

# Minnekahta eMessenger®

VOLUME II

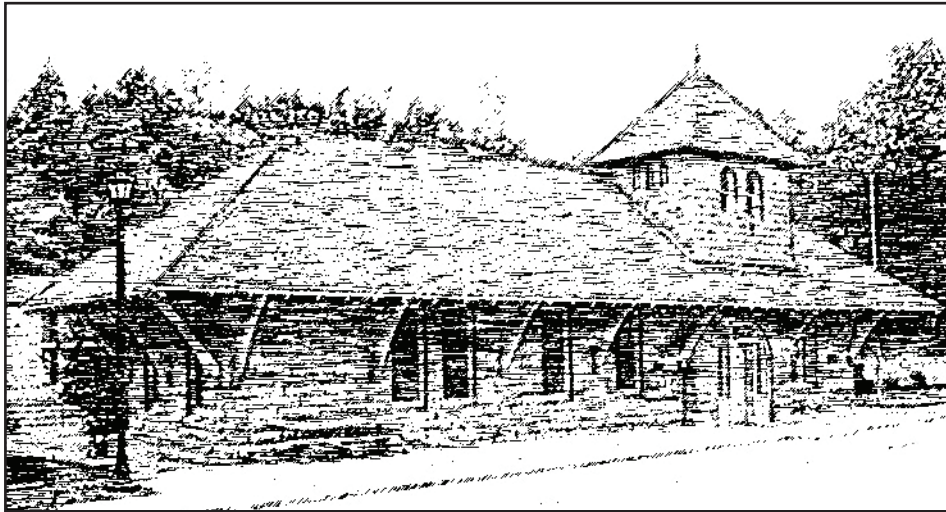
MINNEKAHTA PUBLISHING, LLC

NUMBER 14

SOUTHWESTERN SD.

BRINGING OUR COMMUNITIES TOGETHER

FRIDAY, OCT. 27, 2017



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# Minnekahta Messenger



VOLUME II  
SOUTHWESTERN SD.

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NUMBER 14  
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## WE SUPPORT OUR FIRST RESPONDERS THANK YOU ALL LIVES MATTER

### ARE YOU SCARED? GHOST TOWNS IN THE BLACK HILLS

By T.L. Matt

Always loving to explore history and imagine how people lived long ago, it is natural that I would be drawn to towns long deserted.

Because of the precarious occupation of mining, towns all over the Black Hills were erected quickly and then abandoned as the veins of minerals petered out.

I counted approximately 210 Black Hills ghost towns at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_ghost\\_towns\\_in\\_South\\_Dakota](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_ghost_towns_in_South_Dakota). This is an incomplete list and includes barren sites where the towns, over the years, have reverted to pasture and foundations hard to find.

Yes, the lure of quick riches drew thousands to the Black Hills. Most of their dreams never came true—but a small portion became incredibly wealthy.

Years ago, we took our granddaughter, Ashley, and her friend, Rita, exploring. *What fun!* I will only touch on four sites, because of the limitations of space. To cover them all, it would take the entire space of a 12-page *Minnekahta Messenger!*

“Ghosts on Road” is a sign declaring the town of Galena a haven for departed spirits. Started in 1875 as a gold and silver mining camp, it is unusual because it is now an unincorporated town with actual living occupants amid the historic buildings still standing.

The Galena Historical Society was formed to work on preservation and it promotes a walk to share Galena’s story and a barbecue as a fundraiser each year. This year it was held on June 10th. I’m sorry I missed it and will try to make it next year.

Sarah Campbell, aka “Aunt Sally,” came to Galena to file a mining claim—the first woman in the area to do so. She was believed

to be the first black woman in the Black Hills and came into the region as a cook on Custer’s 1874 Expedition (<http://www.blackhillstravelblog.com/travel-blog/2015-11-05/finding-black-hills-ghost-towns-galena-sd-0>).

Another famous resident was Thomas Francis Walsh, who later moved to Colorado, where he struck it rich in 1896, giving his daughter, Evelyn, the famed Hope Diamond as a wedding gift.

Galena became home to about 400 people and was a thriving community. The schoolhouse, built in 1882, is the best-restored building from that era, thanks to the Historical Society and their efforts

The most famous citizen of all was Tootsie, the singing coyote—during the 40’s and 50’s. The April 2, 2014 Rapid City Journal noted the elaborate neon sign honoring the famous coyote in Deadwood. ([http://rapidcityjournal.com/sign-celebrating-life-of-tootsie-the-singing-coyote-being-re/article\\_05566343-a8a0-5207-89e9-ecb470b7f6eb.html](http://rapidcityjournal.com/sign-celebrating-life-of-tootsie-the-singing-coyote-being-re/article_05566343-a8a0-5207-89e9-ecb470b7f6eb.html)).

Tootsie was captured near Custer Peak in 1947 by Ollie Wiswell. He didn’t want to kill the little pup and gave her to Fred and Esther Borsch to raise. She was a feature at their Main Street liquor store and rode, dressed up, in the annual Days of ‘76 parade in Deadwood.

Governor George Mickelson proclaimed Tootsie to be “South Dakota’s State Animal.” She was taught to *sing* along with Fred as he rendered tunes and they recorded an album—“South Dakota Tootsie.” You can hear the recording today at the Adams Museum in Deadwood.

On a 10-state promotional tour, Tootsie actually went to the White House and met President Dwight D. Eisenhower. A special stamp was issued commemorating the unusual animal.

Darrell Nelson, curator for Deadwood History, Inc., said, “Tootsie was a great, active promoter of South Dakota.” The coyote is an animal that is not easily trained, so Tootsie was a real attraction.

(see *Ghost on back cover*)

## I SURVIVED A HALLOWEEN WEDDING

By T.L. Matt

Who ever gets an early start? It was about 9:00 a.m. on October 10 when we started out from Edgemont for Wyoming and Colorado for a birthday party at 6:00 p.m. in Parker, Colorado.

There were snow-covered mountains and high snowbanks along the road as we came into Colorado, and we knew if we had left a day earlier, we would have encountered a blizzard.

The cheerful event was held at Crown Crest Nursing Home for a beaming, if immobile, 95-year-old Mom.

The next morning, Pikes Peak was awesome among the Rocky Mountains. Leaving Colorado City, there are the Spanish Peaks—gorgeous. Huge white windmills were dead as door nails and the groves of trees permanently leaned to the left from the relentless winds off the mountains.

My husband, Don, was so excited, as this was country he had never seen! He almost turned the car over to me to drive.

Wow! The 7,834 elevation of the Raton Pass on the border of Colorado and New Mexico was so spectacular. Soon after we saw signs for Capulin Volcano National Monument, and I wished we could have stopped.

Chugging on down the road to Lubbock, Texas, we were startled as a coyote crossed the road in front of us. He looked back with a sly grin—he knew he owned the territory!

I wasn’t sure what I was seeing in the fields of white. I thought it was white flowers, but no! It was actually cotton growing. Something I had never seen before. Fields and fields of cotton. Wild tall cotton bushes were growing along the road, and I longed to pick a bouquet, but didn’t.

There were many stockyards and small towns deteriorating as well as historic markers that led to nothing as far as I could see.

There were an extraordinary number of antique stores and

small restaurants as people in rural America were just trying to make a living.

Stink Creek Road and Noodle Dome Road were a couple of the interesting names we came across.

I was surprised to see rolling hills like in Missouri, and the cactus was two feet tall. There were unusual tall ornamental grasses and dead armadillos. The temperature topped 90 degrees F.

Lubbock was a real bummer. Our Route 84 was detoured because of construction and, it being evening, we became really lost. It took us an hour and a half to find our motel, which was in a rather scary district. Couldn’t wait to get out of that city.

Austin has many tall trees and hills and even palm trees to grace the lawns. Huge plants that look like aloe house plants were everywhere amid tropical flowers.

With temperatures rising, we finally—with our guardian angel’s help—found the wedding guests’ rental home.

After a photo session with the bride- and groom-to-be in a nicely landscaped garden, the party-goers separated to go to the wedding at the Alamo Draft House.

(see *Wedding on back cover*)

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# If You Could Change One Thing

## Internal Communication (real, bio-feedback)

By Andy Skadberg

I have been repeating the mantra (*Eye Am My Breath*) a lot, even in my sleep. Desmond said we have to do the work to get bliss (Joseph Campbell “follow your bliss”)\*. Breath Consciousness is the Seal to the “head gasket” to get the power flowing like in a car engine.

This comparison made me think of the extent of attention that has gone into engineering things in this world. Such exacting concerns to make machines, technologies, computers, etc. But then people have not done the same with their own consciousness, their own spiritual development.

A theme for me for some time is “I have to get my consciousness in shape, in the proper stage for effective creation”—like getting the horse before the cart.

Focusing outside of ourselves cannot give adequate feedback from the external.

The external operates with ideas, words, systems, like the economy, scarcity, war, disease—it has created the stimuli for our bio-feedback system but we have become desensitized to its communication, our feelings.

Our collective culture, at least in the US, laments death and yet people are not really valued; the systems are killing us off but wanting us to just be dramatic and think/feel we are just victims of unseen or uncontrollable effects—the hypocrisy is pretty blatant.

An individual can’t get her/his guidance from an outside interpretation. Spiritual evolution is a process of becoming aware and sensitive to the feeling feedback. However, if there is too much mental noise and system disharmony, then it can be difficult to glean the messages/guidance.

**The Practice** (<http://www.globalbreath-consciousnessinstitute.com/thepractice.php>) is the ultimate guide for Self Awareness to become conditioned to the internal bio-mechanisms that guide.

The only ultimate given is the breath. It is the only unknowable, knowable, truth.

With it, all other givens, experiences are given and supported and sustained.

Macro systems like the economy, government, church, etc., etc., are only pushing people inside—the strife and lack of purchase and dependability put a person on dicey, unstable footing.

Pushing us inside to the eternal truth and sustainability of the breath.

This is our awakening. Digesting the image-based creations, one breath at a time.

So, the process is actually physical/biological. We are Breathing ourselves into the new consciousness, not thinking ourselves to it. And, it is happening to us, by us, for us—but we can accelerate, or facilitate, by our conscious participation. This, now, is the proper use of our attention—to use the tools at our disposal, such as:

*Mantras, such as* – “Eye Am My Breath” (any combination, **Trust Your Breath** <http://www.breatheconsciously.com/resources/TrustYourBreathGreen.pdf> has an abundance of phrases, anything that centers you in your breath).

*Deep Breathing* – play with your breath, conscious breathing (notice, pay attention to it)

*New Languageing* – becoming aware of what we are saying, to ourselves, to the world and about it (including other selves) (see **Trust Your Breath** <http://www.breatheconsciously.com/resources/TrustYourBreathGreen.pdf>)

*Contemplations, appreciations* – catalog things to be grateful for.

*Nature connections, observations* – nature abounds in the perfection of what supports everything. Nature IS without the questioning or doubt. Observing and experiencing nature reminds us of what supports us too.

*Experience processing, engagings* – we learn from our experiences, from reviewing, from processing or “digesting” them.

*Sharing, giving, gifting*  
*Active loving* (non-judgment, grati-

tude for all, especially One Breath) see **Love Transcends** ([http://13lightmessages.blogspot.com/2010/10/love-transcends\\_31.html](http://13lightmessages.blogspot.com/2010/10/love-transcends_31.html))

The only thing to know – One Breath.  
\* “If you do follow your bliss you put yourself on a kind of track that has been there all the while, waiting for you, and the life that you ought to be living is the one you are living. Follow your bliss and don’t be afraid, and doors will open where you didn’t know they were going to be.”

— Joseph Campbell

*“Internal Communication (real, bio-feedback)” is the title of a blogpost by Andy Skadberg. It was published on Aug. 25, 2014 on the author’s website, <http://13lightmessages.blogspot.com/2014/08/internal-communication-real-bio-feedback.html>.*

*“Internal Communication (real, bio-feedback)” 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.*

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## The Poet of My Heart

By Andy Skadberg

The poet of my heart  
arrives at itself  
riding on my breath  
the stars sliding by  
in the quiet night  
ride on the waves of my breath  
my eyes see the beauty  
in all because I breathe  
who am I to doubt  
that the design  
is less than perfect  
the tears fall from my eyes  
at the joy of love  
and also the angst  
this world, this life  
invites  
more  
for me to embrace by breath  
and share.

# There's Something To Be Said

## The Kindred Spirit By Barbara Hauseman

### Pass It Forward

As long as I can remember, I have always helped others when they were in a pinch. There is a saying, *pass it forward*, and I believe it is an act of kindness that is worth doing over and over again in life.

Little did I know that I would be the recipient of such an act of kindness. I didn't see it coming. I was at a convenience store last Saturday to buy a fried chicken dinner to feed three and pick up some ice cream for dessert, and had enough money on my food stamps to purchase them.

When I got to the register, the cashier said, "You owe (I can't remember the amount of money)."

"What?" I said. I knew I hadn't miscounted. The cashier said the stamps covered the ice cream but not the chicken. I said to the cashier, "This IS food!" He replied to me that the SNAP program didn't cover cooked food.

After several embarrassing seconds (they seemed like long minutes), a kind male voice from behind me said, "I just won some money from gambling next door and I would like to help you!"

Was I hearing things? Did I really hear what this generous young man, standing next to a beautiful young woman, had said? With embarrassment showing from my ears to my toes, I simply replied, "No, thank you, just the same."

The young man pulled out his winnings from his pocket and said again, "Really, we would like to help you and buy your food." I again replied, possibly from pride, "No, but thank you for the offer."

Turning back to the cashier, who appeared to be getting antsy with waiting customers in line, I repeated, "This IS food, even if it is HOT!" He shook his head.

I threw up my arms in frustration, stalked out of the store and got in my car. Suddenly, the young woman, with shining eyes, white teeth and a smile on her face, was at my car and asking me to roll down my passenger window. In her hands were two plastic sacks with the chicken and ice cream in them. I was dumbfounded!

"We would like for you to have this food. We wanted to buy it for you." The young woman was genuine, and gave me the biggest smile, as she tilted her beautiful face to one side and said, "God bless you!"

What?? I was stunned. Here was a person who genuinely cared about me. Filled with emotion, I held back my tears, not wanting to allow her to see my heartfelt reaction. Again, she said, "God bless you."

I only then accepted the gifts of the two plastic bags of food and said, "God bless YOU!" She smiled, turned around and rejoined her friend in the store. I was stunned. "Did this really happen to ME?"

I can still see her beautiful face, smile of white teeth, and dark flowing hair and feel the kindness that she and her friend bestowed on me that day. I think to myself, "If that had been my daughter, I would have been so proud of her!"

This is the way I was brought up... To help others with a gentle hand and a gentle heart. I felt I had been blessed by an angel who was at the right place at the right time!

Wherever you and your friend are, I cradle this gift of your caring in my heart. You are of the generation that will be taking care of us Seniors! I pray that this thoughtful young woman's mother had taught this special gift of caring to her daughter so that she, too, would be able to pass it forward.

Sometimes, when it seems there isn't enough kindness in this world, it appears out of nowhere, and is given right to you!

God Bless All!

## Lies They Tell Writers, Part 10: Getting Published Should Not Be Your Goal

By Rod Miller

Some people will tell you—in writing workshops, classes, conferences—that getting published should not be your goal. That you should write for the love of it, and not worry if what you've written is ever read by anyone else.

There may be some merit in that point of view if what you're writing is a personal or family history meant only to be left as a legacy. Other than that, I don't buy it. Why would you write if not to be read? That seems to me to be the whole point. If you're not read, are you even a writer? I don't think so.

There are those who say the sheer act of writing makes you a writer. How so? Compare it to, say, an interest in plumb-

ing. Sure, you can play around with pipes and wrenches and fittings all you want. You can even take a course and get a certificate in plumbing. You can buy all the tools and equipment. And you can take a lot of enjoyment and personal satisfaction from it all. But until someone hires you, and pays you, to pound on their pipes, you are not a plumber. Not really.

I don't see writing as all that different. Putting words on paper is the beginning of being a writer, not the end. Because if those words aren't published, aren't made available to other eyes, they might as well not exist.

"Lies They Tell Writers, Part 10: Getting Published Should Not Be Your Goal" is

the title of a blogpost by Rod Miller. It was published on Jan. 11, 2015 on the author's website, <http://writerrodmler.blogspot.com/2015/01/lies-they-tell-writers-part-10-getting.html>.

"Lies They Tell Writers, Part 10: Getting Published Should Not Be Your Goal" 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 [writerrodmler.blogspot.com](http://writerrodmler.blogspot.com). Information about Rod and his books and other works is available at [writerRodMiller.com](http://writerRodMiller.com), his Amazon Author Page (<https://www.amazon.com/Rod-Miller/e/B001HCTX7G>), and at [CowboyPoetry.com](http://CowboyPoetry.com).

# Special Section

## My Favorite Summer

By D.E. Matt

Special Correspondent

Free from outside influences, hovering quietly over an alien world filled with alien life forms, I steal one minute at a time, quietly flying in super slow motion, searching for strange creatures, rocks and plants. I am master of my environment. It is a heady feeling.

Anytime I make a discovery of mollusks, fish, or rocks, I surface repeatedly and click two rocks together under water. This signals my brother and fellow adventurer to also surface; we shout semi-distant conversations back and forth, standing chest deep in the small river, but there is so much water here, in the St. Lawrence River Valley, that this is merely called a creek.

There are so many trees that there is about one raft per mile just sitting on the bank, waiting to be used.

When I later get a chance to view the area from a Cessna, it appears about forty percent of the area is water. We get to see ocean-going ships navigating a farmer's field, and discover which part of the world they and their waving crew came from as they use the canal's Eisenhower Lock as an elevator.

The water is clear, enhancing my ambitions to be the next Jacques Cousteau. I have discovered him at my local library years before television ever did.

On vacation at Lake George, New York, my brother and I make an agreement with the rowboat rental to clean boats in exchange for free use of a small rowboat, empowering our youthful wanderings.

Our dog bursts from the tent, startling a raccoon into a treetop. The park ranger says not to worry, it happens all the time.

The biggest surprise we find is small schools of sunfish hovering in the shade under each anchored boat. We have contests to see who can collect the most mollusks from the sand, then we throw them back. My father shows us how to skip rocks. We can never match his five or six skips.

I never had a summer to match this one, although my sister remembers her screaming discovery of an attached leach quite differently.

## My Favorite Summer

By T.L. Matt

Remember the days when you were sweet sixteen? You longed for adventure—to be grown up and see the world.

It was with great excitement that I anticipated a trip to Colorado with my family. At that age, I had hardly been out of Missouri! Just a disastrous trip to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, where a hurricane cut our trip short—everyone still with terrible burns from the fierce reflections of the sun over the ocean. That was a vacation best forgotten.

To see the mountains for the first time—not the rolling high hills of Missouri and of the South, but the super high majestic Rockies—Wow! A dream come true. To put the icing on the cake, my parents actually let me invite Sue Brent, a pretty blonde and a good friend my age, to accompany us. Her older, protective parents finally gave their consent.

It was a tight squeeze in the car with my Mom, Dad, sister, brother, Sue and myself. But an even tighter squeeze was the tiny camper we hauled behind our station wagon for sleeping. I can't remember how we did it—using this camper built for two or three—to accommodate six people. I know we had to exit when the *guys* got dressed and then the *guys* left us in the camper in the mornings.

Unfortunately, I didn't see the unique vistas on the ride up to Pikes Peak, as I was huddled on the floor of a back passenger

seat, shaking with fear. The majestic views were lost to me, as I saw only the dirt and scraps of paper on the floor.

When we reached the top, however, I was coaxed out, finding it a little hard to breathe, but exhilarated with the snowball fight that ensued.

Going down, I remained seated with eyes partially closed, but in an upright position. What a brave 16-year old!

I guess the most fun was feeding the chipmunks in Estes Park. The furry little things came right up to us—snatching peanuts out of our hands.

Sue and I never attracted any boys, which was one of the things we hoped for at the time. It was a little hard with my small brother and sister tagging along.

However, our one forbidden adolescent thing to do, we accomplished. We managed to smoke a cigarette behind a big boulder, hidden from sight. The best thing about that summer was the bond Sue and I formed after the vacation.

She met her future husband at Fisher's Drive-In, with me along. The teens in town drove a circuit from Fisher's on the south side to Taylor's on the north.

Sue married the boy a few years later, had two children and then, tragically, died of cancer in her twenties—a young mother—so sad.

But I will always treasure the memories of the laughter and fun we shared on that remarkable trip to Colorado—in the middle of my favorite summer.

## My Favorite Summer

By Grits McMorrow

As a Southern California native who spent many great summers surfing waves, sailing Hobie Cats, and getting tanned on clean Pacific Ocean beaches, it is hard to pick just one summer as being my favorite.

While growing up, my parents loved to go to Savin Hill Beach in the Dorchester neighborhood of Boston, Massachusetts. Cape Cod was another beach destination.

They shared their love of beach life with their three boys, taking us to Santa Monica and Malibu near Los Angeles on day trips. I remember a few summers when they rented a large motorhome to drive up the coast to Pismo Beach in San Luis Obispo County.

In the late '60s, our family spent summer weekends in Del Mar and Solana Beach in North San Diego County. Then, in the early '70s, we began going to Orange County's Newport Beach, staying for weeks in a waterfront summer home on Balboa Island. (See *Summer on page 5*)

# My Favorite Summer

By Larry Stocker

Now that the weather is getting cooler, quite cool in some places, a little cooler in others, we look back on another summer gone. You have to wear something to cover your exposed arms. Keeping warm is a higher priority. Another summer is logged in the big history book which keeps track of everything located somewhere in our consciousness.

In many places summer is the time for living and doing and making happy memories. The rest of the year we may be reacting to the last one or getting ready for another summer to come.

But that's not true of all places. Some places with a similar climate all through the year don't have the crisp wind that tells you it is time to put on a long-sleeved shirt. You could walk down the street and not even know what month it is!

There is another way to tell if it is summer or not—school. It is pretty much universal: if the kids are in school, it's not summer; if they are not, it's probably summer. That's one element of life that the kids are in charge of. Personally, I think they should be in charge of more.

I have a girlfriend who says that we should be happy in summer. You can't have a favorite summer without happiness. I think she's right but I have a hard time telling when I'm happy and when I'm not. Or, when I was happy and when I will be happy.

I think people work hard at trying to set up conditions to make themselves happy. Like, for example, camping. In the summer regular people get out the camping stuff, load it in the car and head for the

woods. They cook food over the fire or on the propane stove. They sleep in tents with sleeping bags and air mattresses that almost always develop a leak. The ground is never level, even though it may look that way, and the kids usually play in the fire pit until they are black with ashes and smell like dogs.

The big people usually have something to drink which makes everything seem a little more tolerable. They say to each other that nothing tastes better than a cup of morning coffee with grounds in it while you are so close to the squirrels, raccoons, birds and stray dogs that roam the forest. And the hot dogs, well-blackened by the open fire, are the best.

Campers lie a lot but if you ask them they will say that they are happy and that the camping trip was a big success. Secretly, inside their own thoughts, these brave campers will also be happy when they get back home. Happier, probably.

So, if the trip was dedicated to finding happiness through camping and the real happiness was found in coming back home, why did the campers conceive of the idea in the first place?

Even so, I will say that memories of going camping filled up a lot of pages in that big history book located somewhere in my consciousness. Looking back on camping trips is always way more fun than being there. And the more things that went wrong, the funnier the memory becomes.

Happiness sneaks around and hides in corners. It's hard to predict and schedule when it is going to strike. Little kids are better at living under the blanket of happiness than big people. They can be there and not even know it.

One of my favorite summers was some years ago, in 2009. It was the mildest summer anyone had ever seen in Illinois. All my brothers and sisters, old people now, went to my brother's house surrounded by corn fields down along the Indiana line. The air was beautiful. Everyone stayed overnight. Everybody wanted to be outside.

Our aging mother was there. She sat in a chair under a big willow tree for all of the Saturday and half the Sunday. Sometimes her face looked serious and sometimes she smiled, but she looked happy.

We cooked things, played games and talked about things that went wrong because those were the things that were the funniest. Laughing and being funny is not quite the same thing as happiness but it can fill up the time until real happiness sets in.

I drove Mom back to the Assisted Living home on the Sunday afternoon. We stopped by Dad's grave and looked at the stone that had my mother's name on it next to his. We didn't say too much.

Not wanting the time to end I drove slowly along the corn lined back roads with her dry grey hair blowing in the wind. She was wearing a baseball cap. We kept the car windows down. It was such good air. It was a nice ride.

In life we had gone far, yet there was so much unfinished. We both knew that. She died early in 2010. She died in a way that, to me, seemed an appropriate end for the way she lived. I guess that means a happy death. I guess that means that happiness can be found in unusual places.

I can still feel that car ride with the windows down, the calmness and acceptance of life; I can still see the baseball cap on her head and the magnificent air blowing through the car.

*Summer (cont. from page 4)*

I guess my favorite summer was in 1973. We were at the Balboa house and my parents had just bought our first sailboat, a yellow and white, 12-foot Hobie Mono-Cat that my mother named the *Cat's Meow*. They hired a guy to teach us how to sail her safely and, after a couple days, my brothers and I were on our own. You haven't lived until you've sailed a small watercraft solo, sitting high on the tilted hull's edge with a sail full of wind and your nostrils filled with the scent of sun-warmed salt water.

When not sailing around Balboa Bay, the place to be was 15th Street in Newport Beach for the best waves for bodysurfing. The Wedge had bigger waves but they were gnarly, breaking right at the edge of the sand, where you risked a broken neck if you didn't cut out in time. 15th Street waves formed in their usual sets and gave a good, safe ride. Most of us wore a single fin to help us kick in and catch the waves, aiming an arm toward the beach as we rode the 15-second thrill ride. In my memory, I can still hear the surfers calling "Outside!"

A group of friends came to Newport for ten days in August and we spent most of them at 15th Street. We all swam and surfed, although the gals chose to bask in the sun in their colorful bikinis for much of the day. Nights found us hanging out at the Fun Zone, with its arcade, food booths, and beachwear shops that catered to young people. One night, we found balcony seats at the local theater to watch the new James Bond 007 movie, *Live and Let Die*.

I have enjoyed many fine summers but I will always remember the Summer of '73.

# Rhyme Or Reason

## not far from Wyoming

by ricardo christianson jacome

oh, to write a poem not  
on loan from my mind  
a poem of tenderness

...softly, out on the playground  
during an obscure moment  
next to Eloisa, arms at our sides  
my fingers first grazed hers  
then the nun rang the end-of-recess bell...

i want to write a poem  
barefoot as a heartbeat

a tender poem  
not stood up from the past  
nothing a thing remote

in my town  
of quarried sandstones  
slumping like shackled captives  
sandstones that shoulder to shoulder  
once stood us to unity  
yes  
beneath these listless  
red-complected survivors  
the men of anguish fall out  
returned but not restored

dutiful veterans  
a corps of lives unalterably beset  
lives as tightly fettered  
as their singular ashen  
ponytails

## caught red-handed

By G. Douglas Jackson

for fear of getting caught  
red-handed  
he dipped his other, innocent  
hand  
into the scarlet shame,  
tested the temperature  
with his toes,

waded in up to his waist,  
submerged his shoulders,  
and finally  
backflipped into  
a perfect  
butterfly crawl,

making concentric circles,  
consummating a more consistent  
sin,

he emerged,  
wanton from toenail to hairline,  
guilty in every molecule,  
cell and atom,  
crimson within and without,

he was  
red-handed  
alllll overrrrrr hissss boddddy...

and thereby escaped detection.

## Atlantis

By Michael Neuertz

Late one dusky, baroque-pearl day,  
The screen overlooking my back yard  
Splintered a raindrop  
to build a Washington Monument.  
To the left,  
a cluster of high rise towered, while  
two and three story garden apartments  
grew  
in the empty lots between.  
There to the right, the suburbs spread,  
an open plain beyond.

Suddenly, the sun burst clouds:  
on one silent-switch the city blazed  
briefly  
and drowned.

## Life on the Rio Grande

By Larry Stocker

I don't listen to the local news. I only turn on the radio when I need to hear some other human voice besides the one inside my head. And then I usually turn it off pretty fast. The radio overloads me.

Lately, I keep getting severe alert messages on my telephone.

So, I find myself steering away from radios, televisions, telephones and newspapers. People usually tell me what the news is.

Like, for example, right now everyone seems to have something to say about the Fourth of July celebration, during which none of the people could walk on the special plastic grass they put down on the football field.

I don't know if it's true or not but I have heard people say that not being able to

walk on that artificial grass is a symbol of what's wrong with America. They say that if the people pay for the grass the people should be able to walk on it—not just football players with bad manners and cleats.

And they say that the football coaches are not the bosses of everything in Las Cruces.

The football field they are talking about is called *The Field of Dreams*—a title they borrowed from a baseball movie starring Kevin Costner. I guess to some,

The Field of Dreams is a symbol of excellence, a holy place. They don't exactly want regular people walking around in there.

Come to think of it, the same thing sort of applies to the music-playing bench on the edge of the Rio Grande. That thing is uncomfortable to sit on! It's not made for regular people. It looks okay and, if you are just sitting down for a five-minute rest, it's all right—just don't sit there for an hour.

I'm a regular person, right? and it makes my back hurt.

Last night, a bank of clouds, sitting above Picacho Peak, prevented the view of the sunset—same as last week. The sun slipped out of the sky without notice. The colors were minimal but almost immediately the big silver moon leaped onto the stage. "I'll take it from here!" she said.

That's when I noticed the shimmering silver line running along the churning surface of the Rio Grande. I knew I was in good hands and would be okay for another night.

I don't care that much about the bench or the Field of Dreams but I just wish they would stop sending me severe alert warnings three or four times a day.

*"Life on the Rio Grande"* is a weekly email blog written by Larry Stocker. This story was published on Jul. 11, 2014.

*"Life on the Rio Grande"* was reprinted with permission from the author.

# Well, If You Ask Us

## John D. Taylor: A Man of Principle

By Grits McMorrow

On Thursday afternoon, Oct. 5, I was told by a friend that John D. Taylor, a writer whom I met earlier this year and who has been the editor of the Hot Springs Star Newspaper since August 2015, was released from his duties. My friend said, "The Star cleaned house this week and John [among others] is gone," adding that the police were present during his departure.

Large companies and corporations usually have their in-house security department accompany departing employees while they pack up personal belongings and escort them off the premises, so I imagined the police presence at a pocket operation such as the Hot Springs Star was simply an overt example of an escort service and not a crime-related response.

I was saddened to hear the information about John. I met him in a sit-down meeting in the Star building in January after Andrea Powers of SHEDCO erroneously told me that the Star was seeking to hire a writer. Andrea called John and he agreed to meet with me the next day, but I don't know why. When I arrived with résumé in hand for our meeting, I quickly learned that the Star was not hiring writers, and John had no authority to hire anyone. John was personable and courteous and I left thinking he was a good guy.

My admiration for John peaked when I read his emailed letter to Fall River County Auditor Sue Ganje (and copied to the County Commission) on Mar. 22, 2017 regarding the waiver of the gun ban at the courthouse. Believing an open meeting law violation had occurred on Mar. 21, John wrote a letter to Sue, wherein John expressed dismay and questioned the commission, saying, "From my perspective as the public's ears and eyes, this appears to be an effort to skirt public knowledge of their actions" and "... perhaps a swift kick in the britches like this ought to remind us all that we're dealing with the public's trust" and "... I refuse to leave the public in the dark about potential county commissioner shenanigans."

*Wow!* Not only is John a highly talented, prolific writer with extensive news writing experience and an author of eight or more books, John is a man of principle, a champion of the fourth estate, a genuine tough guy who neither minces words with nor kowtows to public servants. A voice for and a defender of the people.

Best wishes to you, John D. Taylor. You served the public trust.

## Love Your Enemies

By T.L. Matt

This advice, as indicated by my title, is more appropriate today than at any other time. Why? Because today is all we have. The mark we make on the world and the legacy that we leave behind will show that we are either haters or lovers.

Admittedly, it is hard to focus on being an understanding person when so much evil, as we see it, abounds in society.

The most wonderful thing is that we have control over our own thoughts and no matter what someone can do to us, we have the option of either letting them continue to overcome us emotionally or becoming masters of ourselves. We can replace a frown and snide comment with an expression of love and forgiveness. Once accomplished, there is a freedom that overcomes all our heartache.

We are all different in our interpretations of what is right or wrong in this country and in our world. With the atrocities of WWII, the United States choose the better part and gave aid to our enemies after the war. I remember several books I have read that dealt with the victims of the horrendous concentration camps making special trips to confront their former persecutors, who were themselves now prisoners, and to forgive them in person.

We are, in part, products of our birth and the environment from whence we grew up. I remember a family gathering where all members of the family were trashing a particular political party and I made an announcement that I felt differently.

Wow! Talk about a meltdown. They couldn't believe I would deviate from the family tradition. I still love and cherish each one of my family and try to find ways to let them know.

Today is the day you can decide to give aid to that person who irritates you so much. You can listen to the complaints and grievances of "your enemy" without taking part in their gloomy sentiment.

You can be a light in the darkness of the world by expressing your thoughts in a positive way and focusing on forgiveness.

It is possible.

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*Ghost (cont. from front cover)*

My husband actually saw Tootsie as a pup, tied outside a bar in Deadwood, undoubtedly patiently waiting for Fred. She died in 1959 and is buried behind the Borsch cabin in Galena.

To get to Galena from Deadwood, take US Highway 385 S for seven miles to Wild Bill's Campground. Turn left on Galena Road and follow it for three miles.

It is a town you will not soon forget! The old buildings are so interesting and, who knows, a ghost might accompany you. A friendly one, of course.

Spokane was founded in 1890 to extract gold, but it seems the area was richer in silver, copper, zinc, mica and graphite. The town hit its stride in 1927 with profits at \$144,742 which helped build the school, whose skeleton is still visible. The town's most complete structure is the manager's home, near the school and other buildings (<http://www.blackhillsbadlands.com/places/spokane-black-hills-ghost-town>).

On a hill in Spokane is the grave of an old prospector, who was shot for his claim—a sad ending and one that, unfortunately, would befall many gold miners in the Black Hills.

During our visit, we were careful around the crumbling structures. It was a beautiful hike in and the eerie silence around the buildings lent an atmosphere of sorrow for the diminished town.

If you would like to explore Spokane, it is 16 miles from Custer, north of Custer State Park's northern boundary. There is a gated Forest Service path north on FS 330. A one-mile walk will take you there.

The ghost town with the most buildings still standing is Tinton, on the Wyoming-South Dakota border. Just getting there was quite a feat—it was a remarkable drive. We passed the Spirit of the Hills Wildlife Sanctuary and the road was winding and rough, with washboard gravel surfaces.

The aspen groves with orange-yellow tops were spectacular. Iron Creek Lake was beautiful and pristine—a perfect camping place deep in the Hills. The trip would have been worth it just for the scenery.

Passing mine signs—Daisy 1, 2 and 3, Bear Mine and Fillmore—

we knew we were close. After flagging down a car for directions, we were able to find Tinton.

Please note there is now a sign posted "No Trespassing" by Tinton Enterprises, a commercial mining operation.

I learned that, originally, gold deposits were mined—but now, tantalum, which is more valuable, is mined. It's a refractory metal, chemically inert and used in the making of nuclear weapons (<http://www.ghosttowns.com/states/wy/tintin.html>).

Many, many years ago we visited and found about 20 buildings. Seeing these homes, and imagining the lives of families who experienced this remote, isolated mountaintop, was a spiritual experience. We walked the streets in hushed silence. It was almost like it was a sacred place.

Most of the homes were made with red tar-paper on the outside. There was an unusual native stone fireplace. One home had old furniture and springs for a bed in it, with old-fashioned wallpaper still on the wall. The schoolhouse was a large white structure.

Warren Long, an old friend of ours, said he used to live in Tinton as a boy and the winters at this high elevation were very harsh. He remembered going to school in waist-deep snow. I'm sure the residents watched out for each other and gave aid when needed.

I felt this was a trip of a lifetime; I'm not sure many of the structures are still standing today.

One really strange thing occurred while we were there that I can't explain. We took pictures of different people in our little group in front of various houses and then of some of the houses just by themselves.

None of the pictures with people in them turned out—just the ones of the ghostly houses. I still wonder about the remarkable photographs and if some ghost somehow influenced the camera.

If you do make the trip, enjoy the journey, as it is worth the effort! Several houses used to be visible from the road. Good luck!

Our ride to Rochford on our little motorcycle years ago was very interesting, especially when we rounded a corner outside the town and came across the magnificent Standby Mill in all

its glory. It was an awe-inspiring scene.

It has since been torn down because of safety precautions, but not before it had been painted and sketched, of course. But I felt it was a real privilege to have seen it, against a backdrop of amazing stands of aspen—an emblem of the hard-working people who settled this wild country.

Rochford is another remote little ghost town with a few inhabitants. I absolutely love the store there!

There are more adventures just waiting to be experienced. Hope you have the courage to face the "ghosts" of the Black Hills.

*Wedding (cont. from front cover)*

A vampire movie, *Vampire's Kiss*, starring Nicholas Cage, and a vegan dinner awaited them. The costumes were varied—from characters in Cage's movies to a darling pickle and a snazzy Beate Juice.

Don dressed as Napoleon, with heavy black boots and trench coat, and I was Josephine, of course.

We were the last to leave and the most vulnerable to the horrendous traffic, I might add. We were following the car driven by the photographer, a cute snappy blonde—but not for long!

I was juggling two huge trays of cupcakes on my lap and trying to look serene, as I knew Josephine must have looked.

The stoplight changed after the photographer drove through and we were stuck at the intersection by the red light.

Thus ensued one hour of nail-biting terror, trying to find the downtown Alamo. We crossed the bridge over the river to the downtown area two times with the traffic moving at least 3 miles an hour!

Poor Don, dressed in a white sweatshirt top with high black collar, heavy white tights with red cummerbund and long black socks up to his knees, had to stop three different times. He ran into stores, while people looked askance at him. A crazy man, no doubt! It didn't help that the heat reached 99 degrees at this point! It was a wonder he finally got the right directions. We were over an hour late by this time.

I was next to tears—my corset killing me and the cupcakes

starting to melt. I was wearing the same blue empire-waist dress in which I had gotten married 43 years ago.

We finally made it to the front door and a woman came running out, grabbing the cupcakes from me. I was sure we had ruined the entire wedding and was feeling very miserable.

But, wonder of wonders, they had served the dinner and were watching the movie, graciously saving the vows of my granddaughter and prospective spouse until the last. Relief!

Coming into the darkened theater, my husband knocked a full glass of beverage into my shoes, which were squishy and cold for the rest of the evening.

It mattered not, as my granddaughter was much relieved at our appearance and the vows went off without a hitch.

The bouquet, plastered with cool pictures of Nick, was caught by the sister of the bride who wore the pickle costume.

A giant picture of the faces of Jennifer and Ben, the bride and groom, then graced the big screen and this showed them merging into one, as is appropriate.

I have to say it was the most unusual, but jolly event I have ever attended. People in every costume you can imagine came up to talk to us and were as friendly as can be. The giant hug from my granddaughter made it all worthwhile!

We opted to go home via blue highways, so toured Oklahoma, Kansas and Nebraska at a more leisurely pace. We saw small-town America close up and encountered friendly individuals everywhere we stopped.

The only truly upsetting things that happened were the hitting of a hawk and also a beautiful gold, red and blue pheasant as they flew into our car.

On our last day, with over 600 miles of driving behind us, we made it into peaceful, quiet Edgemont and found things as "right as rain."

I guess it would have been a smoother trip with a GPS, but we wouldn't have seen the small town cultures close up. I don't regret the trip at all—it was an experience I will remember forever.