

The Stinking Desert GAZETTE

"Serving SE Utah Since 1986"



Vol. 3 No. 8

Moab, Utah

Mar. 1989

WELCOME, JEEPERS!

THE NEW AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT
COMES TO MOAB



Aircraft Restored

On the international scene, members of the investigation team in Lockerbie, Scotland, are making progress in their task of reassembling the entire Pan-Am airplane to pinpoint the exact sequence of events that led to the crash of the huge jet.

Airline engineers are keeping a close eye on the project. When the reassembly is complete, they hope to have the 747 back in the air within a few weeks.

"It's not an old plane," said Marian "Bud" McTush, chief engineer for the airline. "We'll have to iron out a few wrinkles, of course, and it's going to take a lot of rivets, but when we're

done this aircraft will be in better shape than most. You have my word on that."

Bendalot - At Last

By Rona Bestbet

Mo-Benda Minerals Inc. and Laffalot Inc. announced recently that BENDALOT, a 50-50 joint venture, plans to proceed with a feasibility study for a large scale magnesium plant near Moab, Utah. The plant would extract magnesium from asbestos tailings in the Moab dump area. Moab's mayor, Tom Smocks, was unaware of the study. "I haven't been officially informed of anything," said the mayor.

The study will take 24 months

to complete and will include pilot plant testing at the At Last Research, Development and Testing, Ltd. facility to open this spring in the old "Mom's Cafe" building in Moab. Should this new study show the technical and economic feasibility of the process, a plant would be built at a cost of about \$500 million, providing jobs for five people and ten computers.

MAD Meets

Word that the Italian Alps were being ruined from overdevelopment spurred a number of conservationist groups into action here.

The Moabites Against Development (MAD) group met last month to map out strategy for their

forthcoming campaign to scare potential investors away from our city.

Members agreed to refrain from wearing underarm deodorant to "generate a less-favorable atmosphere", and hopefully discourage these big money investors.

The group wound up the session with a vote to present the Moab Golf Course with a commendation for positive action.

"The expansion of the golf course to 18 holes turned out to be a godsend," said a spokesman for the group. "The additional 9 holes will use up enough culinary water to support approximately 1,000 people. Those ball-bumpers have done us a real favor, and boosted tourism to boot," he said.

Wherefore art thou, economic development?

Guest Editorial
by Sam Cunningham

I have heard it said that the only way the Toxic Waste Incinerator (A.K.A. BIG INDUSTRY) was defeated involved the importation of stink-in' environmentalist hippies who all were registered to vote using the same address. I have heard it said that the defeat of the Incinerator was the proud and fine statement of a dedicated and educated population, sanely steering their own ship of state to a safe berth. And I have heard every shade and nuance of opinion and exclamation between those two points of view.

I know that the committee to investigate illegally registered voters has not issued a report to the community yet. And I know that community leaders are committing themselves to a study based on opinions voiced in neighborhood meetings about what Moab and Grand County is now economically and aesthetically, and what it means to be in the future.

All right. So a "directional" study was conducted several years ago. If I ask any reasonably well-informed Moabite who has lived here over five years what political tactic, what canvassing technique, what advertising strategy has been used before in Grand County, it seems that it has all been tried here before. And two

years ago, we saw that directional study come and go. Many people agree with you, Nik, that any viable result of that study is, at best, subject for a cartoon.

But wait a minute. Agree with it or not, Grand County made a statement to the world that they can mobilize and carry through a conviction. Like it or not, we are the ANTI-INCINERATOR TOWN, because the media loves an easily labelled issue. So where do we go with our Economic Development Plan?

Neighborhood meetings are, at least, a forum for discussion of community direction. There are a lot of people in Moab who have left promising, yuppie-directed lives for a chance to live in a trailer or a \$20,000 "starter, needs work" home, and count their affluency in red rock vistas. There are a lot of people who have lived here all their lives and would live no where else.

How much does your life-style here mean to you, folks? Can you spare time for two meetings --10 meetings--a seat on a committee--a position on a Board? If you uprooted your lives to come to Moab, can you not spare 30 or 50 or 100 hours to make sure you won't have to move again? If you live here at cost of any easy life elsewhere, can you not donate your energy to shaping your community?

Sure, a lot of the content of these meetings will be a "rehash." But let's all give it everything we can spare from work and family. Take the time to prepare your thoughts and ideas about life in Grand County in a coherent fashion. Find a way to go to these neighborhood meetings. Speak up. Free yourself to attend a Monday Commissioners' meeting. Board meetings are opened to the public. Go. MAKE YOURSELF HEARD.

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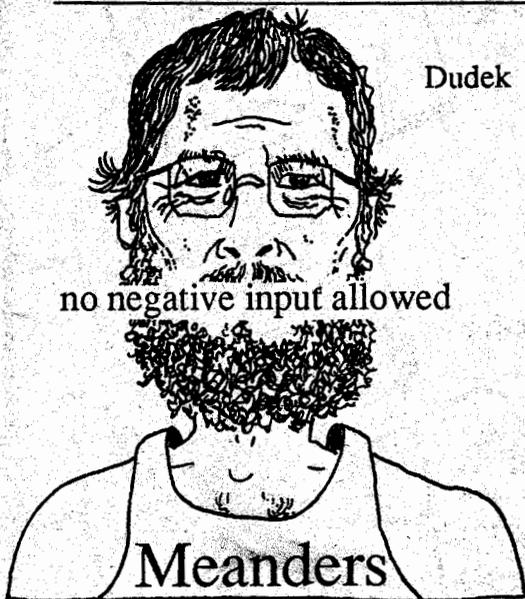
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Someone said at the January 26th town meeting that this is a special moment in Moab's history. There are avenues of expression opened to all of us now. No matter what efforts failed in the past, let's start over, restructure our mistakes and use our energies to tell our community leaders how we feel about the present and the future of life in Moab. Let's use the means available now to clearly state our ideas on economic and civic development. And then, if we are not heard, let us put those same energies into finding out why not. But no one can hear you if you do not speak. So folks, the first (or perhaps the second, after the Incinerator) step is yours. You might find that you like walking.



Dudek

Several people took issue with our cover cartoon last month. If we're true populists, went the argument, how could we object to community wide input for a consensus agreement upon which all of our development efforts could be based? Sounds fair enough....

But what if the worst happened and we had some agreement and, therefore, some concerted effort in a particular direction? Say it was tourism? And in a year or two, the Mideast oil fields get blown up and plentiful gasoline is no longer available? And the tourists don't show, like in 1975 or worse?

Yes, you say, but we can't stop planning just because something disastrous may happen to the economy. Good point. But the planning and funding of development ought to be done by the private sector, with local government acting as watchdog. Any political or governmental action ought to be in the form of restrictions drawn up to control development.

Governments tend to get corrupt when they promote business activity. The corruption ranges from the creation of salaries for so-called experts, all the way to favoritism for a few over the wishes of the majority. We've seen it all.

(A notable exception is the film commission. The economic benefits of this endeavor are undisputed. Financing a "voice" to speak for the community to simplify communications with the promoters of such productions has proven wise.)

But, you say, if the thrust of development is directed by a wide-ranging, democratic input that sets a binding course for our politicians to follow, don't we then have the best of all possible worlds, namely, an informed and enlightened direction in which to proceed?

Hogwash. The public at large is just as liable to go off half-cocked as a few individuals. What's worse, our leaders would be bound by the decision, however bad it might be.

The primary responsibility of government should be to play loyal opposition, or friendly adversary, to development.

If a development is properly financed and carefully thought out, and its entrepreneurs have a genuine desire to live here, it needs no incentives given up by the community to lure it here. Organic development. Make it on your own, or get out. That's the kind of commitment a community needs for solid progress. Anything else is flim-flam, packaged to look like an asset to the community.

We've seen enough flim-flam.

Some of you will think that this argument is narrow in scope. You say, we want to prosper, not just survive. You say, people with families have greater financial pressures and therefore

a greater need for economic development. You say, communities all over the country are vying for these enterprises, and we are crazy if we don't get organized and go after them.

And, you say that some affirmative action by local government is needed to get grants for widely beneficial projects, to bond expanded facilities for essential services, to channel a percentage of tax money for "advertising" to offset that spent by other communities, etc.

Fine. Get down, get loud, and make your opinions known. May the best opinions win. I'll go with whatever happens. But remember, as Joni said, "you don't know what you got til it's gone."

I'll argue to the end for the preservation of our wonderful (if somewhat bucolic) country lifestyle, and for a local government that refuses to grovel before the single-minded money interests that have commanded the respect of a shallow public nationwide. Our salvation is in our diversity, and every piece of the puzzle as it now sits seems just right, from the recyclers whose yards are not pleasing to some, to the successful and imaginative locals who work so hard and so finely toward their vision of a better community.

We will continue to present any point of view that comes to us in legible and coherent form, even if it is negative to our line of thinking. Negativity stimulates productive thinking, and we hope it becomes welcome in the input process that's been proposed.

A slightly differing view of the "living room meetings" is presented elsewhere in this issue, by Sam Cunningham. I hope you read it. If she means that input like the above is to be part of the overall consensus, then we really don't differ that much at all.

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Hag Rag

by Louise Teal

The ultimate in desert gear. Don't grab for your Patagucci Catalog. It's not in there..yet.

Only an avant-garde store, such as St. Vincente de Paul, carries what you want - long sleeved, loose weaved, white cotton shirts. (60's hippie shirts, which finally, nostalgically, have been donated to thrift stores.)

Don't be suspicious just because this apparel costs less than fifty dollars. It is functional. In fact, this simple shirt has many benefits:

1) You can protect yourself from the sun by using the handy sleeves to tie the shirt over your head. This also has the advantage of assuring solitude, because other hikers will think you are a member of some weird cult and steer clear.

2) Should you be surprised by a Scout troop, when you thought you had the desert to yourself, the sleeves can be used to tie a quick covering around your appropriate parts.

3) The shirt can be considered part of your desert survival kit. It can be cut up for bandages and splint ties or used to wave frantically for help from a cliff top.

4) Use the shirt as such and you will block the sun's vicious rays. As you struggle along, the loose weave lets in air to cool your sweating skin.

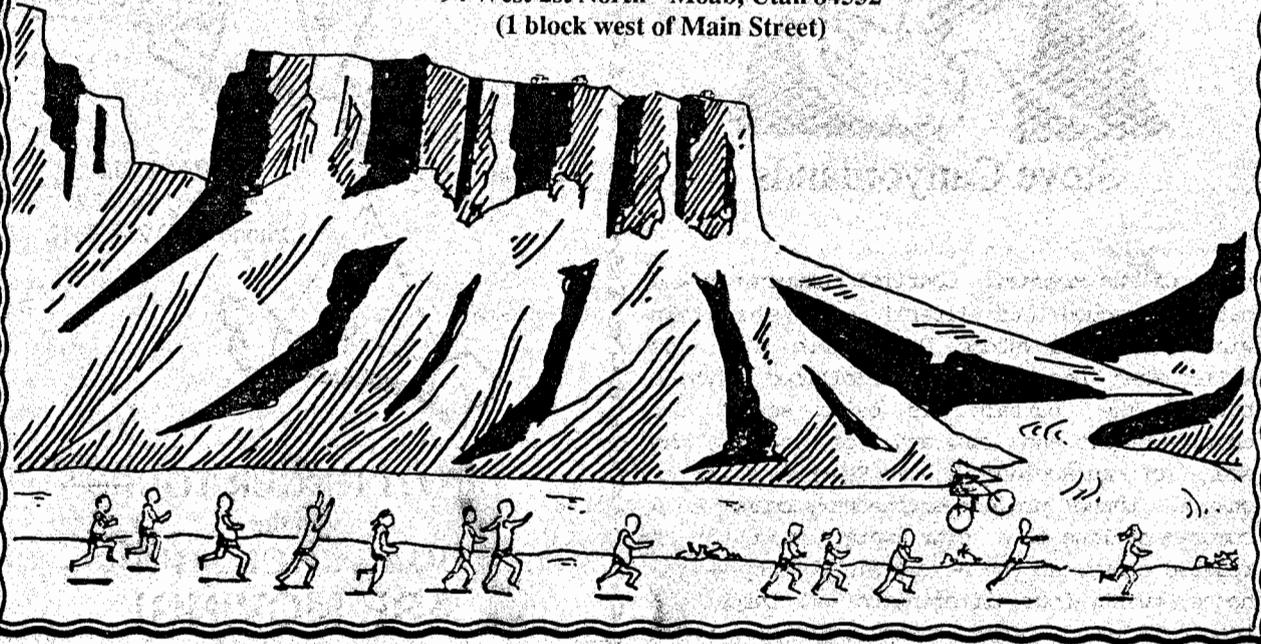
5) If you are fortunate enough to find water in the stinking desert - soak the shirt, put it back on and you will become a walking swamp cooler.

And you will be cool in more ways than one. Used properly, the white shirt will be a filthy rag by the end of the day. Your friends will know you have been Out There.

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The Colorado River freezes over
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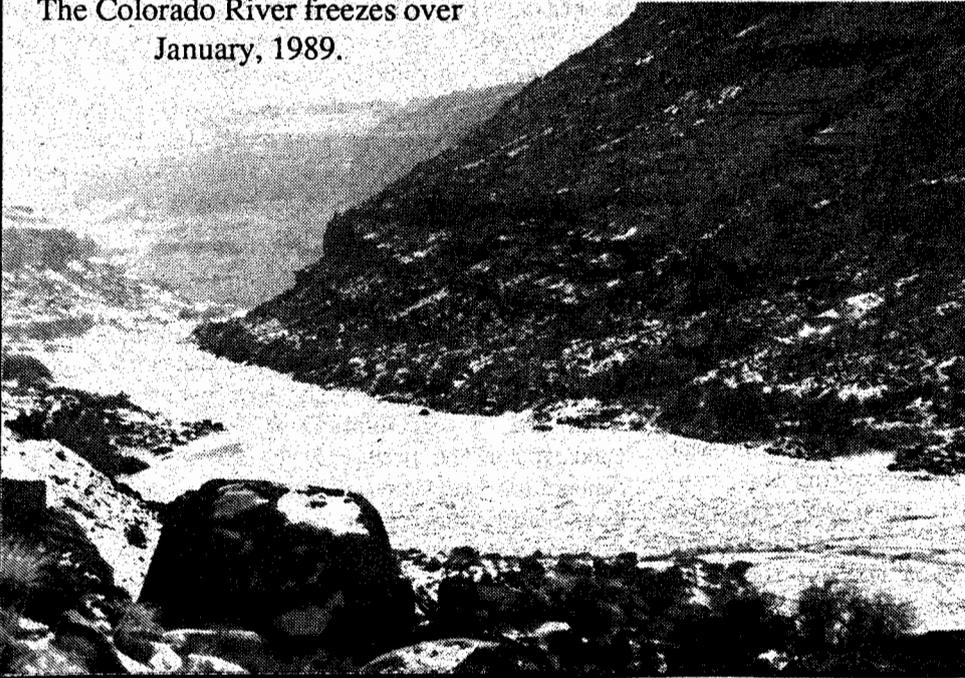


Photo by Dudek



Steve Canyonlands

Best Of The Pressed: Conflict between man and nature reached its literal conclusion this winter in Yellowstone Park where a man was killed when his snowmobile collided with a buffalo. The buffalo is being sought for charges of hit and run, and for leaving the scene of an accident....In Seattle, a worker on a bus tunnel project erroneously connected a compressor line to a city water main...In a related story, at the nearby King County Courthouse, twenty-four different toilets throughout the building exploded at the touch of a flush handle. What a wild image. Your business done, you reach for the handle, anticipating the peaceful and reassuring swoosh and gurgle, and instead, KABOOM! Your business explodes in your face on a geyser of water erupting from some shattered porcelain. BRAZIL is here.....In Kenosha, Wisconsin, a whimsical judge with a keen sense of priorities sentenced an overweight woman, convicted for possession of

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marijuana with intent to distribute, \$500, with \$5 stayed for every pound the 265 lb. woman could lose. Lose 100 pounds and pay no fine, he told her. The judge apparently recognized that her addiction to overeating - a practise that temporarily boosts her spirits despite it being an endangerment to her health - was as serious as her usage of drugs, and rooted in the same psychiatric causes and effects. (Soon, perhaps, we shall all be required to report for our monthly weigh-ins, and be fined \$5.00 per every pound of fat, a scary thought. Or maybe we will all be rationed a fair monthly portion of food based on weight and occupation. Nah, then a package of Twinkies would sell for \$20 on the underground market, and there'd be gang wars and killing and....) The Wisconsin woman reappeared at court and weighed in at 265. She paid the full \$500....a powerful addiction... Locally, it seems that Rudy Higgins, the RV Park entrepreneur who's plans to build one in the quiet neighborhood down below the hospital, may get his wish for an appropriate access to his property. The need for an alternate road to the hospital in case of tie-ups on the only existing road may give him the necessary access to proceed with the project. Good for Rudy, bad for the neighborhood.....And finally, Ken and Alice Drogin, owners and operators of Castle Canyon Nursery, who have been calling for the planting of more trees to combat the buildup of carbon dioxide, had their views endorsed by the scientific community last month. Remember, even if your plantings seem insignificant in the overall picture, you are still creating an oxygen-rich environment around your own digs, and that's good.....

MOVIE COMING: If present plans hold, the BUFFALO SOLDIERS will begin filming here in April. People and horses are needed. Contact the film commission. Resume and photos please..
CONFIDENTIAL TO MOAB MARY: Those who attempt to boost their own egos by destroying the reputation of others can't hurt you. They have influence only among their own kind. Judging from what comes out of their mouths, they have shitpiles for brains. Avoid them, pretty bird, and fly away....to those who truly love you...

Anti-Development League Formed

By Notary Sojac

Roving Stinking Desert Gazette reporter Notary Sojac has uncovered a secret alliance between environmental extremists and certain long-established Moab families. The group calls itself "The Moab Anit-Development League." These strange bedfellows have united to undermine the Grand United Futures (GUF) plan and any similar "economic development" initiatives that might bring more people to Moab.

Jimminy "Cricket" Staggers is "alpha male" of an exponentially-expanding Moab family, each member of which is related by blood or marriage (most often both) to two-thirds of the families in Moab prior to 1956. According to Staggers, he and his peers oppose efforts to attract new residents and develop non-extractive businesses in Moab because, "Them new people comin' in got too much edjication. They don't think like us. They're all a bunch of city folk who want to tell us what to do with our public land. They mess around with our God-given rights to use our private property like we want to. It's like an invasion of communists from Russia. The Russians would force us to live different than we want to, so what's the difference?"

Staggers proudly pointed to the large junkyard outside his doublewide trailer which swarmed with children, dogs, and chickens, as an example of a comfortable and moral lifestyle the local development interests are trying to sweep away. "I use all them old trucks for parts for my 4WD and trailer so's I can go wood hauling and hunting whenever I want to. All that other stuff I can use when uranium comes back. The animals and garden provide food. Don't people believe in thrift and can-do Yankee self-sufficiency anymore? If these new folks want to live in a place that looks like Beverly Hills, why don't they move there and leave us alone?"

A.J. "Slick" Rock is Director of Covert Operations for the radical environmental group, Back to the Pleistocene! Rock explained his group's joining with Staggers' in the MAL: "Actually, we're against anybody being in the county unless they are hunter-gatherer tribesmen with stone age technology. Staggers and his people come pretty close, come to think of it."

"This economic development stuff that is going on right now is undermining our efforts to keep Moab an economic backwater, a place where people like us who want to hang out in the wilderness and not have regular jobs can afford to survive. We've got to work together to keep the yuppies out. Every time I see some mountain biker with his \$250 lycra suit, \$1200 bicycle, and a \$300 bike rack on top of his \$25,000 car, I want to throw up."

"It's really great that Staggers and his people and us tree-huggers have finally realized that we have so much in common: we both want to live a laid-back country anarchist lifestyle in a red rock Appalachia."

In the first meeting of MAL, Staggers offered Rock and his friends advice on how to make their houses and yards look like extensions of the city dump to nauseate potential residents and developers looking the town over. In turn, Rock led a discussion of how to discourage funding for the proposed Trough Springs road connection between the Anticline Overlook and Kane Springs Road. The group debated how to influence the new Democratic County Commissioners to continue the lack of enforcement of county zoning ordinances and thus maintain the Moab tradition of comfortable squalor.

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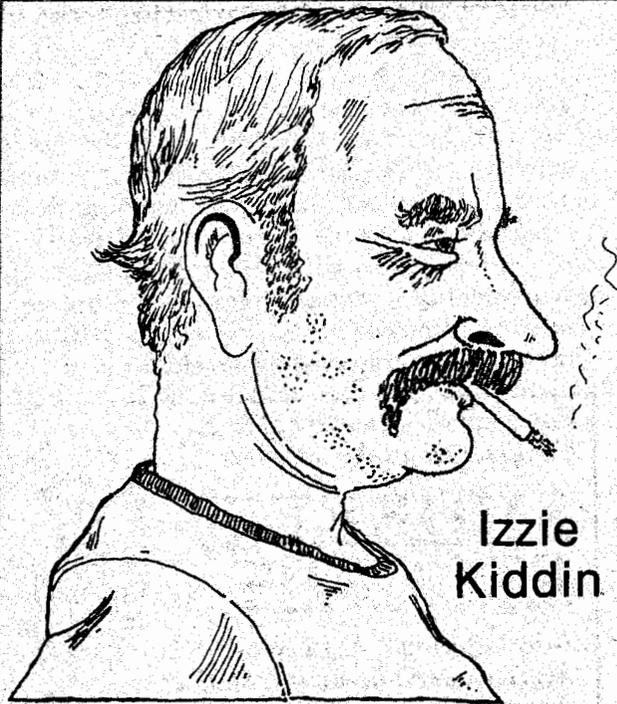
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Izzie Kiddin

Hidden Canyon, Hidden Heart

Omega is off somewhere in The Kolob District of Zion in search of her usual Utopia splendor. In the meantime, I find myself inching across a narrow ledge with Gary & the kids, 850 vertical feet above Weeping Rock and the spectators below! But, let's start at the beginning...

Omega heard Gary and the kids were coming so she took a powder to Kolob Arch. She took the damn beer too! Said she had to finish her article for the paper and needed some space. I told her to use all that space she has in her head! What a hopeless romantic she is!

Anyway, I've known Gary forever. If you'll remember back a few stories, he's the one that rescued me from my Goblin Valley hallucinations. He's here with Jan and the kids. Chris is ten and has more energy than all of us put together. He climbs every rock he sees. He sleeps on occasion. Jason is thirteen and is practicing to be a rock & roll star; that is, if Gary doesn't kill him first over his ceaseless guitar practice sessions. Mike is sixteen and is currently rebuilding an old Buick for a set of new dreams and the freedom of the free, freeway. Hot rod reality.

After lunch, we all decide on The Hidden Canyon Trail. The brochure states it's only one mile and "moderately strenuous." Besides, it's paved at that! Walter Ruesch must have been a visionary or a very eccentric desert rat. He not only blazed these trails here in Zion, he cemented them. Fifty years ago! No fancy equip-

ment existed then, only sheer will and manpower. Millions have since enjoyed the trails of Walter Ruesch here at Zion.

None of us had ever done this particular trail, but one look at the 12% grade was enough to make Jan opt for the pleasant stroll to Weeping Rock. So, Gary, the boys and I start up the trail, with Chris setting his usual impossible pace. A hard mile later, the trail seemingly ends.

"Is this it???" Gary asks bemused. "Where's Hidden Canyon?" Just then, Chris spots two people inching their way down a narrow ledge towards us. They look absolutely petrified! "Holy shit!" Jason exclaims. "That's the trail?" The couple passes by us and gasp for air when they reach solid ground. We found out that indeed was the trail and Chris is already scampering up the narrow ledge. Kids of ten, know no fear.

And that's how I found myself on this ledge with Gary and the kids. Running after Chris with undue concern. Jason declined to come with us. Falling from grace for a future rock star is one thing, but falling from a cliff is not cool. Too anti-climactic he says.

Gary finally catches up with Chris and waits for Mike & I. We are looking straight down towards Weeping Rock, some 850 feet below. The ledge is about 18 inches wide. It is a vertical drop.

God forbid the fat lady should appear around the next bend! Gary goes on a ways and reports back that "It's not all that bad." "Just don't look down." Don't look down?!? I have to see where I'm going! Chris points to the little white dots of people down below and tells me not to worry, for if I fell I'd probably die of a heart attack before I hit bottom anyway. Nice guy.

So, with tripod clanging, water canteen swinging and daypack feeling uncomfortably off-balance, I follow the rest around the ledge to Hidden Canyon. I do not let on that I am scared shitless.

It's a neat canyon with a tiny arch hidden at it's rimmed-up end, but the whole time I'm thinking there is no other way back down but across that ledge again!

Mike is asking me for a smoke before the ledge, like it's some last mile and I discover to my horror I didn't bring any!

"We'll never get across that ledge without a smoke!" Mike drawls.

Once again, back on the narrow ledge. This time there are spectators below, faces like little white dots, pointing at us. I distinctly hear one of them shouting "JUMP!" I see Jan waving at us. She's probably worried about the

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boys. THE BOYS? What about me???

We finally reach safety and Jason, whose practicing scales on an imaginary guitar. "You guys are nuts! Just look at that ledge you were on!" We all look back up to Walter Ruesch's idea of a trail and I almost pass out on the spot.

Jan greets us at the trailhead and Mike and I roll her for a cigarette. Chris says we should do it again and I beat him severely about the head and shoulders all the way back to camp.

I wound up leaving them all a day early. I felt kind of bad about it for awhile. I guess they thought I was getting fed up with Jason's guitar playing around the campfire; or maybe they thought I was scared of the next trail.

Truth is, never having had a family of my own, I was quite taken by my first meeting with Jan's kids. All so young and full of life and optimism, ready to go out on that ledge of hope time and time again. Ready for whatever the future held for them. Not knowing the word 'fear' or the reality of failure. Young enough to be still reckless.

So you see, I was viewing Gary's new family as the one I chose not to have. I was falling in love with those kids. Heck, I haven't got time for such foolishness. So....I left.

CANYONLANDS CAFE

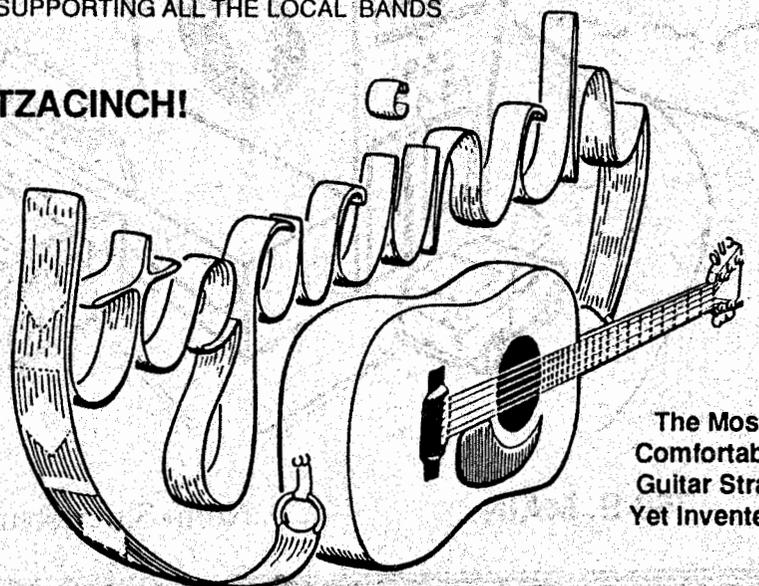
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The Trough Springs Road Issue

For Or Against (or in the middle of the road)

by Grant Johnson

Before jumping into the issue of whether you're going to fight for or against the breaching of Kane Springs Canyon by highway and risk "polarizing" the community, one must look at what a 'through road' means.

First, take the 22 foot width. If the Feds provide any funds, which they most certainly would have to do, the road must have 5 foot shoulders. That's 32 feet. For most of the length there must be a cut slope on one side. This requires a 6 foot ditch. That's 38 feet. As for the cut slope, you have either solid rock, which can be cut vertically to ditch bottom, or talus, clay or sand which should be cut at 1½:1. A 20 foot cut would then be 30 feet wide. Cuts under 20 feet are usually 2:1 (20') and under 6 feet are 3:1 (18'). The cut slope thus would add 20 more feet at least. That is 58 feet. Now for the fill slope. Dirt can not be stacked steeper than 1½:1, both physically or legally. If you observe the beginning of Kane Springs Canyon road on the fill side and picture in your mind where the shoulder would be, a 1½:1 slope in some cases would hit the creek bank. A 50 foot fill at 1½:1 would be 75 feet wide. Altogether, my guess is at least 100 feet of disturbance would occur along the entire length of the road. After construction, you will have a modern highway, complete with double-yellow lines, and a volume of traffic that will at least equal that of the Potash road which is not a through paved highway.

Last issue's article suggested that you could avoid "ideological polarization" and work towards a "mutual advantage..." and asks,

"Could an access route for non-motorized traffic be engineered into the Kane Springs road upgrade? Could we have some mountain biking and hiking trail development in addition to the loop road so there are expanded opportunities for everyone?"

This idea sounds like full scale development, even worse than just building the damn highway. What do you think "engineered" and "upgrade" mean? Aren't they euphemisms behind which bulldozers hide? This so-called compromise will get you not only a Kane Springs highway, complete with guardrails, but also bulldozed bike and hiking trails.

Who ever heard of constructing a hiking trail in Slickrock Country? Don't say 'Arches.' Those trails are to keep people separated from the desert, and justly so, for fear they may get hurt, lost, destroy something or have a revelation. Besides, National Parks have to spend money. Hiking in this desert is anarchic. You step where you want to or are able, preferring a route most unused and unseen.

If you must compromise, then start by proposing a road closure at the end of the asphalt. Allow no more than a 'no-development alternative.' If you lose, you lose the present Kane Springs Canyon experience that helps make living in Moab what it is. At least you will still have your integrity, strength and unity to fight the next "upgrade" over Hurrah Pass to the Needles.

A compromise is what is worked out between two differing sides. If you start out being

"reasonable" to avoid "polarization," what will you end up with? Where would Moab be on the incinerator issue if you avoided "Burr Trail-like confrontation?" Maybe Dean Norris would have volunteered to scale down the burning capacity and "engineered" bike trails in and around Cisco. But how could you compromise on Trough Springs? Either you have a highway loop or you don't. Lance Christie's suggestion that constructing a separate bike trail would make a highway loop more acceptable sounds like a pay-off to another special interest group.

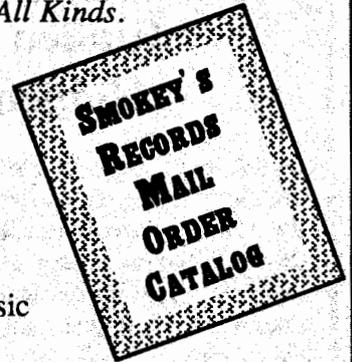
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As for the problem of "polarization," what is wrong with having differing opinions?

Back in 1977 I was hitchhiking up the Burr trail by Bullfrog Creek when a 2-ton cattle truck stopped. A couple of cowboys from Boulder, who were camped in Moody Wash in the Circle Cliffs, were returning from Bullfrog Marina on a beer and whiskey run. The driver, a man I'd never met, stuck his head out the window and said "Now Goddammit, just because we disagree don't mean we can't get along! Now git in." I took the ride down Moody, 30 miles off-course, spent the night at their cowcamp, helped consume the beverages and argued the effects of grazing on the land. We both agreed the plant life had been drastically altered. He said it had improved while I argued the contrary. The only tense moment of that day and the next was after I bedded down in an old mining bunkhouse, he came in waving a pistol mumbling something about a rattlesnake.

The next day I helped them siphon radioactive water from an old uranium mine up in the cliff for 600 dry cows that fought over a trickle from the end of the hose. I worked for the cowboy for the next 9 months and we never agreed on a thing.

My point is that disagreeing is healthy. Have a good sense of humor. Your ideological adversary need not be your enemy. Respect the rights of others to think and speak freely, and expect to be treated likewise. If someone hates you for your opinion, that's their problem. Anyway, Moab is not so bad: In Escalante, an opposing viewpoint will get you hanged, only in effigy if you're lucky.

Jackrabbits run only in circles. That's why they are found in the middle of the road. But Ravens, who consume tread-marked entrails, fly as crows do.

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Phew! The weather finally broke last month, not a moment too soon. Relationships got a mite strained during the six week cold snap. Cabin fever was epidemic, with all the classical symptoms: itchy skin, rheumy eyes, stale odor, hair that's greasy-looking and frizzy-dry both at the same time, size 12 crow's feet around the eyes, and a propensity to consume copious amounts of junk food and alcohol.

All right, so that's what happened to me. There were probably some of you out there who managed to stay fresh as newly-opened daisys. You did your aerobics, avoided excessive TV, and ate vegetables and rice the whole time. If so, you are now no doubt living alone with your crystal collection, because your mate got disgusted and left you to go live with a blues singer with some soul.

Most of us hung in there and righteously suffered through it, doing everything wrong. To compound our problems, we got fussy. As the fever progressed to its advanced stages, its victims exhibited an exacting preference for one certain way of doing things. The proper manner for feeding the woodstove, for example, became a matter for vigorous debate. Everything, from selecting the most entertaining TV program right down to the correct shade of brown for the morning toast, was a subject for confrontation. The testier people got, the more the cabin shrank.

I remember the worst of it, the bottom, as it were. It was the first week of February; the 6th. The high was 12 degrees. That night, it dropped to -10. I was feeding the woodstove and thinking those weighty thoughts us country folk like to dwell on in the dead of winter. Like, why did my complexion suddenly take a quantum leap toward its senior years? And, how many years did I have left before the whole shebang gives out? I felt like, if my body were a car, I'd be taking a real gamble driving it to Grand Junction.

Furthermore, I felt guilty for letting myself get hung up somewhere else than the here and now. I knew, if Alan Watts was right, that wishing for Spring was wishing away a part of one's life itself. And there I was, wanting to be elsewhere. That made me even gloomier.

Maybe none of you got gloomy like that. But I doubt it. We tend to be kind of introspective

when we're shut inside in the winter. We feel, well, shut in. Closed off. I imagine it's how a snake must feel when it needs to shed its skin.

One feels a desire to break loose from something old, stiff, clinging....a dry covering that films the eyes and blunts the flood of incoming sensations. We begin to have thoughts of leaving the area and starting anew somewhere else, when what we really need to do is to shed the crusty, unbending shell of accumulated pretentiousness so that we can emerge fresh and flexible for the upcoming year.

But, unlike the snake, we grow proud of our old armor. Some of us haven't shed for years. I wasn't having much luck either. No matter how hard I scraped that scaly old belief system I couldn't get anything to peel off. It hurt a lot, but nothing loosened up. So, I gave up and slithered stiffly off to bed. And that's when I had, no foolin', the following dream.

I dreamed I died and went to the afterlife. Only it wasn't any kind of afterlife I'd ever heard of before.

A bright light beckoned. I found myself walking through some swinging doors and into a noisy saloon. The sound of laughter and loud, tinkling, old-time piano music filled the air. I pushed my way through the merry crowd and bellied up to the bar. A thin, mustachioed bartender ambled over. "What'll it be?" he asked.

"Wait a minute," I stammered. "Where am I?"
"The Limbo Bar and Grille, of course."
"Then there's no heaven or hell?"
"Of course there is."
"Whoa," says I. "I never really believed in 'em, but I assumed that if I was wrong about it, I'd be stoking coal about now."

"Nah," he laughs, "you wind up wherever you think you're going to wind up after you die. Anybody who came to no conclusions winds up here. You're among friends."

"You mean, everyone who thought they were going to hell really went to hell?"

"Yup."
"With real furnaces and real coal?"
"Bituminous."

"Then, everyone who really believed they were going to heaven went to heaven?"

"Yeah. All three of them. But the last I heard they'd all applied for a transfer down

here. It seems they're avid bridge players. They're afraid that centuries could pass by before they ever get a fourth."

"Well I'll be damned. I mean, I guess I won't be. But hey, I wasn't really a model citizen when I was alive. There were more than a few moments I'm not too proud of...."

"Like I said, you're among friends. We've got a different perspective here. I know, what about all that guilt? Forget it. It was just another amusement, like all the rest of your feelings. Let me put it this way. The really bad ones felt no guilt at all."

"And where are they?"

"Sitting through a 5 million year symposium led by Phyllis Shlafley entitled: 'How to be a really good person.' It was the worst punishment we could think of."

"So, this is eternity!"

"Nah, eternity implies duration. You'll get over that in a hurry."

"Well, how long will I be here?"

"See, you're doing it again."

"Oh."

"Listen, you can't be uptight about time and still be enjoying yourself. It's the same as it was on Earth...the same as it was on Earth.... the same as it was on Earth...."

The bartender seemed to be slipping away, down a hall of mirrors, growing smaller and smaller, and suddenly I awoke with a start. I was back in my bedroom. Still alive.

I chuckled to myself. Just a silly dream, I thought. Nonetheless, I felt lighter. It's nice to be awake in the middle of the night. I grabbed the ice scraper and cleared a patch of window. It was beautiful outside, like a scene from a LeGuin novel. The dark, bare trees and bright snowfields stood out under a shattering of stars. The world was asleep and everything was perfectly in its place. I snuggled down into the warm covers. Yeah, it's good to be alive, summer or winter, when we accept it all just as it is. The bartender was right. You can't be uptight about time....

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The official rules governing the game of Horseshoes

by Dudek

It's that time again. The snow is gone, the frost is out of the ground, and the pits are dry enough to prepare for play. It's horseshoe pitching season in Moab.

The game is one of the oldest of them all, dating back to Roman Army camps around 100 AD, according to the Encyclopedia Britannica. It wasn't until 1914, however, that the rules were standardized, and the National Horseshoe Pitchers Association, the NHPA, was formed. The NHPA is headquartered at Route 5, Lucasville, OH 45648.

Itinerant shoe tossers in this area have noticed certain rule differences at different courts around the county. In an effort to clear up the discrepancies, and hopefully arrive at a set of rules we can all toss by, here are the official rules according to the NHPA.

COURT: The stakes are 1" steel posts set 40 feet apart. (30 feet for women.) The stakes stand 14" high, and are canted 3 inches off vertical in the direction of the opposite stake. The stakes are located in the center of a 6' by 6' pitchers box. The front edge of the box is bordered with a 2" high wooden rail. The toss must be made from within the confines of the pitcher's box. The landing area around the stake, composed of clay, soil or sand, must be at least 3 feet wide (18" on each side of the stake), and the length of the box in the other direction (6 feet).

SHOES: The horseshoe may be no more than 7 1/2" wide and 7 5/8" tall, and the throat may be no wider than 3 1/2". The shoe may weigh no more than 2 1/2 pounds. Each pair of shoes are marked for identification. Toe and heel calks may extend no more than 3/4" above the face of the shoe.

PLAY: Two players (singles) or four (doubles) compete, each pitching two shoes in succession which completes an inning. In singles, both contestants pitch from the same end and change ends after each inning. In doubles, partners play at opposite ends throughout the contest. Only one player scores in an inning, and that winner throws first in the next inning. The pitcher stands anywhere he chooses within the pitcher's box, but he may not step on or over the foul line during his delivery. A glove or finger tape is permitted. Immediately upon pitching his second shoe, the player must exit the pitcher's box, and he must take up a position off to the side behind an imaginary line that is even with the stake. The second player may not walk over to the opposite stake and examine the lie of the horseshoes before pitching his half of the inning.

SCORING: The shoe must land within the borders of the opposite pitcher's box; otherwise they do not score.

After all four shoes are pitched, any shoe which rings the stake, or lies the closest to it, scores. A shoe is judged to be a "ringer" if a straight-edge laid across the tips of the shoe encircles the stake without touching it. A

non-ringer shoe must lie within 6" of the stake to score. A measuring device determines whether this criteria is met.

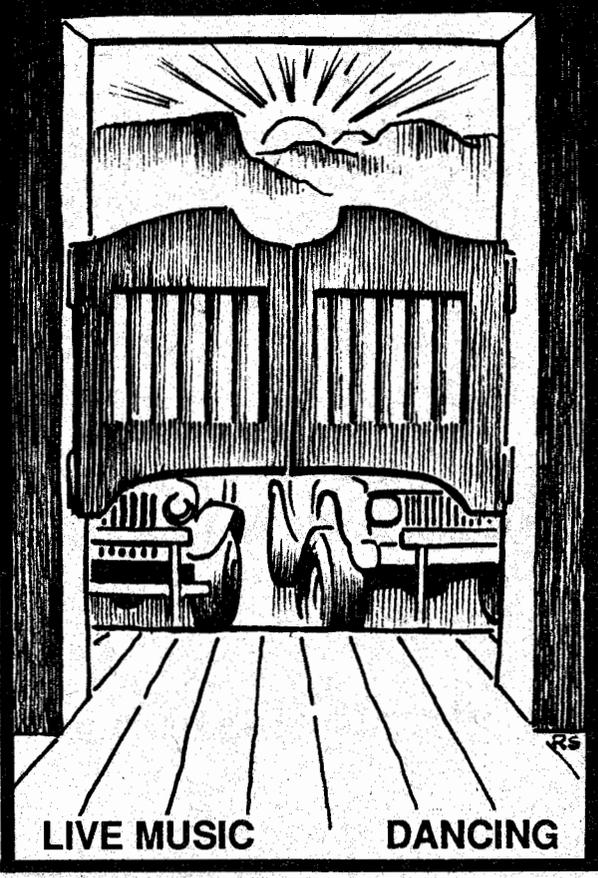
A shoe closest to the stake scores 1 point. Both shoes closest to the stake score two points. A ringer is worth three points. A double ringer is worth 6 points. All equals count as ties and no points are awarded.

If each player has a ringer on the stake, they cancel each other out and no points are awarded. In such a case, the next closest shoe is eligible to score. In a case where a player has one ringer and his other shoe is closest to the stake, he scores 4 points. If both players score two ringers, no points are awarded. If one player scores two ringers to his opponent's one ringer, he scores 3 points. If both shoes lie closer to the stake than the opponent's, two points are scored. If a shoe leans against the stake (one point), and an opponent's shoe on the ground also touches the stake, they tie and no points are awarded. If no score is posted in an inning, the last player (or team) has the next pitch. The first player reaching 50 points is declared the winner. If the game total is reached by the first player in an inning, the second player is not allowed his turn to "catch up" or surpass the first player, and the game is over.

MOVED SHOES: A shoe moved by an opponents shoe is counted in its new position. A shoe which becomes a ringer as a result of having been moved by an opponent's shoe counts as a ringer. A ringer knocked off the stake by an opponent's shoe loses its ringer score.

INFORMAL PLAY: In informal play, and to allow more matches per outing, a game may be declared at a lower score, usually 21 points. Sometimes a "shoe width" is declared the close measure for shoes in the one point range. In the event that pitchers are using two different brands of shoes with varying widths, a standard distance (say, the width of the smallest shoe) must be decided upon beforehand. And finally, "leaners" are sometimes scored as two points, although a very low leaner is subject to great dispute and this rule variation is not recommended.

OUTLAW SALOON



RECORDS: The record for consecutive ringers is 72, by Ted Allen of Boulder, Colorado. The record for percentage of ringers is 88.5%, by Elmer Hohl of Wellesey, Ontario, Canada. The women's record for consecutive ringers is 30, set by Sue Gillespie of Portland, Indiana. Allen also holds the record for world titles, 10, over a span dating from 1933 through 1959. The women's record is 8, by Vicki Chapelle, of Winston, Lamonte, Missouri.

Well, here's hoping that this clears up some of the major rule discrepancies that have cropped up in this area. Obviously, there's a lot more to the game, and information on the finer points may be obtained by writing to the NHPA in Ohio.
Happy hooking, campers. I'll be seeing you out there in the pits this summer, for sure.

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River Running Deep

A Short Story

by John Wahl

Gentlemen, start your engines. Yeah, right snorts Kenneth, peering helplessly at the bewildering snakepit, which crackles and snaps ominously. Too hot for a hands-on inspection, as if his hands would know what to inspect. The agony of defeat. De feet you mean, dumb-ass—must be 15 miles at least to a decent road, and nobody likely to come along any time soon. This is great, just great. His disgust beams like a laser onto his brand-spanking new piece of indomitable JUNK, twenty grand you gotta spend so as to get stranded in a hellhole like this? The tire iron, Kenneth's only tool, is a fierce temptation. He can almost taste the gratifying muscular jolt of each impact, the glorious cursing tantrum that would feel so good as he pounded this shiny pile of garbage senseless from top to bottom, stem to stern. Settle down, easy now, that would be a stupid thing to do. Cathartic but stupid. The towing bill alone will drive me into bankruptcy, he's thinking. Some greasy vulture will be able to retire courtesy of Kenneth the California Klutz. Should have put a CB in this rig, some spare parts, a helicopter—at least a dirt bike for emergencies. But Noooo. Instead we've got, let's see, a six-pack of wine coolers and a Frisbee. Sensible L.A. hardware, enough to gird your loins with on the freeway. Oh yes, forgot about the .44 magnum under the seat. Your basic survival kit. He grins at that thought—no, not hardly the gun-toting type. And not the terminally ignorant type either. Water, maps, food were all stowed away in the back, just as the guidebooks suggest. Sleeping bag, tent, hi-lift jack, extra spare, 5 gallon can of gas—I'm one well-equipped hombre, just like that guy in the Camel cigarette ads. With one of those all-terrain off-road mean machines that you see climbing cinder block mountains on T.V. Gung-ho ho ho. Kenneth can't suppress a little self-deprecatory chuckle; surely not that naive, I hope. Anyway, what to do? What will you do?

No distractions, plenty of time to think. Let the engine cool off, see what happens. As if "cool" were the magic word a shadow falls across everything, quenching the almost painful glare of chrome and polished lacquer. Glancing up from his problems Kenneth sees thunderstorms building in all directions. Gauzy blue curtains of rain slowly grow dense, impenetrable, cut by stroke after stroke of lightning. To the west sunlit cliffs are brilliant beneath a black sky, each spurring the other on to a deeper, sharper contrast. That looks wicked and it's headed this way he thinks, as the first faint grumblings roll into his ear. At least this temperamental lemon of a truck has a good solid roof. Time to dig out snacks and a jacket and settle in for what promises to be a double-feature. Mesa cliffs fall into darkness, offering up junipers on a blade for sacrifice. The storm when it finally arrives is a doozy, a pounding slashing frenzied thing that rocks his pick-up and, from the sound of it, is pulverizing higher country into rubble. This is great, kind of scary though. Wouldn't want to be out on the lake right now for sure. His parents and their friends had boats at Lake Powell for summer vacations, even a long holiday weekend now and then, and he'd had great fun waterskiing,

swimming and fishing, or nosing around into hidden sandstone slots. Took his buddies or a girlfriend along, had some good times, went home with a tan and lots of neat pictures. Couldn't figure what kind of jerks would want to blow up the dam—he'd seen some crazy stuff in a newspaper or something somewhere. Nut cases everywhere you look these days. But it had aroused his curiosity. Drifting in the boat, with all those sheer walls plunging out of sight beneath green water, he got to wondering what was down there, under there, covered up. Went to the library after one of those trips and dug around for some info, reading about Major Powell, Glen Canyon, the Colorado River. Looking through a book of beautiful pictures, taken before water backed up to fill the reservoir, Kenneth felt a strange uneasiness, a kind of anger. Trying to pin it down he realized suddenly that he felt robbed, cheated. Sure the lake was a blast but this....all gone forever. Used to be a person could float for days, didn't have to be a whitewater boatman it says here, anybody could make the trip. But he couldn't. Maybe he would never have genuinely wanted to, maybe it would seem too risky, maybe he wouldn't find the time. Idle speculation because that stretch of river isn't there anymore. He'd been given no say in the matter, they hadn't asked him what he thought. Well, he

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reminded himself, it makes no difference what you think anyway, now does it? Much too late with your opinion. So Kenneth felt a little strange on their next outing, sort of detached. And slowly an idea took over his daydreams, a plan. He would have money, a good job no problem--Dad's rich, has connections, I'm a sharp kid, a computer whiz. The world was gonna be his oyster, OK? So get a jeep or something, bunch of camping gear, take his own trips to check out what's left of the country. Rough and real, down to earth, no bullshit.

"Bullshit" he says now, with an ironical flourish. Rain has let up a bit, but thunder is still booming against the hidden cliffs, rolling like a cannonball around some Neanderthal's version of a roulette wheel. The vibrations rumble through his insides, transporting Kenneth back to his earliest memories. It was a big church, old, stranded in the decay of an inner city. Usually restless and uninvolved, his attentions focused when it came time for a hymn. This congregation's pride was a huge pipe organ, one of the largest. The whole front of the sanctuary was filled with its magnificent plumbing, all different lengths and sizes of handcrafted piping rose behind the organ's vast console, which looked breathtakingly intricate. Only the most omnipotent of gods could fathom such a device, Kenneth was sure. The bulletin indicated that this next hymn would be one of his favorites, and the anticipation was almost unbearable. Cecil Rathbone, the organist, turned to leer at all the little old ladies, those persnickety souls who had been complaining of late about the volume. "Too loud!" they would announce, their voices quavering with indignation. Cecil was a tiny mouse of a man with crooked bifocals and a flagrant toupee--his moment had arrived; brace yourself. Those three

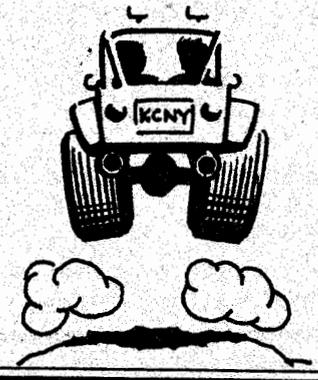
thrilling chords came crashing out, headed for the balcony like a tidal wave. "HOLY, HOLY, HOLY!!!" It rumbled up into your bones, your very guts, and Kenneth was overjoyed. Not a religious experience in the ordinary sense of the word, but a pure exaltation, let's celebrate being alive! A few years later he would be exposed to the pathetic whining of an electric "organ", and wanted to tell the people they were being cheated. It was a sham, a cheap imitation of glory.

That was great thought Kenneth, thunder fading away at last, sun jumping out all scrubbed and confident. Rolling down the window he takes several deep spicy breaths and then gives it one more try, see if she'll start. Surprise! Runs smooth, no sputtering, no horrible noises. A fine piece of craftsmanship, like I've always said, made in the good old U.S. of A. too. No tiresome hike for this boy, not today. Kenneth thumbs his nose at an imaginary tow truck and begins his journey back to L.A. crawling along in granny gear, low range, eatin' up those miles. On an outdated map or in some book Kenneth had read of a place called Music Temple. Mostly under water now, more than likely. He wonders how much if any of the amphitheater remains uncovered, thinks of those poor fools dreaming of explosions or precision earthquakes. Don't hold your breath, fruitcakes. But now if a man could float old Cecil and that organ into Powell's Temple or some such spot, let him cut loose on one of those fine 200 proof hymns, why the tremors would fill that sacred hollow and rumble down deep into the bedrock. The lake would get choppy, berries would be shaken off every juniper tree in the county, and a mighty shudder would race downstream and blast that Goddamned eggshell plug right outta there. Kenneth smiles at the thought. Yeah, he thinks, that should do it.

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RECOLLECTIONS OF THE "KNOW-MAN"

By Todd Campbell

Richard is a big, beautiful, lovable fellow — the more so because of his geekiness. In a moment of concentration, he would inadvertently drool, push the scholarly glasses up his nose bridge and, noting your presence, mutter "Bless me". He is the best friend of my principal riding partner, David, and thus qualified to tour with us. Little did we know we should be charging baby-sitting fees.

A thousand miles into our mountain bike tour of the Rockies, David phoned Richard to verify our rendezvous in Missoula. On the appointed day we were humping our 'rolling duffel piles' through the scurrying traffic and rain-shined streets with particular zeal, as a hot shower awaited us up at a friend's home in Rattlesnake Canyon. Even in our haste we didn't fail to notice the 'all-terrain' type sandal eddying in the gutter. Usually I stop for such things, there being the possibility that its pair lie somewhere ahead. This time, however, urgency bade us onward.

After the warm greetings and ample hugs were dispensed, we were to discover that yes, incredibly, the sandal was Richard's! It had weaseled its way out of his pannier somehow. That evening, David and I made a couple of disturbing observations. Richard's rear rack was only wired on, and flimsily at that. (He never claimed any mechanical prowess.) Then we found out that he failed to bring a lid for the increased-capacity pot that we were to cook with every night for the remainder of the tour. In the absence of a lid, we would learn to im-

provise with everything from cardboard to foil to tree bark, all notably less efficient. It was a tolerable condition, humorous even, but the man was beginning to become a force.

Hundreds of calories later we left Missoula, and during the week that we pedaled through the heartbreakingly beautiful alpine scenery of the Swan River Valley, Richard was able to lose his gloves, his shorts, and his chop sticks. "Spoiled child syndrome", he once called it, this tendency to misplace things. One of Richard's shirts was spared an uncertain fate by a gentleman riding a motorcycle. He saw the shirt pop out of Richard's makeshift bungee lashings and stopped to retrieve it. Slowing alongside our pace line, he offered the unsuspecting Richard a familiar looking shirt.

Richard seemed to have difficulty projecting the consequences of his actions. I once watched him hang a gas lantern precariously on a nail, only to knock it to the floor a minute later in a shuddering explosion of glass. Apparently, the babysitters were not doing their job.

The thing that fooled us about Richard was the consummately deliberate way in which he went about his tasks. How, we reasoned, could a thing done so ultra-methodically be bungled so badly? Even the morning ritual of packing the bike, a rote task by all accounts, gave Richard the opportunity to reinvent a whole new system, a treatise on bulk, weight and balance. Richard's laggard ways gave David and I plenty of time to stretch before riding. And oil our chains. And clean our fingernails, the ones we hadn't yet bitten off, that is.

At this point, I ought to begin making mention of some of Richard's many desirable qualities, so as not to offend him or make him seem unnecessarily inept. After all, you accept a friend for all of his peculiarities. Richard can identify a bird by its ruffage, its behavior, its call, its flight pattern, and various other miscellanies of avarian knowledge. His easy-going, affable manner quiets any crisis. And his readiness to engage in erudite conversations about the definition of art, the sorry state of world politics, or philosophies to live by can charm many a mature woman. He is very well educated, but not exactly what you call street wise.

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This is why he became designated the "know-man", for he could lend valuable insight into about anything that has no germane or palpable effect on day-to-day living, at least that of a bike tourer. Anyone can be a "yes-man," but not just anybody can utter profundities like, "There is no such thing as safe sex for a banana slug". (A banana slug, you see, is endowed with but one bodily orifice, an 'all-purpose' hole, through which it must coordinate the various functions of not only survival, but reproduction, too. In the truest biological sense, "survival" and "reproduction" are the same word, only spelled differently.)

Who else but Richard could so poignantly remind you of yesterday's harrowing experience

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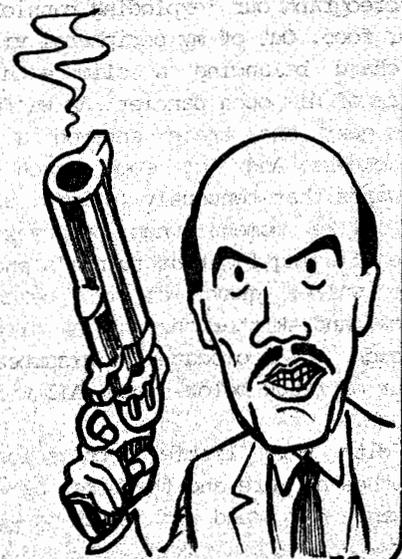
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with the logging truck? Even as we lay in our sleeping bags gazing up through the forest canopy, absorbing morning's solace, we could faintly hear that distant yet omnipresent reminder, the patented gargling sound of a slowing truck's Jake brake. And Richard would catch your eye, "That's your summer passing you by." Twisted, but funny.

I look back fondly on the incident whereby Richard explained the concept of 'wildlife harassment' to me. I was in the bow of the canoe, paddling furiously to track a beaver we had just spied in the reeds. There we were on Seeley Lake, liquid runway for a seaplane, sided by a highway and fringed with private marinas, yet I was accused of harassing the poor numb beaver. I reckon that beaver wouldn't have known it if I called its mother dirty names! As I see it, some things cannot be taught in college.

Richard was able to lose one more item before we left the Canadian Rockies - his wallet, identification and all. The three of us were staking out Jasper's railroad yard for the arrival of engine 6217, the express freighter to Vancouver. Our hope was that after riding the rain for some 600 miles, we might safely dismount somewhere near the Washington state border.

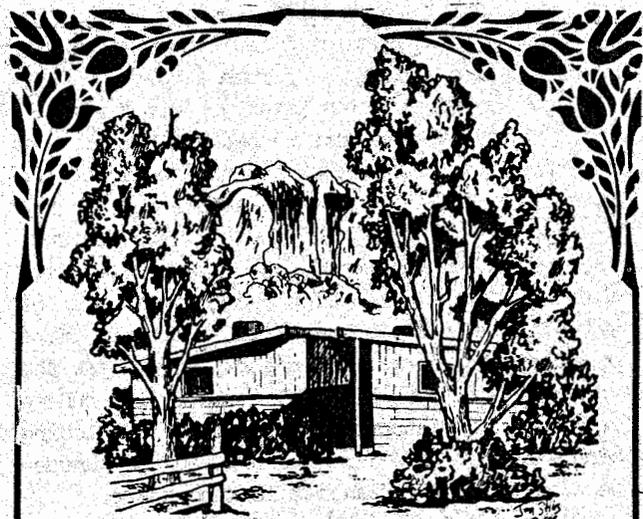
That freight train had to be a mile long, or so it appeared as it eased into the yard. In order to avoid the Mounted Police's Trainmaster, we pedaled clear around the end of the train, speaking with the conductor for a minute before flailing up the gravel corridor between the tracks. Our reconnaissance informed us that there were seven empty cars on the express; where or what kind we had no way of knowing. The train groaned and shuddered as cars were coupled somewhere on up the track. Time was tense. And all of a sudden Richard yells, "Todd, I got a flat!"

"Ride it, Dick, we can't fix it now!"

Finally, we reached an empty car. The moment we heaved our last bike onto its deck, the train lurched to a start. What glee we took in exploring what were to be our confines for the next fourteen hours, climbing car-to-car and deck-to-deck as we whisked through the Rocky Mountain wilds. In those first moments of disbelief, we had little anticipation of the total surrender we would make to the almost surreal screeching noise and diesel exhaust assaulting our senses.

As the excitement subsided and we settled in for the ride, our thoughts turned to our stomachs, a common preoccupation with touring "sprocketheads". Richard and I stumbled to the front of the car, where we had braced our bikes. With the unpredictable swaying of the train, it was with some effort that we began to choreograph our 'exploding panniers' to get at our food. Out of my peripheral vision I noticed Richard balancing a slim leather item on the flap of his open pannier. As we fumbled through our gear, the train entered a tunnel. Total blackness. And for some reason we both turned towards that tenuously placed wallet. In the dreamlike moment when our eyes readjusted to the blinding light at tunnel's end, we watched the wallet quake on its perch, jump to the deck, and skitter through a slit just large enough to accommodate it, disappearing into the blur of track below, gone. All we could do was laugh.

With very little left to lose but for the clothes he wore and the bike he rode, Richard began a new trend with which to elicit our concern. He started taking spills off of his bike.



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His first fall was attributable to a front-wheel washout on a gravel road. We doctored his skinned up hands two or three times a day for the better part of a week. His condition, needless to say, made him even more useless than usual. But to his credit, he'd always be trying, bracing a loaf of bread between his forearm and chest, knifing it with a battered paw. And he complained less than never, content to bring up the rear as we hiked and biked through Banff and Jasper National Parks.

We crossed back into the United States at Sumas with no difficulty, despite Richard's lack of identification. Our only thrill came when the border guard took issue with a cute answer to his standard question.

"Gentlemen, are you bringing back anything from Canada with you?"

"You mean like communicable diseases?"

"This could take all afternoon, buddy", he scowled.

Later that day, clipping through the afternoon heat in draft formation, David veered slightly left to dodge a 2 x 4 laying on the shoulder. I too passed it on the left, only to hear THUNK THUNK - "Crap!" Richard bounced over it, none too pleased that we hadn't called it. A short while later, David called a hazard and stomped away so that we could see it in time, a large bag of highway garbage filled by Washington's Youth Corps and awaiting pickup. David cleared it on the right, just staying on the edge of the road above a ditch. I checked for traffic and cleared it on the left, but alas, Richard's attempt to follow David's lead met with disaster. His front pannier grazed the bag, his steering crossed up, and he tumbled head over teakettle into the ditch.

We had Richard's hands and elbow cleaned and dressed in minutes, when all of a sudden we were surrounded by vehicles with flashing green lights. The local emergency response volunteers had made it in record time, but they could only offer second aid. As neighbors wandered out to witness the commotion, we found ourselves besieged with offers of support in the form of dinners and showers and lawns to sleep on. We accepted, of course, as graciously as hungry, dirty tired bikers can. As so often happened during our tour, we were overwhelmed with generosity, but in this case not without blood-letting. Such are the vicissitudes of bike touring - taking the good with the bad.

Richard's final spill marked the end of our tour together. During our descent of Mount Constitution, highest point on the San Juan Islands, Richard smeared through a slick turn and lost it. The prognosis - an extremely painful dislocated elbow. In his usual display of forbearance, Richard could only be moved to say, "Curses".

I felt badly for Richard, sorry even, although he isn't the type of guy who feels sorry for himself. I grew accustomed to his bumbling ways, and I'll forever recall him as a man "in the know", the chap with the studied opinion a little light on practicality.

Anyone can be a "yes-man".

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BARD'S NARDS POETRY CORNER

A Trucker's Pony Express Dream

by John Wahl

Little pit-stop town and just outside,
 some horses caught in the interstate slipstream.
 Pinned bitterly close—within range, nearly,
 of shredding tires, discarded trash,
 stoic under the diesel's roar and stink.
 All of Nevada to roam around in
 but you weren't lucky.
 These valleys go on forever, even at 80 plus.
 A canteen or two would look sort of puny—
 nothing to drink but meadowlark song, son,
 or maybe some talcum powder dust
 while high peaks buried in snow are shining
 with a hard chromium gleam, whorehouse crystal.
 Sun would peel a man's skin right off, up there,
 and a mouthful would only be an icy burn,
 another kind of dust. God it's hot.
 But they glow pink in the morning,
 and I love to race with cloud shadows
 on a fresh day, on a good horse.
 Columns of light angle down through a storm,
 columns of air twist across alkali,
 pinyon and juniper blacken the far hills.
 Over that next summit and I'll be there,
 resting against the cool stone stationhouse wall
 under a big cottonwood with softly tapping leaves,
 thinking some about dinner but mostly a woman's laugh
 meant just for me, when this riding's done.

Snowrock

by Mark Doherty

Leaping from pink spot to pink spot
 Of rock splotched with snow,
 I slipped and almost spilled
 But spun to my feet in a squat
 And slithered down a snowrock slide
 Into the soft sand below full of snow.
 A Winter slide into a soft white pool!

From my spot in the sandy pool of snow
 I fell backwards into the softness
 And swished out a snow angel.
 John came to help me up
 (So as not to disturb the artwork)
 And we sat for a moment to admire
 A white snow angel
 With an aura of redpink sand!

The angel's eyes looked up
 At the high buff walls
 Laced and blanketed
 With a pure white dusting
 Outlined on top
 By a deep blue Winter sky.
 Snowrock and sky

Now you see why
 The desert is so alive
 Amid this cold Winter season!

Getting Away

by Louise Teal

A high-pitched howl.
 Coyote wakes me.

Moving over the sandstone,
 he appears and reappears
 like a ghost.

He spots a rabbit.
 Runs.
 His paws don't even touch ground
 He floats

I see a rabbit
 escaping through
 sage brush.

Getting away.

I look back for the coyote,
 searching until my eyes ache.

Spring Thaw

by John Wahl

She builds a fire with poems,
 lets sweet smoke cup her breasts
 and lowers memory onto the coals.
 I paint swallows on her hands
 with iridescent ashes, feel them glide
 over me, an arctic fox curled weightless
 on her belly, summer rising through my fur.
 Padded paws brush past slender willows,
 soft grass moaning into my mouth.
 I want to be smooth slickrock
 tracing the curve of her back,
 water like melted glass sliding between her legs,
 warm sunlight on her heartbreaking face.
 I want to be her canyon wren.

Say yer plummin's stopped up,
 Got holes in yer doors?
 They's a leak above your head,
 So ya swims when it pours?
 Got four children in one bedroom,
 And the rugs are plumb wore?
 And to top it all off
 Ma says there'll be one more!!
 Call Dave, Call Dave,
 Call Dave for them there chores.

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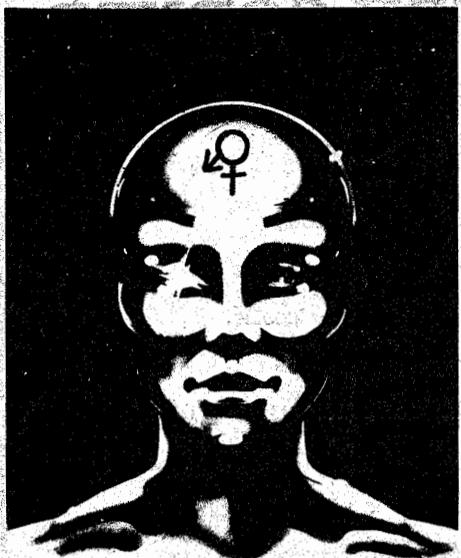
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STARSCAM

Your
Horoscope
by

**Rama Lama
Ding Dong**

Aquarius
(Jan. 21 to Feb. 20)

Rama Lama spent January lolling on the beaches of Lotus Land instead of attending to astral business. For you Aquarians who missed last month's prognostications, rest assured that, had you known, February would have been an even worse month for you.

To be honest, March doesn't look all that great, either. Oh sure, there's all those planetary influences saying this will a great month financially, that you will have several romantic partners to choose among, that you'll get along better with your family, and that some creative project you've been proposing will get the green light. But what then? If you consider that this month will be the high point of the rest of your life and, come April 1st, it's all downhill, what's to celebrate?

**Pisces
(Feb. 21 to Mar. 21)**

PIE-SEE-ANS...PISS-EE-ANS...PISK-EE-ANS...? No wonder you are so fragmented. The rest of the world can't even figure out how to pronounce you. Why don't you all get together and let the rest of us know.

Your impractical side takes over on the week of the 19th when you are approached to join a local pyramid scheme. The project overwhelms your compassionate, charitable nature so you will probably bite. Make sure you don't get too much to chew.

Reality is a real drag this month. Retreat into your personal affairs. Try to increase their frequency and duration, rearrange your bedroom (after the 11th) for more efficient use of space, and shop during the morning hours of the 25th for new and interesting appliances. Try to be a little less insane this month.

ARIES: Everything you drop will roll somewhere you can't find it.

TAURUS: The more buttons you fasten on your shirt, the higher your IQ. Think about it, Taurus.

GEMINI: You will feel very energetic on the 17th. Try to do something.

CANCER: Cosmic influences suggest that you contact an important personage on the 16th. Make sure you pick the right person or disaster awaits.

LEO: The Moon gives you extra physical energy in March, making this a good month to solidify your reputation as a complete animal.

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Moab's Body And Fender Artists

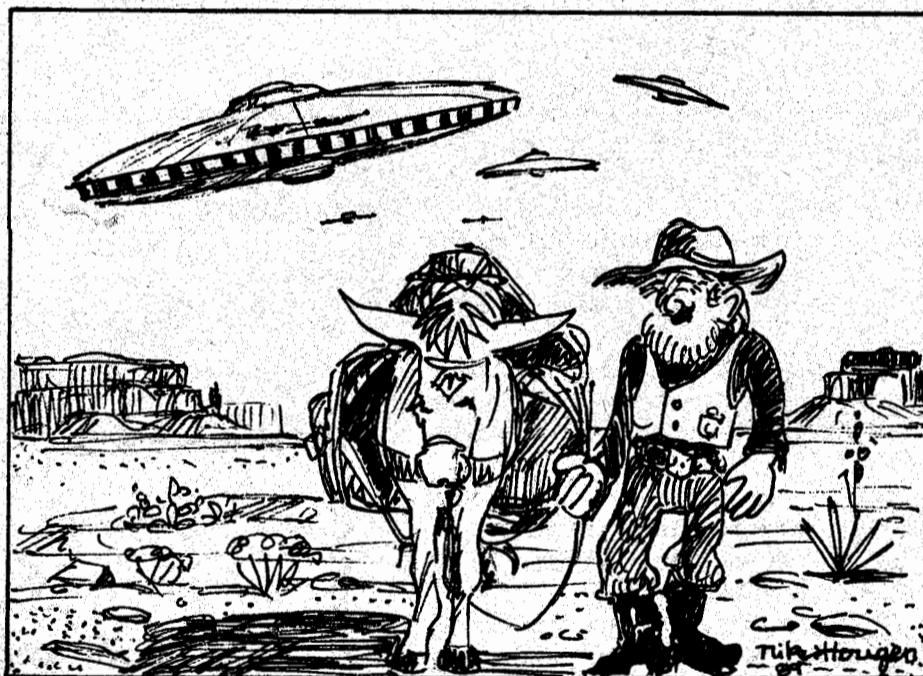
VIRGO: You will be less likely to feel overwhelmed on the 19th and 20th if you stay in bed all day.

LIBRA: Have you noticed that people have quit listening to you?

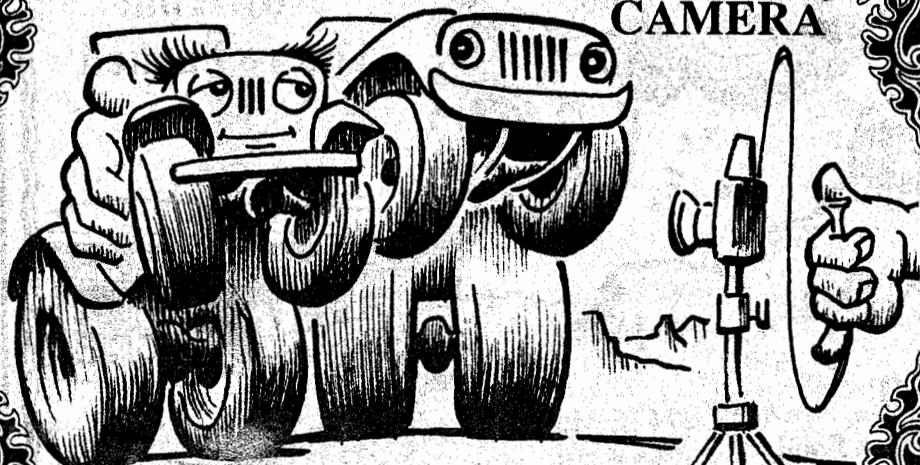
SCORPIO: Seeing yourself in the light of the Full Moon on the 22nd makes you realize how much you look like a Disney character.

SAGITTARIUS: After both Mars and Jupiter enter your 7th House on the 11th, you will be visited by every single person to whom you have ever casually said, "If you're ever in the area, look me up."

CAPRICORN: Cosmic influences call for a change of your life vocation this month. Rama Lama advises you to buy and refurbish the Poplar Place.



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LEDITORS

Keep 'em coming. They are an anthropological study in cultural diversity.... I love mental illness when it's tastefully done. Good job!

S. R. Simms
Logan, UT

Yep, believe it or not, I've been assigned here. It seems our plot for the overthrow of the military/industrial complex, starting with the Glen Canyon Dam, was uncovered. Our counter investigation has yet to expose the fink who fingered us, and that may now be difficult with the wave of executions, exiles, etc., that is now nearly complete. Nevertheless, there are still a few voices to speak out in the model city of Page. I very much look forward to the next issue.

Paul Zaenger
Page, AZ

WHOM ARE STILL FRIENDS - OLD FRIENDS NOW). THE BELL BURNED - THERE WERE BREAKUPS AND NEW LOVES, AND OUR LIVES STILL REVOLVED AROUND THE POPLAR PLACE. SPYKE (THE MAN) COOKED, AND THE MUSIC: JOHN PRINE, PHOEBE SNOW, BONNIE RAITT. IT WAS THE FIRST BAR I'D BEEN IN WITHOUT A JUKEBOX BUT WITH A REAL RECORD PLAYER, AND YOU COULD BRING YOUR OWN RECORDS. POOL TABLES, DART BOARDS, FROZEN TAPS, WELCOME TO SPRING WITH "RIBS AND RUM", THE BEST PIZZA IN TOWN, HELL, THE ONLY PIZZA IN TOWN, LITTLE KIDS (WHO ARE NOW IN COLLEGE), CAN-CANS ON THE BEACH....JOE AND JULIE LEFT - REMODELINGS, CLOSINGS, REOPENINGS. SOME OF US MOVED AWAY AND CAME BACK, RE-ACQUAINTING OURSELVES WITH THE POPLAR PLACE (REMEMBER MURPH'S PLACE?) - SOME MOVED AND DIDN'T RETURN - OTHERS MARRIED AND HAD BABIES. JOE RETURNED WITHOUT JULIE, AND THE KIDS STARTED TO HIT THEIR TEEN YEARS....

I SWEAR TO GOD THE PLACE HAS MELDED WITH MY MIND. I MISS IT ALREADY....

CHRIS KAUI
MOAB

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO CAPTURE THE SPIRIT OF ALL THAT THE PP HAS BEEN FOR EACH OF US DURING OUR LIFE IN MOAB. BUT INDIVIDUAL REMINISCENCES TELL PART OF THE STORY. BRIAN K. SUMMED IT UP WHEN HE TEARFULLY COMMENTED, "THE POPLAR PLACE WAS THE ONLY THING THEY COULDN'T CHANGE NO MATTER HOW MANY MOTELS THEY PUT ON MAIN STREET."

THE POPLAR PLACE HAS BEEN THE SOCIAL CENTER FOR SO MANY PEOPLE IN MOAB THAT LOSING IT IS LIKE LOSING ONE OF THE CORNERSTONES OF THE COMMUNITY. AS NIK HOUGEN SAID, "WE OUGHT TO MAKE A DATING SYSTEM BASED ON THE PASSING OF THE PP ERA: BF AND AF (BEFORE FIRE AND AFTER FIRE)."

FORTUNATELY, THE DATING SYSTEM MAY NOT BE NECESSARY SINCE PP DEVOTEES ARE FERVENTLY WORKING FOR A RESURRECTION.

EVERYWHERE IN TOWN PEOPLE ARE TALKING ABOUT THE FIRE, DISCUSSING THE POSSIBILITY OF A REBUILD, AND REMINISCING ABOUT THE PAST. I'VE HEARD SOME OUTRAGEOUS STORIES.

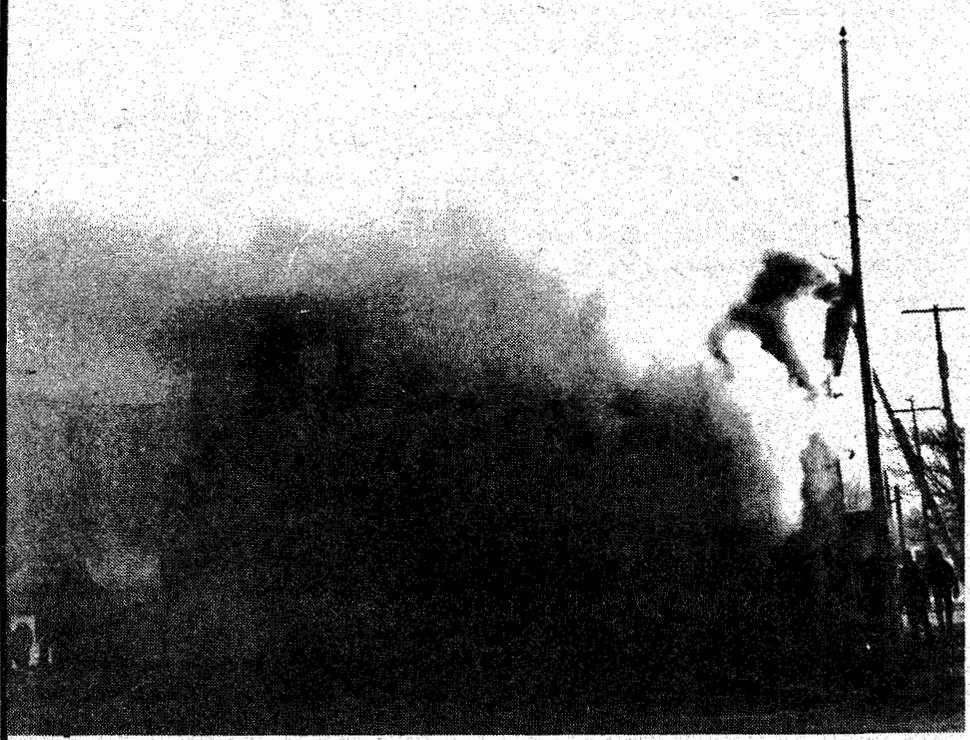
APPARENTLY QUITE A FEW EXUBERANT PARTIERS HAVE FALLEN OVER THE UPPER BANNISTER. GRACEFULLY OR NOT SO GRACEFULLY JOINING THE FOLKS DOWNSTAIRS. ONE GUY LANDED UPRIGHT AND UNRUFFLED ON A CONVENIENTLY PLACED COUCH.

THE PEOPLE WHO REALLY HAVE A STORY TO TELL ARE THE BIGHEARTED OWNERS, MANAGERS, BARTENDERS, WAITRESSES AND COOKS WHO CREATED A WORLD WE'LL NEVER FORGET. THEY WELCOMED US, MADE US LAUGH, LISTENED TO OUR WOES, AND KEPT THE GOOD TIMES ROLLING.

MOST PEOPLE'S RECOUNTING OF THEIR FIRST EXPERIENCE AT THE PP IS ABOUT THE SAME: WHILE PASSING THROUGH TOWN THEY STOPPED FOR A DRINK, HAD AN EXCEPTIONALLY GOOD TIME, AND THEN MET A BOY/GIRL AND DECIDED TO STICK AROUND TOWN FOR AWHILE.

AT THE PP YOU WERE GUARANTEED TO FIND FRIENDLY, FAMILIAR FACES, PEOPLE YOU'D KNOWN FOR YEARS, WHO'D SHARED YOUR GOOD TIMES AND BAD. WE TRUSTED EACH OTHER. THANKS EVERYBODY, FOR THE MEMORIES....

LEE GOODMAN
MOAB



A CONCERTED EFFORT IS UNDERWAY TO RECONSTRUCT THE POPLAR PLACE. THE BUILDING CAN BE SALVAGED IF ENOUGH FOLKS GET BEHIND IT WITH SOME STOCK PURCHASES IN A SHELL CORPORATION TO FINANCE THE JOB. THE STOCK IS PROJECTED TO SELL AT ABOUT \$100 PER SHARE. SHAREHOLDERS CAN EXPECT SPECIAL PRIVILEGES AS "MEMBERS", AND THEIR SHARES WOULD BE PROTECTED BY THE CORPORATION. THE BUILDING HOLDS A LOT OF MEMORIES FOR MANY OF US, AS EVIDENCED BY THE FOLLOWING EXCERPTS FROM MATERIAL WE'VE RECEIVED FROM OUR READERS.....

BY CHANCE OR COERCION, I'M NOT SURE WHICH, MY THEN-HUSBAND AND I AND SOME OF OUR FRIENDS DECIDED TO MAKE THE TRIP TO MOAB. THE EXACT REASON FOR THIS TRIP IS LOST SOMEWHERE IN THE NETHER-WORLD OF 1973, BUT WE ALL DROVE DOWN FROM SALT LAKE CITY DURING ANOTHER FREEZING JANUARY. BEFORE WE EVEN MADE IT INTO TOWN WE DETOURED INTO ARCHES NATIONAL PARK (WHEN WINTER VISITING WAS STILL FREE). THAT WAS WHERE I WAS CAPTURED BY THE BEAUTY OF SOUTHEASTERN UTAH AND DECIDED TO MAKE MOAB MY HOME. THE TEMPERATURE THAT AFTERNOON WAS FOUR DEGREES, AND I DON'T THINK WE EVEN DROVE PAST PARK AVENUE. ANYWAY, WE STOPPED AND WALKED OUT A SHORT WAY, AND I WAS HOOKED. WE RENTED MOTEL ROOMS AND STAYED THE WEEKEND - NOW THAT I THINK OF IT, IT MUST HAVE BEEN NEW YEAR'S WEEKEND - AND PARTIED AT THE POPLAR PLACE, RUN BY JOE AND JULIE MAY. THERE WAS A BAND, AND JOE AND JULIE KEPT THE PLACE HOPPING DURING BREAKS. THE MUSIC, THE FRIENDLY ATMOSPHERE - JOE PLAYED THE BAR LIKE A VIOLIN.

WE RETURNED AGAIN AND AGAIN FOR VISITS, FINALLY MOVING DOWN IN 1975. OUR FRIENDS HAD ALREADY SETTLED HERE AND STARTED THEIR HOMES AND BUSINESSES. (REMEMBER THE TEAHOUSE?) WE MET MORE PEOPLE (MOST OF



WE GOOFED!

Electrical contractor Al McLeod wants our readers to know that the ad in our last issue, a tasteless reference to the big electrical switch in the Florida State Prison, was created and printed without his knowledge or permission. The editor assumes full responsibility for this foolish attempt at topical humor, and herewith apologizes for the content of the ad.