

“more poets. fewer lawyers...” Ed Abbey

---Amy Brunvand

Cheatgrass

When the too-great herds and flocks chewed and trampled the hide off the foothills, something had to cover the raw eroding earth. --Aldo Leopold

You don't expect such prettiness
From grass with such a hot pith
Of hellfire, this girlish lavender shag
Carpeting the canyon bottom
In soft-focus greeting card sentiment.

Seeds tickled like wind chimes,
Sharp prickly awns that knit
Into the cuffs of your socks,
Puncture grazing mouths, scatter
And wait for a kindling spark.

You don't anticipate such malice
From impressionist pastels;
Spring green, purple haze, wheatfield gold,
Flare to blaze orange, the fire season
Begins with all the horror

Of a carefully watered lawn,
Ends in a prophecy of burning
Sagebrush, a rainbow alchemy
Of water transformed to wildfire,
Jack rabbits without rabbitbrush

Desert tortoises incinerated
In underground burrows,
Earth and the works in it pierced
By darning-needle seeds stitching
Blackened seams of the fire next time.



“Simple Chaos 6 Revisited” (2010)



“PetiteCode 3”
(2010)

The Consciousness of Willows

Sometimes when I sit quiet by the river
I can hear them among the dizzy buzz
Of insects, the white noise of flowing water,

Not songs exactly, unvoiced thoughts,
Of greenness reaching towards the sun,
A longing carried by summer heat

For roiling water of spring floods,
The thrash of rushing waves washing into
Eddylines writhing with debris and driftwood,

For graceful bending, roots in damp sand
Sinking intentions deep to hold on tight;
They reach up to beckon songbirds

Invited to perch on swaying branches,
In return for keeping down the pests,
They contemplate the reedy heron who fishes

In calm still water slenderly disguised
By its supple willow-like neck
Until it rises on startled wings, unmoored,

Without disappointment, joy or sadness
They hold fast to water, Earth and sky
Though they acknowledge nothing but willowness.



Amy Brunvand is a librarian, writer, and part-time nature mystic from Salt Lake City, Utah. She agrees with Edward Abbey that the environmental movement needs more poets and fewer lawyers (even though some of her best friends are lawyers).

The artwork is by Sandy Brunvand, part owner of SaltGrass Printmakers which is a non-profit collaborative printmaking studio in Salt Lake City.

Sandy's website: <http://www.sandy-brunvand.com/>
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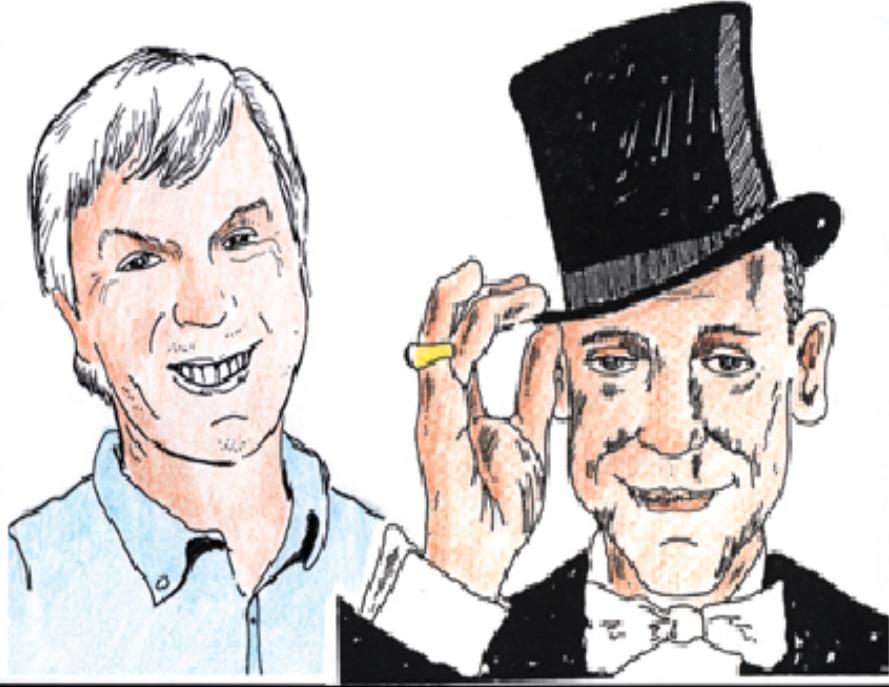


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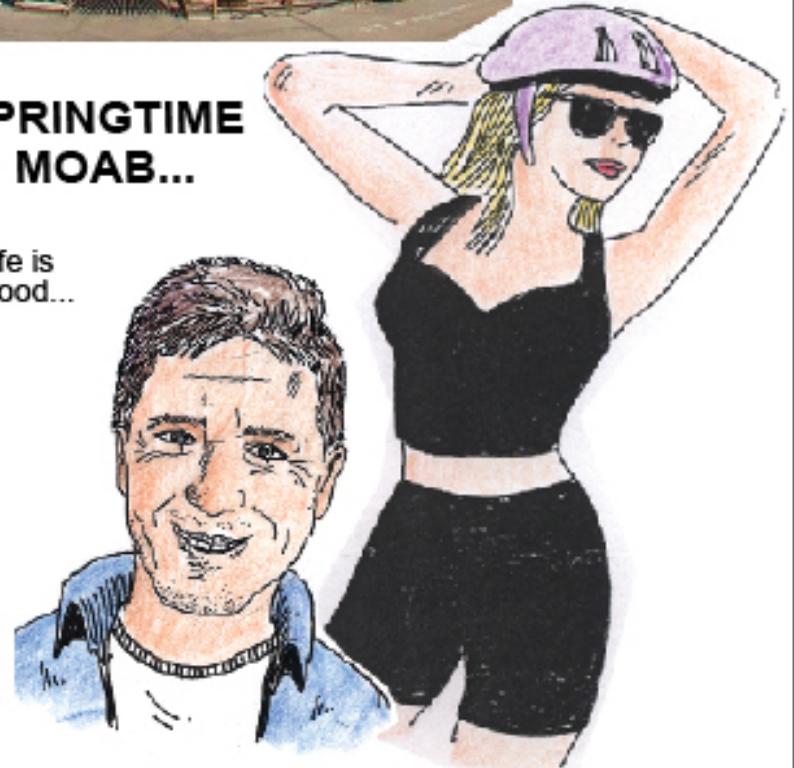
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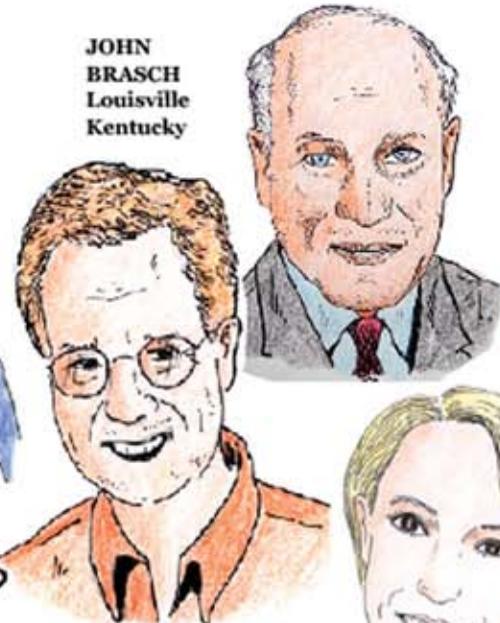
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