



# The Taylor Times



The Newsletter with "Schmaltz"

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## ***ARE WE THERE YET?***

Seems like news is usually related to either travel or music, and it is true that these are generally the two major things to report, but every now and again something else happens. This year it was turning 66 and becoming officially eligible to retire. That's the good part. The bad part is that I won't be able to afford to retire until the

house and car are completely paid off, which I hope to see happen in spring or summer of '18. But will Social Security then actually support us or will we have to start selling lemonade in the front yard? Tune in to next year's newsletter for more on that! Meanwhile, here's this year's.

### **ON THE ROAD AGAIN**

Traveling this year has generally kept us on the ground (or at least on the water) as we have stayed relatively local. In January, we spent a few days of quiet in Birch Bay, a favorite haunt near the Canadian border. In March, we took a much-too-short break in Victoria, B.C., where restaurants, water taxi rides, wandering through the city, including Chinatown, and another visit to the

Butterfly Gardens, all made for a wonderful trip. The ferry rides across the Strait of Georgia and through the Gulf Islands are always beautiful, even in the rain.

Long Beach, WA, is becoming one of our go-to spots, with its 26-mile long unbroken beach and numerous activities. We were there this year for Sand-sations, the sand sculpture festival, during which we had the opportunity to observe the creation



*Jeff and Donna in Chinatown, Victoria, British Columbia*

of these temporary works of art from start to finish. While the pieces were admittedly not overly impressive, the process was quite interesting and the other activities associated with it kept us busy. I also picked up a stunt kite and made some serious efforts learning to fly it. Fortunately they build those things to absorb a lot of crashes! We will be in Long Beach again as the year draws to a close.



*Hooded merganser on Birch Bay*



*The shores of Birch Bay, Washington*



*"Hey, what about me?! Food!!"  
Harbor seal at Fishermans Wharf,  
Victoria*



*A serene street scene in Victoria. Fish gotta swim... birds gotta fly... horse gotta pee.*



*Mungo Martin House near Royal BC Museum*



*Could be Long Beach, Washington*

## MUSICIAN'S CORNER

Every year that goes by makes me a little (read "a lot") more anxious to get out of engineering and dive head first into music. The belly-flops thus far have been somewhat painful though mitigated by my expanded girth. Nevertheless, like the fraternity pledge whose response must always be, "Thank you, sir, may I have another," or the shark that needs always to move forward or drown, writing remains ceaseless albeit with obstructions, including the unconscionable need to make a living.

At the beginning of the year I subbed with the Washington Wind Symphony, a top notch concert band, and found the impetus to finish a piece for band I had begun a number of years earlier, "Balance of Power". The music (detailed sketch) was completed in February, though the last of the orchestration is still being finalized.

Also, in February, I had decided that Brass Band Northwest needed something of mine we could play in the church where we are resident ensemble. We'd played my music in many concerts and a couple of festivals, but never at services. Over a two

week period I wrote and scored "I Come In Peace", a three minute piece designed to fit exactly into the offertory. Since then it has been performed five times, including an orchestral arrangement that I conducted with the Eastside Symphony at our holiday concert in December. It will be performed yet again by the Northwest Symphony in March of 2018. Critics would no doubt limit their praise of the music, but audiences seem to quite enjoy it and that, of course, is what it's all about. Then again, maybe it's just the illusion of UFOs they applaud.

In April, I began work on "Conjunction, Return to the Planets", which was finished in detailed sketch form the end of July. That orchestration is nearing completion and is scheduled to be premiered by Eastside in May. Other writing has included progress on the middle two movements of the 2nd Symphony; efforts to finish a piano reduction of the Piccolo Concerto so it can get published and satisfy requests for it from various places around the globe; and a couple of additional etudes for tuba gradually progressing to an eventual complete set at some time in the as yet unscheduled future.

As of this writing I am back playing with Washington Wind this season as well as Eastside and Brass Band NW. An ensemble of us from the brass band will be performing live on KING-FM's Northwest Focus on December 22. If I've gotten this letter out in time you can find the station on the internet and listen in at 8PM Pacific Time. If not, you can still go to KING-FM, find their NW Focus and check the archived programs.



*Ferries everywhere in the Gulf Islands, B.C.*



*British Columbia's Government House*



*You're taking a selfie in the Empress? Really?*

## THE COOKED BOOKS

Here are a couple of books I'd recommend to those interested (why not?... this is a newsletter after all): "The Lost Symbol", Dan Brown's rollercoaster of mystery and intrigue through the entrails of Washington, D.C.; "Thomas Paine" by Craig Nelson, providing a vivid look into one of the main players in not only the American Revolution, but the French Revolution as well; "The Origin of Language, Tracing the Evo-

lution of the Mother Tongue" by Merritt Ruhlen, which classifies and traces language back to the proto-language that may have started it all and followed humans as they migrated all over the world; and "Dragon Teeth", Michael Crichton's last published work, which presents a fictional character mixed in with the very real historical fossil hunters during the late times of the old west.



*Crazy sculptures on the beach*



*Highline-Seattle Botanical Gardens near Seattle*



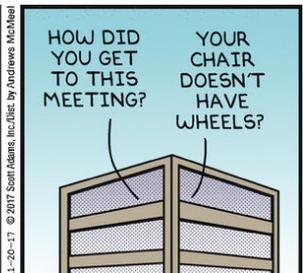
*Ferries great and small in Victoria Harbour. From our balcony at the Worldmark.*



*Yes, it does sometimes snow in Seattle.*

***Wishing peace and happiness to all for the  
Holidays and the New Year!***

*Jeff and Donna*



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