



The Taylor Times



The Newsletter with "Schmaltz"

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HEADLINES ARE OVERRATED OR ANOTHER YEAR CLOSER TO RETIREMENT

I suppose if there was ever a year when there were not enough stories to put into this newsletter I'd have to start making them up. Realizing that I could create such tales to keep an audience entertained would propel me to write even more. As they became increasingly more enthralling and complex I could start creating screenplays from them, Hollywood would get wind and they'd be turned into movies. I could write the music as well. Fame would blossom and money would pour in. I could quit my job and bask in a whole new exciting life!... Alas. I still have my job. So far no year has gone by that has not been filled with it's own cache of narratives absolving me from the pitfalls of fame and fortune. Sigh!... Here's this year's crop.

DOG BARKING RESOLVED

In March of 2014, Donna had confronted a neighbor about his barking dog. She had not been feeling well after some dental surgery and the encounter rapidly escalated to a war of words, some of which, admittedly, Donna should not have spoken. Because of the threats she was arrested and held overnight, but after 72 hours no charges were filed with the county and the matter forgotten except for a no-contact order with the neighbor. We thought the issue was behind us. Six months later in September, we got a subpoena from the City of Seattle to appear in court where city charges of harassment and even assault were filed. On the good side, since this was now city and not county the



Posing at the Botanical Gardens of Puerto Vallarta

charges were only misdemeanors, not felonies, but on the bad, they still had to be fought in court requiring us to hire a lawyer. Ka-ching! Hearings and discussions with judge and prosecutor dragged on into 2015, with eventually two out of three charges dropped, but a final determination that Donna would have to attend one anger management class and perform 48 hours of community service. If she did this on schedule and had no further legal issues the record would be expunged as of March 1, 2016. Despite the feeling that the neighbor was just as guilty of contributing to the turbid situation and the fact that the dog has not been a problem barker since this all began, Donna did her penance and we now await these last few months of legal cleanliness in order to return to godliness.

NEIGHBORHOOD NUISANCE

A house is being built a couple doors down from us. Unfortunately the builder, Tritec Homes, has been anything but a good neighbor. I warned him several weeks before he ever broke ground, that the alley was going to be a problem if his contractors drove trucks through it, especially once the weather turned wet. As expected, as the seasonal rains started to soften the alley, mud started to replace the gravel that I'd spread with much effort over the years and quickly created a mess that made it almost impassable. The critical point was the morning a contractor backed a full-size cement truck all the way through the alley to the construction site to pour walkways that could have been accessed from the front. Some notable quotes from the contractor that will live in infamy: "I'm having a f***ing bad day", "I couldn't make the turn off the other street" [note the streets are the same width on each end of the alley], and the prize goes to, "Who knew it would rain!?" It's the beginning of December in Seattle! Is there anyone in his right mind that did NOT know it would rain!? Of course, the insult is the builder refusing to spread a couple more yards of gravel into the alley, a pretty minimal cost compared to what he will no doubt charge for the house. His claim that the city would

'TIS THE SEASON FOR INJURIES

Two falls in November left Donna in a world of hurt. On the Tuesday morning before Thanksgiving I woke up at 7:30 to find her lying in a pool of blood in her bathroom. She had fallen against the open bathroom door and hit her head on the edge causing a 2 1/2" gash. Fortunately she was still conscious so it had probably not happened much earlier. We got the EMTs out quickly, who bandaged her up and took her to the hospital where they closed the wound with 6 staples then sent us home. The next day she was groggy but fine when I left for work, but after numerous attempts to call her without response, including one from her mother, I went home early to find her wedged between her bed and a blue plastic hamper she uses for a shelf, face down with both arms pinned behind her, her left over the edge of the hamper at the armpit. It's hard to say for sure how long she might have been there, but it could have been as long as five hours! I managed to get her on her bed and restored things to their original order. Her right arm recovered within a couple of hours, but as of this writing her left still has no mobility at the shoulder at all and is limited at the elbow as well. Her hand is working, but not at full strength. The diagnosis seems to be a rotator cuff tear or severe stretch and probably some nerve damage. Time and exercise will help, but surgery may be needed. This could end her pitching career!



What a mess!

not allow him to do it is pretty bogus considering the city planning engineer told ME to put some gravel down. Just amazing!

TRAVELING

Travels this year were all returns to favorite places of the past. Before Memorial Day we took a weekend trip to the quaint little cabin in Forks that we'd discovered a year earlier. Late July had us back at Birch Bay near the Canadian border, where we took advantage of the good exchange rate, doing some shopping and eating as well as making our mandatory stop to pick blueberries outside of Ferndale on the way home. Before Labor Day we packed the car again for a week in Long Beach, Washington, just catching the end of the Kite Festival. Our own kites flew a few times while there. On our drive down



That cozy cabin in Forks



Talking to the animals at Pto. Vallarta Zoo. You got food?



The beach in front of our unit at Garza Blanca



Cape Flattery - the most northwest point in 48 states.



The Red Baron flies again in Long Beach

forest fires burning in the area gave an eerie glow to the sun as we turned west toward the coast, but the ocean breezes along the beach kept the air clear for us during our stay.

Finally, the week before Thanksgiving found us back in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, staying for the first time at our somewhat newly acquired time share at Garza Blanca. The week proved quite entertaining and included missing our flight down because of two incorrectly set alarm clocks, a hike up a river to a waterfall that was supposed to be "easy", and getting eaten alive (literally) by no-see-ums. But the location and facility were gorgeous, the staff totally friendly and helpful, and the food, whether at the resort or in town, superb. Admittedly somewhat risky as we approach retirement, we did add to our purchase in order to have the greatest flexibility we could get with the place. We should now be able to use it as frequently as we might ever really want and at the best times. I expect this has now been our final vacation investment.

MUSIC MATTERS

The Piccolo Concerto was finished almost on schedule, in April instead of March. I promptly gave the solo part to the piccolo player, Lisa Hedley, who has been enjoying practicing it, at least that's what she says. I'm currently working on preparing all parts for performance, which will occur in May, 2016, with Lisa and the Eastside Symphony. Once the concerto composition was finished I went back to complete the Tuba Sonata, started a number of years earlier. Then there were some transcriptions to do of my early piano music. Lately, in addition to final clerical work on the concerto, I've been trying to finish up a sextet for wind and string trios, also started a number of years ago. Gradual

work is also proceeding on much other music, with plans for a lot more ahead.

I opted out of the Highline Band this season to allow more time to write. After 13 years it was a little difficult to step back, but a worthwhile decision nevertheless. Brass Band Northwest and the Eastside Symphony will continue to be my performance outlets, especially since the directors of both ensembles are so willing to play my music. I am very grateful to them.



Looking out the patio window, Garza Blanca



A selfie on the front porch in Forks



Lily pads at the Botanical Gardens, Pto. Vallarta

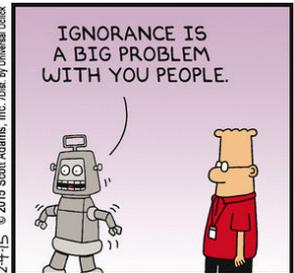
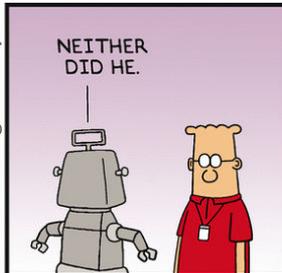
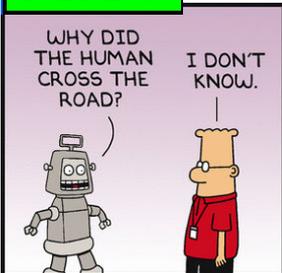


Garza Blanca - comfy hammock on the balcony

**Happy Holidays and Best Wishes
for a Wonderful New Year!**

Jeff and Donna

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