club. With that group, he also clip-clopped along the streets in a number of small-town parades as his horse fouled the pavement. In high school he took up bareback bronc riding, and rode three seasons for the Utah State University Intercollegiate Rodeo Team.

Nowadays, Rod's experience with horses is mostly on paper, as he includes them in many, if not most, of his poems, magazine articles, short stories, novels, and nonfiction books. And while he often writes about getting bucked off and otherwise mistreated by equines, writing about it doesn't hurt as much as the real thing.

"Speaking to the Back Country Horsemen of Utah" is the title of a blogpost by Rod Miller. It was published on Apr. 4, 2014 on the author's website, <http://writerrodmilller.blogspot.com/2014/04/speaking-to-back-country-horsemen-of.html>.

"Speaking to the Back Country Horsemen of Utah" was reprinted with permission from the author.

Writer Rod Miller writes poetry, fiction, and history about the American West and writes online about writing and reading at writerrodmilller.blogspot.com. Information about Rod and his books and other works is available at writerRodMiller.com, his Amazon Author Page (<https://www.amazon.com/Rod-Miller/e/B001HCTX7G>), and at CowboyPoetry.com.

Bourbon-County

Another Time and Place

WORLD'S SEXIEST BAR!

Unique Drinks • Live Music • Open Mic

705 North River St. 605-745-4441

Well, If You Ask Us

I Do Business with Hills Edge Auto

By Grits McMorro

It is such a relief to have my truck back and looking good. As you may recall, I wrote about having had a deer encounter in early July, when a deer crossed the two westbound lanes of Highway 18 to make my acquaintance in the single eastbound lane.

No one was hurt except, I presume, the deer. But a post-accident search of the impact site did not result in finding a carcass of it, so the deer did not die at the scene. Receiving a blow from a 2006 Toyota Tundra Crew Cab truck, weighing 6,600 pounds and heading downhill at 35 miles per hour, leads me to believe the deer had to have sustained some injuries. But I don't know for sure.

While Barbara walked uphill along the shoulder pavement to scrutinize the road-side tall grass for signs of the deer's fate, I surveyed the front-right end of the truck. I may not know if the deer was badly injured in the accident but I know the truck suffered massive damage. Thankfully, none of the damage interfered with the drivability of the vehicle, so we were able to return home safely, where I could assess the particulars of the front-end damage under bright garage lamps instead of with the beam of a flashlight.

I called my insurance company and related the facts of the accident as I knew them, answered some questions, and took a few photos to send to the agent. Within days I had selected a body repair shop in Hot Springs, obtained an estimate, and soon Geico Insurance sent Hills Edge Auto Sales, Inc., a check.

For what seemed like an eternity—because I was impatient to have my truck restored to its former condition—I waited for the service date. When the great day came, feeling like a parent dropping a precious child off at summer camp for two weeks, I left my stalwart companion in the caring hands of Gaylen, Janet, and Kevin, and was driven away to pick up my substitute child (a 2017 Dodge Ram 1500 with 12 miles on it) from Enterprise Car Rental.

In what seemed like a wink of an eye, it was time to collect my repaired truck, and I couldn't get to Hills Edge fast enough. There it was, looking as good as if it had never encountered that troublesome ruminant mammal in the fading light of a July day.

The folks at Hills Edge did a great job fixing my truck and I appreciated the courtesy, honesty, and professionalism they demonstrated to take care of me. I'll do business with them again.

Libraries are Important

By T.L. Matt

Searching for a new place to settle in and call home, and be close to our daughter and grandchildren, we considered every aspect of several communities. The availability of groceries, hardware, banking and other essential services were considered as well as a library.

We were ecstatic to learn what a top-notch library Edgemont had, with accessibility to inter-library loan, research computers and programs to bind the community together. Their Internet site was outstanding and informative.

I love to walk to the library and enjoy the magazines, search for that special book and converse with Ashley Courtney, the librarian, and her assistant, Agnes.

Ashley has taken courses to increase her expertise in helping patrons and choosing the best in materials. With hard work, she has brought the Edgemont Library up to the highest accreditation level that a small library can acquire in South Dakota.

There are audio books for the hard-of-hearing and large print books for those with limited eyesight. The adult-coloring class and the book discussion group are rewarding because of friendships formed and mind-expanding topics explored.

I have observed the very young enjoying reading groups and getting familiar with materials and services that the library has to offer. On Fridays, when school is out, the youth gather at the library as a place where they are welcome.

It is so gratifying to see Ashley work with the disabled of the community—recognizing them as people who need a bit of extra help from someone with a willing heart. A country is judged on how well it provides for it's helpless—impaired, the elderly, and the very young. A city is judged by the same criteria.

A library provides a place where people can go to seek knowledge, no matter their income or physical limitations. The only thing that we take with us in the next life is our character and the knowledge we have acquired.

A library stands as a pillar of freedom that should not be diminished. Yes, you can access the Internet for knowledge, but the Internet does not have a heart.

Ashley Courtney and the library do.

Minnekahta Messenger

Published by Minnekahta Publishing, LLC

P. O. Box 221 Hot Springs, SD 57747 • messenger@blackhillssentinel.com

Christian "Grits" McMorro, Publisher • T.L. Matt, Editor

The opinions expressed in our published works are those of the author(s) and do not reflect the opinions of Minnekahta Publishing, LLC or its Advertisers. • Information contained in our published works has been obtained by Minnekahta Publishing, LLC from sources believed to be reliable. However, neither Minnekahta Publishing, LLC nor its authors guarantees the accuracy or completeness of any information published herein and neither Minnekahta Publishing, LLC nor its authors shall be responsible for any errors, omissions, or claims for damages, including exemplary damages, arising out of use, inability to use, or with regard to the accuracy or sufficiency of the information contained in Minnekahta Publishing, LLC publications. • All rights reserved. No part of any Minnekahta Publishing, LLC published work may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without written permission from the publisher.

Cowboy (cont. from front cover)

“The Medicine Man” was effectively accompanied by drummer Jan Speirs.

“A Border Affair” is a love poem written by Badger—a nod to the years he spent in Cuba. “A Cowboy Prayer,” the most famous of his compositions, set to music by Barry Hertz, is often played before rodeos around the country.

The last poem performed in song was “Lead My America” and, according to www.sdpb.org, was “set to music in 1957 by Dr. Harold Dudley of Washington D.C. and performed by the Fred Waring Chorus and military choruses in the nation’s capitol.”

A fitting finish to a fantastic program by Pegie Douglas and the Badger Sett Band.

An open mic of Badger Clark poetry was the next portion of the show and a real treat it was! Michael Lewis of the Badger Clark Memorial Society and President of the South Dakota Historical Society gave a moving reading of the essay, “My Father and I,” published in 1916.

Referring to the Badger Clark books and other materials being offered in the lobby, Lewis stated, “One hundred percent of the proceeds from our promotional items, including Badger Clark’s books, [will be contributed] to the ongoing publication of his works.”

Bonnie Jo and Brad Exton, the Ramblin’ Rangers, performed a musical arrangement of “A Bad Half Hour,” which resonated with the crowd.

Grits Wrangler—the stage name of *Minnekahta Messenger* Publisher Grits McMorrow—was featured in a lip-smacking rendition of “Bacon” by Clark, which had the audience grinning.

A regional favorite in acting and recitation, Ricardo Jacomé appeared next with an excellent rendering of *The Border Affair*, an emotional poem about love.

Traveling the West and playing at cowboy and poetry gatherings, guitarist Kerry Grombacher performed “The Old Trailer”

and “A Border Affair.” A very professional presentation.

“The Roundup” by Grits was very spirited and convincing as he actually became a real “wrangler” before our eyes.

Ricardo, wearing a worn, slouched hat, was suddenly 30 years older when he recited “The Old Cow Man” with a flair.

Carrying a New Mexico horse blanket, Grits laid it down at the front of the stage—*getting everyone’s attention!* He then lay upon it and proceeded to recite “A Bad Half Hour” with real empathy for Badger’s character, who was trying to sleep, but was plagued by memories of his dear Annie. It made you want to silence Jim, the singing guard, yourself for crooning “Annie Laurie” to the herd and torturing the heart-sick cowboy.

A surprising climax to a great program honoring Badger Clark.

Origins (cont. from front cover)

A few hours later, the warm springs were discovered yet again! They pitched camp for a long stay.

From these Indians, we have the first names for this locality—names which have survived to this day. In their musical tongue, they called the springs “Wi-wi-la-kahta,” or “Minne-kahta,” or “Warm Waters.”

A few weeks after the first Sioux invasion, a band of Cheyennes, coming to the springs with their sick people, as their fathers had done before them, found the strange intruders in possession of the canyon and were by no means pleased. The old men of the two bands opened diplomatic exchanges in sign language.

The Cheyennes claimed the springs by right of inheritance and immemorial usage; the Sioux felt their culture was superior and claimed it by their right of progress and manifest destiny.

While the discussion was based on property rights alone, there was some chance of a peaceful settlement, but when the chieftains began to shout about national honor, the case

at once became hopeless and the young men hastily retired to their respective camps to apply their war paint.

As in most international mixups, the old men bungled their job of statesmanship and the young men had to pay for it.

The details of the contest and the number of casualties are lost in antiquity, but the nature of the terrain makes it likely that most of the fight occurred on the heights of Battle Mountain.

At length, the Cheyennes withdrew. However, it was in the nature of a holy war and the Cheyennes made camp in a sequestered part of the hills and made raids, harassing the Sioux horribly.

At Sioux initiative, a peace conference was called. One elder statesman had an inspiration and his idea was beautifully simple—they declared the springs under a perpetual flag of truce, and all territory within a certain radius to be neutral ground, wherein no man should unsheath a knife or pull an arrow from the quiver.

Tradition says that the treaty was made—and as the history of the United States proves that treaty-breaking was almost exclusively a white man’s game—there is reason to believe this agreement was loyally kept.

The hard-fighting Sioux won and maintained practical ownership of the “Black Mountain country” (a term coined by Lewis and Clark) but once members of any other tribe reached the neutral ground of the healing waters, they were safe there as long as they chose to stay.

The council after the fight on Battle Mountain made the canyon forever a place of peace, and the sparkling rapids of the warm creek have never been reddened with human blood since that distant day.

Interview (cont. from front cover)

When asked, “*What’s the secret to a happy marriage?*” Caroline smiled and answered, “Teamwork—it’s a job you work at every day. You care about

your spouse by putting your best foot forward every day.” She mentioned sharing responsibility for making important decisions together.

Barney had been an only child and cared lovingly for his aging parents. When Barney couldn’t complete his book, *Looking Back at Edgemont*, ©1984, Caroline rewrote a chapter and worked to get a copyright. She confessed, “I’ve always received good compliments on Barney’s book.”

This experience launched her interest in writing, and she later wrote *Red Canyon Echoes*, ©1999. She was 85 years of age when the book was published. Caroline also edited *The Edgemont Centennial, 1890-1990*.

Caroline offered advice to families today: “Have evening meals together!” Her children, John, b.1937 and Mary Ella, b. 1939, knew that nothing could interfere with that special time when members of the family sat down together at meals to share accounts of daily activities and bond with one another.

When asked about technology, Caroline said, “A lot of it is good but some is misused.” She cited the fact that children today are so involved with the Internet and cell phones that they don’t have enough time for physical activity.

Caroline feels that because children in her time had to make do with what they had, they were more inventive, and this trait led to enhanced imaginative skills.

Because of her deep faith, Caroline takes life one day at a time and makes the most of the opportunities she has. She exercises daily with her walker.

At the close of the interview, Caroline stated, “I don’t know what people do who don’t have faith in God.”

Caroline’s character portrays a life of endurance, constant learning, and true caring for others. She made us feel loved and appreciated and we thoroughly enjoyed our visit.

What a grand lady!