



The Taylor Times



Holiday 1999

Volume 5 Issue 1

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The Newsletter with "Schmalz"

Seattle, Washington

BAJA SUNSHINE

This Thanksgiving saw yet another opportunity to visit sunny Mexico, this time to Los Cabos (The Capes) at the southern tip of Baja. Trendwest / Worldmark has a time share just west of the quiet village of San Jose del Cabo, about 18 miles up the road from world-renowned Cabo San Lucas. Located on the



The famous rocks near Lovers' Beach, Cabo San Lucas

Costa Azul, a beautiful stretch of beach overlooking the Sea of Cortez, Worldmark Coral Baja was a warm and relaxing place from which to base the exploration of this desert in the ocean.

The area has almost everything, though the true flavor of Mexico remains for the most part on the mainland. In fact, if anything, this area is too American, particularly Cabo San Lucas, which swells with ever-growing examples of the typical tourist resort: McDonald's, Burger King, the Hard Rock Cafe, hard-sell time-share hawkers, and tequila-filled night life stretching well into the darkness of unending summer. Depending on one's bent, this can be good or bad. There's a lot to do and a lot to see, but be prepared to spend your *dinero* as the comfortable values found elsewhere in Mexico are noticeably absent from this vacationer's

mecca.

Golf is particularly expensive. I had a chance to play at two of the local links, one the reasonably priced Fontanur 9-hole course in the town of San Jose, the other just outside Cabo San Lucas at Los Cabos Country Club, the reward for tolerating the ordeal of their time-share presentation. This latter course, normally priced at \$155 per round, while well-groomed and enjoyable, was hard pressed to hold a candle to the other even more expensive layouts along the "corridor". In particular, the three Jack Nicklaus courses, Cabo del Sol, Palmilla, and the just opened El Dorado, are amazing works of golf architecture and scenic splendor, though the \$200 price tag for a single round at each of them is equally amazing.

In addition to the golf I rented a car for
(See "Cabo" on page 2)

Garden Grows, Computer Woes

Activities around the house have been very time consuming this year. Some have been quite rewarding, like refinishing a shelf project for the living room, and rebuilding the gardens, which I allowed to grow unhampered last year. The biggest negative time-consumer, however, was a computer crash I experienced in August as a result of a software manufacturer's improper checking procedures. Five months worth of work, including some music, was lost. Most things can and are being rebuilt, but some are completely unrecoverable. It has been a great frustration, but the gardens helped ease the stress. The gladiolas were brilliant and quite a few wildflowers put on colorful displays. I'll be looking forward to next season as they all begin to mature.



WORK RESUMES

The job situation has finally stabilized this year, at least until a change in the economy contributes any further effect. In April or so, the former engineering manager of now-defunct Chiyoda, my former employer, hired me on with his newly formed company, Beacon

Engineers, as a temporary and part-time employee. Remnants of old Chiyoda work and another small-scale project emanating from Japan, provided a couple of continuous weeks at the time, and some scattered hours since. Meanwhile, May saw another job surface near the airport, just 20 minutes from home. Elcon Associates, primarily a commercial and

light industrial engineering firm, took me on, also on a temporary basis, to help with a project to replace the power distribution system at one of the local fishing ports. With that project now behind us, there remains enough work that they have offered me a permanent position. I will make things official on January 1.

Cabo Sunshine

(Continued from page 1)

two days, driving through the mountainous desert highway to the bustling city of La Paz. Alas, without a map of the city and having decided to return to Cabo the same day with yet one more stop thrown in, I did not make it to the waterfront Malecon for which the city is known, with its shops and restaurants. That will have to remain for another trip. On the return, however, I took the time to visit the artsy hamlet of Todos Santos on the Pacific coast side of the peninsula. Many unusual craft shops and several art galleries gave the impression of a miniature version of Santa Fe, but remiss was the overall quality of that famous art haven. Nevertheless, it was well worth an extended look through the door.

Restaurants, while no less expensive than those of home, abounded up and down the corridor and all provided exquisite taste temptations. I limited myself only to evening meals, but in the seven nights of dining, never had anything but wonderful fare ranging from the chayote salad at Damiana's to the Mayan style fish at Carlos and Charlie's to the ribs at the Tropicana, all was *my delicioso*.

Journey of the Floridians

Mom and Dad visited a little early this year, reaching the Northwest the second week in July. Some discomfort was provided courtesy of La Niña, who was still disrupting normal weather patterns. Still, all was pretty cooperative. Among our adventures this year was a drive through Mt. Rainier National Park. On what proved to be a gorgeous day, there was still a remarkable amount of snow leftover from a record-setting winter. The views were fantastic all along the way, and dinner in the



historic Longmire Lodge was a real treat for the palate.

Mom and Dad in the shadow of the big mountain.

Oh, Canada!

In a quest for fall colors I turned the truck toward Canada in early October. On a clear, warm weekend I ventured through North Cascades National Park and on up to the lakeside city of Penticton, British Columbia. Surprisingly picturesque, a dozen or more superb wineries are conveniently located nearby, making it a great starting point for both a search for scenery and a colorful wine tour. A little early for the valley leaves, I still managed to find a few displays worthy of capture, but I admit I miss the sweeping stands of aspen stretching across the mountains of Colorado.



Hawthorne Mountain Vineyard, Okanagan Falls, British Columbia

The Year of La Niña

Most of you are no doubt familiar with the weather phenomena known as El Niño and his sister La Niña. These south Pacific climate generators have been affecting weather patterns across the globe for the last two years. While not exceptionally cold, La Niña last season sent us one of the wettest winters ever recorded in the Northwest, including a mind-boggling and world record-setting 1178" of snow at Mt. Baker... that's more than 98 FEET! The phenomenon caused us a much cooler than normal and nearly non-existent summer, which is usually absolutely spectacular. This year warm and consistently dry weather never reached us until September. By then, the days were getting too short to really enjoy it. Forecasters say La Niña will again play havoc this winter, but are confident that next summer will bring the return of

THE BIG 30

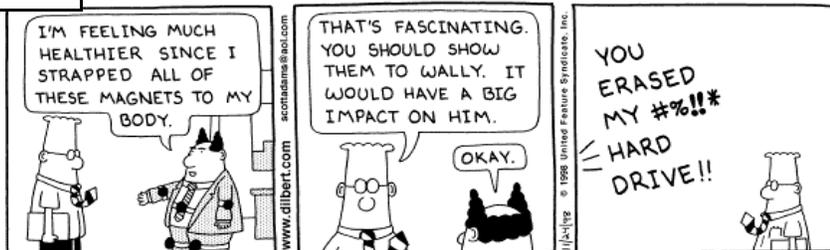
It's hard to believe that 30 years have passed since high school. I kept wondering if maybe it was just a math error, but there was no denying it when I returned to Chicago for a whirlwind

weekend with my former classmates in August. Scott had been kind enough to take me for a ride in his airplane before Saturday evening's festivities began, on a day that ultimately ended up being quite pleasant for Chicago. The turnout was very good and though there were the usual holdouts, there were also several others who showed that had never been to one of the reunions before. I had an exceptional time and would like to have stayed longer, but this year's limited summer in the Northwest convinced me to get on the earliest return flight that Sunday morning. The skies over Seattle were gorgeous when I arrived and beckoned for a nice long bike ride, rewarding the quick return.



Renewing an old acquaintance.

DILBERT



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* **Holiday Greeting** *
* While this year has seen many *
* changes, both good and bad, changes *
* are what keep us alive and growing. *
* Happiness can neither be achieved nor *
* *****

Check out the expanded newsletter at <http://members.aol.com/taylortms/ttimes.htm>