

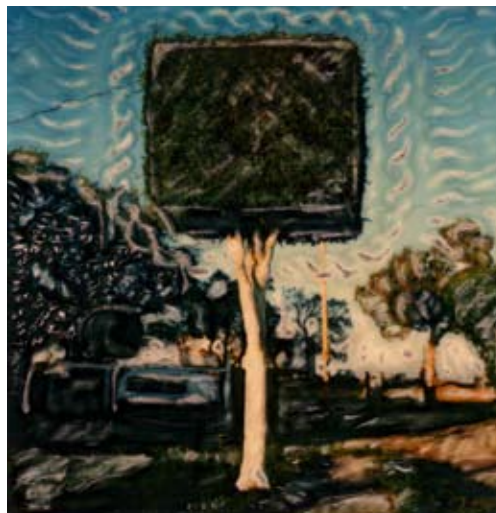
JUNE/JULY 2011
VOLUME 23 NUMBER 2

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"ALL THE NEWS THAT CAUSES FITS...
...SINCE 1989

2/3...**TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT....By Jim Stiles**

Watching Lake Powell go UP & DOWN:

I thought about the way the spiritual and moral aspects of our last wild places have been pushed aside in favor of their recreational and commercial components. I wondered if the return of those magnificent thousand foot canyons would be seen for their grandeur or their climb-ability.

4/5...**THE DOG OF THE MONTH!!! Meet GORDY.**

6/7.....**OBAMA’S POST-bin LADEN RULES OF WAR...Tonya Morton**

Or, in an Orwellian victory for irrationality, will this be justification for greater aggression and military involvement overseas?

8/9.....**THE FREEDOM OF MULES R. Avy Harris**

But this mule is clearly blazing his own trails. He’s saddle-free and nuzzling my bare shoulder with a surprisingly soft mahogany coat. I found him – or he found me – back behind the closed-down general store in Klondyke, Arizona. When I press my forehead against the glass to look inside, a spider peers back.

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TWO YEARS in the KINGDOM of MOROCCO.....CHARLIE KOLB

Death comes as no surprise to the people here; the harshness of this destroyed place is not lost on the Berbers of the Ait Haddidou. Death is a constant companion that shadows the children as they play

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Southern California...1950

26/27...**THE BULLETIN BOARD of DOOM...including:**

The population of the world, long expected to stabilize just above 9 billion in the middle of the century, will instead keep growing and may hit 10.1 billion by the year 2100, the United Nations projected in a report released Tuesday.

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U.S. Public Lands Solar Policy---WRONG from the START

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WATCHING LAKE POWELL GO UP & DOWN.

I drove past Glen Canyon Dam last week, on my way to visit friends in Springdale. It hasn't changed much since my last visit, or my first for that matter; it's still the biggest chunk of concrete I've ever laid eyes upon and it still floods one of the most beautiful sections of the Colorado River—Glen Canyon.

Of course, I've never really seen Glen Canyon in its pristine state. When the dam's diversion gates closed in 1963, I was still a kid in Kentucky, oblivious to these kinds of devastating man-made disasters.

Oh to be that innocent again!

My introduction to Lake Powell and its consequences came to me via an aunt I barely knew. Bertha Gunterman was a frail but feisty retired editor for Random House, living in New York, when she got wind of my interest in the West. She began sending me clippings from magazines about The Dam and the effect it was having both downstream in the Grand Canyon and, of course, the utter destruction by drowning upstream.

Early on, it had become apparent that this dam was a bad idea. For example, water released from the bottom of Glen Canyon Dam is cold—very cold—and consequently, it killed most of the native aquatic life in the Grand Canyon. They've since stocked the river with trout, which is wonderful if you want to imagine you're fishing an alpine stream.

The dam had been built to “save” water for the Lower Basin states of the Colorado River Compact, but evaporation and bank storage was diverting millions of gallons of water away from the reservoir. That's what happens when you build a reservoir in...the DESERT! The politicians could just as easily have moved the measuring point to Hoover Dam, 300 miles downstream, but that would have made too much sense and saved too much money. So the Bureau of Reclamation built another dam.

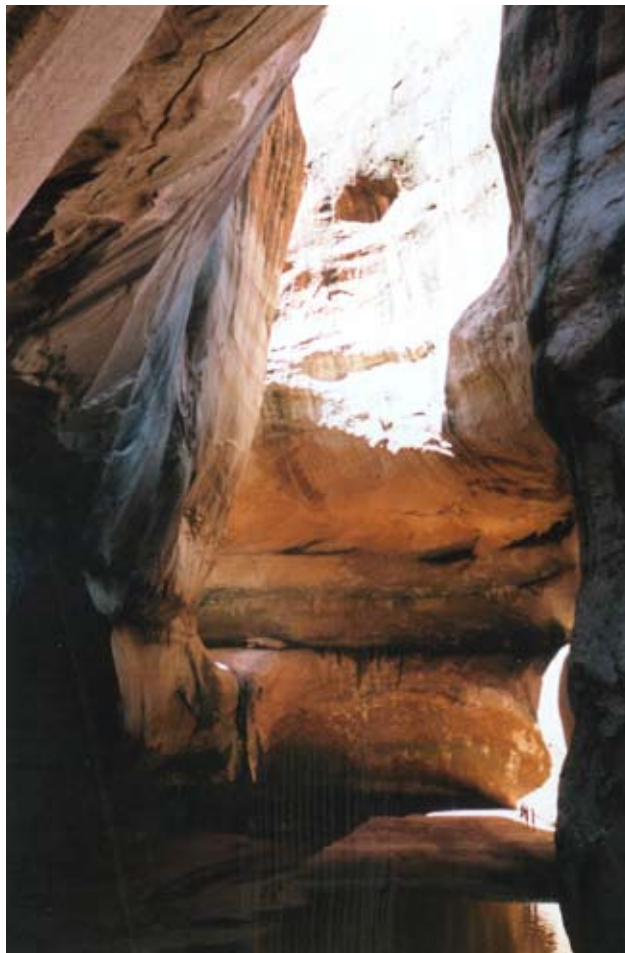
In my twenties, I became obsessed with The Dam and Glen Canyon. After my move to Utah, I made frequent trips to the reservoir and to Glen Canyon's above-water remnants. I discovered Ed Abbey and read *The Monkey Wrench Gang* about 200 times. I dreamed of “the precision earthquake” that Abbey's Seldom Seen prayed for. I drew a cartoon of The Dam with a gaping hole in its concrete facade and drove all the way to the remote Wolf Hole, Arizona to present

it to my favorite author. Of course, Abbey didn't live there as he'd claimed—he'd never even been there. Still my passion for Glen Canyon stayed red hot.

But one day, more than a decade ago, I was ranting about dam removal to an environmentalist pal of mine (an attorney of course) and I noticed a certain lack of enthusiasm on his part.

I said, “What's wrong with you? Don't you want to see Glen Canyon restored?”

He smiled sadly and replied, “It won't be the same.”



It was true that the Glen Canyon Story went beyond the physical resource—there was a romance to it that elicited visions of a Desert Xanadu. Tucked away in this remote, unknown corner of the Southwest was an entire canyon system, almost 200 miles in length. It was one of the best kept secrets in America. It truly

was, as Eliot Porter later said, “The Place No One Knew.” It was full of history, going all the way back to the Anasazi. The Glen was inhabited by just a handful of hermits and oddballs and explored by a strange mix of cowboys and prospectors and river runners. The legendary Bert Loper lived down there, in his old cabin that he called The Hermitage. Art Chaffin ran the ferry at Hite. The place was full of ghosts.

The men and women who had stumbled upon Glen Canyon in the 1940s and '50s, who really found religion of sorts here, were like an exclusive congregation. Their names, like Glen Canyon itself, are the stuff of legend. Glen Canyon will always be inextricably linked to the lucky few like Ken Sleight and Katie Lee and Harry Aleson and Moci Mac and Doc Marston. How much did this place mean to them? Watch Ken and Katie choke back tears a half century after the Glen's demise. The loss runs deep.

“All that's gone,” my friend said. “You can drain the reservoir but you can't bring back the way it *felt*. That's gone. All of it.”

He looked at me and said, “If they ever drain the lake, it'll be a ZOO down there.”

Still, when the drought in the early 2000s pulled Lake Powell's elevation down by 150 feet, I was anxious to see what the re-exposed parts of Glen Canyon would look like. Abbey had always insisted that Glen Canyon was not gone, that it was simply in “liquid storage,” waiting to be restored and rejuvenated.

In March 2005, the reservoir fell to a level that, if my friend Rich Ingebretsen's calculations were correct, meant that one of the canyon's most iconic natural features, Cathedral-in-the-Desert, was completely out of the water. Ingebretsen is the president and founder of the Glen Canyon Institute and is probably more dedicated than anyone to its restoration.

We'd seen the photos of this extraordinary side canyon, with its tapestried walls and hanging gardens and its fluted waterfall. What would it look like 42 years after it went under? Would it have retained its splendor after all these years? And would it *feel* the same? Ingebretsen and I wanted to find out.

To add some irony (or hypocrisy?) to our quest, we rented a speedboat to travel the 30 miles down lake from Bullfrog Marina---the very motorized contraption that we both claim to loathe. But we forgot about our contradictions when we found the Cathedral looking almost exactly as it had been portrayed in the old photos. Even small rocks on the ledges above the



Why are our days numbered
and not, say, lettered?

— Woody Allen

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drop-off were just as they'd been in 1963. Later, we found inscriptions from the Hole-in-the-Rock Expedition, weathered but still readable after all these decades under water.

I'll be damned, I thought. Cactus Ed was right—it IS still here in "liquid storage."

Because we'd come down river in early March, we may have been the first visitors to see the re-emerging Cathedral. The ride back to Bullfrog was bitter cold and most people had the good sense to wait for warmer weather. And when the temperatures rose, the people arrived in droves. By May the narrow side channel was choked with tourists. Motorboats, house boats, canoes and kayaks—it was veritable gridlock down there. Scores of tourists rubbed elbows taking pictures and the silence we'd experienced in early Spring was gone, replaced by reverberating motors and the shouts and hollers of well-meaning admirers. It looked like Delicate Arch on Memorial Day weekend.

I thought about the way the spiritual and moral aspects of our last wild places have been pushed aside in favor of their recreational and commercial components. I wondered if the return of those magnificent thousand foot canyons would be seen for their grandeur or their climb-ability.

I wondered what Glen Canyon would be like if the reservoir were drained and the canyon restored. A free-flowing Colorado River would stop most of the house boats, but the river in Glen Canyon was serene and almost rapid-free. Motor boats were already making trips up and down the river in the last few years before the Colorado stopped flowing. They would surely return.

But what about the non-motorized traffic? I thought of the hundreds of thousands of 21st century recreationists who would descend upon this "secret place," all of them looking to "re-create" the Glen Canyon that we'd read about. They'd be replacing the jet ski/Evinrude people—it's true, and for some that's an improvement—but it dawned on me: today's noisy waterborne tourists recreate *on top* of Glen Canyon. Yes, they race about the lake at full-throttle and drink beer and make noise and disturb the general welfare, but the Glen is safe and sound under 500 feet of H₂O.

Drain the lake and the New Generation of Glen Canyon Recreationists might make me nostalgic for water skiers. Instead of floating and boating *over* Hidden Passage, they'd be *inside* it. The "place no one knew" would become "the place that got screwed." It would be loved to death by the very people who claimed they wanted to restore it. It's an idea so common these days that the notion is a cliché.

The Park Service would naturally feel the need to control this mass, this *mess* of "adventurers," and Glen Canyon Recreation Area would eventually become yet another heavily-regulated river---the waiting list for permits would stretch to years.

I thought about the way the spiritual and moral aspects of our last wild places have been pushed aside in favor of their recreational and commercial components. I wondered if the return of those magnificent thousand foot canyons would be seen for their grandeur or their climb-ability. Would these spires *inspire*? Or just challenge gonzo climbers to 'conquer' them? Would visitors to the Cathedral-in-the-Desert feel reverent? Or would they instead be inspired to exploit its beauty in some commercial way nobody has even fathomed yet?

On my return from Springdale via The Dam and Page, Arizona, I passed the overflowing parking lot for Antelope Canyon Scenic Tours. Twenty years ago, nobody had heard of this stunning slot canyon. Today its promoters are making the big bucks. It's a real "wilderness adventure." When I think about restoring Glen Canyon, I know that this is a harbinger of things to come.

And it occurred to me...maybe we don't deserve the return of Glen Canyon. Not yet. Would its restoration be anything but a cash cow for the "amenities economy?" Would it simply be the latest natural wonder to be exploited by thousands of entrepreneurs and trampled by millions of insensitive, thrill-seeking recreationists?

After decades of longing desperately to see Glen Canyon out of the water, I surprised even myself when I thought: maybe keeping it in "liquid storage" is the better alternative. Maybe it's even safer down there under all that water. Because today, I'm not sure we humans are worthy of something as holy as "The Place No One Knew."

BALANCED BUDGET? HOW ABOUT A BALANCED LIFE?

I was in Cortez, Colorado last week, doing some shopping and had just climbed out of my car in the grocery parking lot when I heard somebody shouting. Across the street was an auto dealership and standing on the curb was a salesman, waving to me for reasons I could easily imagine. I waved back.

"Hey," he hollered, "Aren't you ready to turn in that jalopy for a new set of wheels? We have some great deals."

A "jalopy?" I drive a 1999 Subaru Forester with 140,000 miles on the odometer. She's still got some life in her.

"Thanks," I replied, "But this car has got to last me a while longer. There's no way I can afford a new car these days."

He laughed. "Hey you don't have to pay CASH for it. We've got all kinds of financing for every kind of buyer...ANYBODY can afford a new car."

I shook my head. "There's no way I'm going in debt to buy a car. Isn't that why the country and the government are in such bad shape? Isn't it because everybody keeps spending money they don't have?"

"Yeah but..." he protested. But I cut him off.

"The truth is, hardly anybody can AFFORD a new car. That's not the point. What you want is for all of us keep SPENDING, whether we have the money or not."

By now, the car man was growing weary of my logic and good common sense. "Okay," he said. "I can see we're not going to put you in a new car today."

But isn't that the problem in a nutshell? Whether we're talking about government debt or consumer debt, spending beyond our means seems to be the only way to keep this shaky house of cards going. If we all want to keep living beyond our means, we all need to keep spending money we don't have. And we NEED to live beyond our means so that everybody else can do the same.

The government keeps interest rates low, hoping they can tempt us to keep borrowing. When they say there is "growing confidence in the economy," all they mean is, it looks like people are borrowing more money than they should again.

Look at the car salesman—he needs us to go into debt and borrow money to buy a car because he needs to have an income sufficient enough to let him borrow money so he can buy that new flat screen. The guy that sells the tv needs the income so that he can buy a bigger house. We're keeping the American Dream alive with smoke and mirrors.

It's no different with government. Everybody wants to cut the government's budget but nobody can decide how to do it or what to cut. And certainly nobody wants to see government spending slashed if it adversely affects benefits to them.

Conservatives dream of slashing discretionary spending to all those welfare bums and inefficient government bureaucrats. But whether they deserve their benefits and salaries, these millions of people take that money and SPEND it. They buy products and services that come from the private sector. Take away all those government paychecks and who really suffers for trimming government fat?

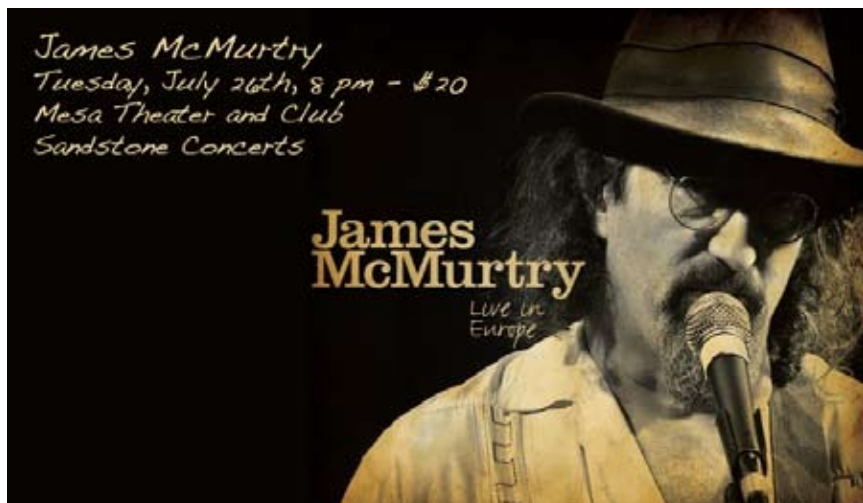
Liberals want to slash defense spending. But the fact is, more than 5 million Americans work in the civilian defense industry. What about *their* pay checks? Plans to close or curtail military bases always run hard against the reality that nearby communities often depend heavily on their business.

Is there a solution? Yes. Think about the things in Life that really make you happy and learn to live without the rest. If we all need less stuff, we won't need to borrow more money. And we won't have to earn as much to achieve the same result.

Spend less. Be happy. Don't worry....in that order. How's that for proposing something that can be so completely logical and so utterly unattainable, all at the same time?

At least I'm not suggesting a *rendez-vous* with an asteroid. I've become much kinder and gentler these days.

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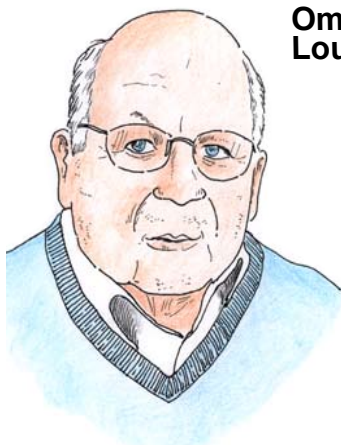
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- 10) It's the only thing government sells that they can actually deliver
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- No one likes to be afraid alone
- 8) It comes on fast and lasts a long time (like tequila shots)
- 7) It creates lots of jobs in the Military Industrial Complex
- 6) It spreads, like a swarm of bees, coming from all directions
- 5) We might as well be afraid.
- The world ends in 2012, or was it May 21, 2010?
- 4) If all we have to fear is fear itself, it's easy to know what to be afraid of
- 3) "Fear is the mind killer."
- And it's cheaper than booze and drugs
- 2) Fear is what we do best
- 1) Hope is so 2008

“DOG of the MONTH”

“G O R D Y”



“Here’s a couple of photos of our daughter’s Springer Spaniel, Gordy. He can be a little obsessive-compulsive as shown in the photo of him jumping to try to grab a branch of a blue spruce tree. Honestly, there was nothing on the branch or the tree that initiated this jumping, which continued for a steady 5 minutes before we could distract him. The other photo is of him as a puppy three years ago. From the puppy photo, he gives the impression of a little angel with no internal tormentors.”

SHERM BYE...longtime Zephyr reader



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Obama's Post-Bin Laden Rules of War

Tonya Morton

If you're like me, you likely watched the TV news coverage on the night of the assassination of Osama Bin Laden with mixed feelings.

First, relief. It's nice to know there's one fewer man plotting the deaths of others. And who didn't hate having to be the annoying liberal the past ten years, when the topics of Afghanistan and Iraq inevitably arose, saying over and over again, "But how does this relate at all to September 11th and finding Bin Laden?" At least that conversation is over.

Second, concern. No one seems to be discussing whether we had a legal right to assassinate Bin Laden, and judging from the 24-hour news cycle, I'm not the only one thinking this may provoke some retaliation on the part of angry Al Qaeda sympathizers.

And third, has anyone suggested creating a drinking game based solely on news anchors' Obama/Osama name mix-ups?

But, after watching the uninformed speculation about Obama's speech, and then the slightly-more informed speculation about Obama's speech, and then Obama's speech, and then the post-speech speculation about the effect of Obama's speech, I turned off the television May 1st and crawled into bed with one question in mind: Now what? Not how will this cripple global terror networks, since every TV pundit has agreed now that Bin Laden was, at most, a figurehead of Al Qaeda the past few years, removed from the day-to-day operations of the organization; but rather, to what end will the Obama administration use this assassination? In a supreme moment of liberal goodwill, will Bin Laden's death finally provide the rationale to scale down the futile "war on terror," as it fumbles into its tenth year? Or, in an Orwellian victory for irrationality, will this be justification for greater aggression and military involvement overseas?

As anyone who follows politics knows, given the choice of a rational option and an irrational option, the US will always choose that which more closely resembles a video game.

Or, in an Orwellian victory for irrationality, will this be justification for greater aggression and military involvement overseas?



And so, four days after Bin Laden's body hit the water, the CIA, under the orders of the President, attempted to assassinate American citizen Anwar Al-Awlaki. Awlaki, who currently resides in Yemen, is unquestionably an American citizen. He was born in New Mexico in 1971, was raised in both Yemen and America, and received a Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from Colorado State University. The reason provided for his attempted assassination: Awlaki is a Muslim cleric, now affiliated with Al Qaeda, who reportedly had some contact with the Fort Hood shooter and also possibly the man who attempted the Christmas Day bombing a couple years ago. And last year, despite the fact that Awlaki hasn't been directly linked to any deaths, he was placed on the list of people singled out for "targeted killing" by this administration.

First of all, the fact that President Obama has a "kill list" of people he wants assassinated is pretty scary even before you consider that it contains the names of American citizens. The public has known that the list contains Awlaki's name, along with the names of at least two other Americans, for a year; and the response, needless to say, has been muted. Awlaki's father, represented by the ACLU and the Center for Constitutional Rights, brought suit against the government last year, requesting the removal of his son's name from the list. Unfortunately, the suit was dismissed on technicalities; but the judge admitted the case raised "stark, and perplexing, questions." Among these questions, of course, was the issue of whether the president could "order the assassination of a U.S. citizen without first affording him any form of judicial process whatsoever, based the mere assertion that he is a dangerous member of a terrorist organization."

Then on May 5th, with a predator drone attack, the president's authority to kill American citizens without a trial became less a theoretical question and more a frightening reality.

Now, the argument in favor of stopping Al-Awlaki can be quite compelling. He is affiliated with Al Qaeda. He has expressed support for men who kill innocent civilians, and he has provided religious justification, through his popular sermons, for his listeners to commit violent acts. It has even been suggested that, with the death of Bin Laden, Awlaki will rise to greater prominence in Al Qaeda, possibly to the point of taking over Bin Laden's operational role.

But all of that information still doesn't add up to a justification for murder. First of all, it isn't as though Awlaki is the only religious leader advocating violence against his enemies. In Uganda, Rev. Martin Ssempe, who in the past worked with President Bush on AIDS prevention and Pastor Rick Warren's Saddleback Church, is known as the "Kill-the-Gays" Pastor for a reason. His sermons have inspired numerous acts of violence against homosexuals. And yet he remains

alive. Here in America, Televangelist Pat Robertson still appears on TV even after has called for the assassination of Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez. The Reverend Fred Phelps and his followers openly pray for God to kill all the homosexuals with disease and/or earthquakes. And, in 2009, Arizona pastor Steven Anderson stated in a sermon that he prays for President Obama, the "socialist devil," to die and go to hell. You'd think if Obama really wanted to sic a predator drone on a religious leader, it'd be that guy.

But while the Bible may argue that thinking about adultery is as evil as committing adultery, and that wishing a man dead is as evil as actually killing him, the law does not. That is why Pat Robertson is free to advocate assassination and Rev. Fred Phelps can wish upon every star that all the gay people were dead. As long as they don't act on those hateful wishes, they remain innocent in the eyes of the law.

Of course, the argument could be made that, in addition to expressing verbal support for violence, Awlaki has conspired to commit violence—that he has aided people like the Fort Hood shooter in their intent to murder people. But "conspiracy to commit murder" is an offense to be proven before a jury, and this case has not been made in any court of law. No evidence has been provided to a judge; no jury has confirmed its veracity.

As anyone who took high school Civics knows, under the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution, "No person shall...be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law." An argument could be made that, while the Constitution is an American document, the rights it enumerates are universal—that we should grant Constitutional protections to every enemy we face; but even under the Bush-era philosophy that Constitutional rights are reserved only for American citizens, Awlaki has the right to a trial.

Even during the Civil War, when the fate of America was far more imperiled than it is now, certain practices of war were deemed incontrovertibly wrong. In Section 9, Article 148 of General Order 100, known as the Lieber Code, President Lincoln established that:

"The law of war does not allow proclaiming either an individual belonging to the hostile army, or a citizen, or a subject of the hostile government, an outlaw, who may be slain without trial by any captor, any more than the modern law of peace allows such intentional outlawry; on the contrary, it abhors such outrage. The sternest retaliation should follow the murder committed in consequence of such proclamation, made by whatever authority."

In other words, even in a state of war, America does not label certain individuals as "outlaws" who can be killed at whim. So, what does it say about our current government that it would murder its own citizens without trial even when no war has been declared?

This is an act without legal precedence. While, admittedly, our country has done some terrible things over the years—let's not even get into the stuff we did in South America—the formal stance of our government has always favored a judicial approach to our enemies. In the wake of World War Two, when the fates of the Nazi leaders lay in our hands, we didn't merely line them up against a wall and shoot them. On the contrary, we held trials, we presented evidence, and we passed fair sentences. And those men were responsible for the deaths of millions. Is the argument of the current administration that Anwar Al-Awlaki is more evil than them?

When we captured the mastermind of the first bombing attempt at the World Trade Center, in 1993, responsible for six deaths and thousands of injuries, we didn't assassinate him. Though he wasn't an American citizen, he was given a trial, and he was sentenced to life in prison.

When we captured Timothy McVeigh, responsible for 168 deaths in the Oklahoma City bombing, we didn't just kill him. He was given a trial; evidence was presented against him and he was sentenced to execution by a jury.

Both Saddam Hussein and Slobodan Milosevic, leaders responsible for genocide and the torture and murder of their own people, faced a jury and were presented with the evidence against them.

So what's so special about Anwar Al-Awlaki, that he deserves an immediate death? The answer, it seems, is that—as of May 1st—you don't have to be "special" to die without trial anymore. In the wake of the assassination of Osama Bin Laden, a quick death just seems more efficient than a drawn-out trial. The thinking of the Obama administration seems to be that, since Americans were joyous at the extra-judicial killing of one Al Qaeda leader, and seemingly comfortable now with the attempted killing of a second, where's the barrier to further action? Congress will follow their constituents and the courts will refuse to step in. The question is not, is it Constitutional? The question is not, is it moral? The only question to ponder is: who's next?

TONYA MORTON is a regular contributor to The Zephyr.



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Minneapolis, MN



JIM CASE
Flagstaff, AZ



DAVE YARBROUGH
Waddy, KY



**PAUL
EBBERT**
Lander,
WY



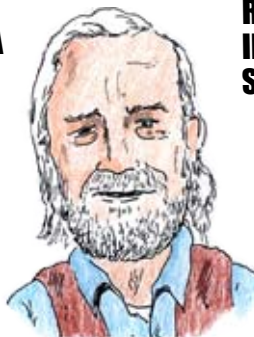
**TONI
McCONNEL**
Flagstaff,
AZ



TED HELM
Brentwood, TN



**SAM
CAMP**
Big Bar, CA



**BERNARD
COLE**
Flagstaff,
AZ



RACHEL WHITE
SLC, UT



**RICHARD
INGEBRETSEN**
Salt Lake City,



MIKE MAROONEY
San Diego, CA



STEVE SMITH
Louisville, KY
"...where every man is king!"



JANIE TUFT
Moab, Utah



GARY MEEKS
Price, Utah



BRENT SWANSON
Idaho falls, ID



**DON
BAUMGARDT**
El Paso, TX

**MO'
BONE!**

THE FREEDOM OF MULES

R. AVY HARRIS

He looks like the kind of mule you could trust. He's about my height and gazing into my eyes with his dopey brown ones like he's already decided to like me. This is the kind of mule you could befriend, travel with for years if you wanted, and cry when he got old and crippled and had to be put down with a shotgun.

He looks like a good mule.

Then again, I know nothing about mules. The only one I've ever ridden was a hateful old ass out on a trail ride when I was 7 and my parents got the whim to spend the weekend on a guest ranch. That mule hated me – not that I blame him. He spent 6 hours a day trudging behind a line of grander horses, the click of cameras and bad renditions of “My Darlin’ Clementine” drowning out the plod of his own heavy footsteps. To add insult to his already-heavy burden, someone had named him Obedience. As if he'd lost the will to be anything else.

I'd bite the kid on my back too.

But this mule is clearly blazing his own trails. He's saddle-free and nuzzling my bare shoulder with a surprisingly soft mahogany coat. I found him – or he found me – back behind the closed-down general store in Klondyke, Arizona. When I press my forehead against the glass to look inside, a spider peers back. There are still some boxes and cans on the shelves, but someone disconnected the phone in the booth out front and the doors are all boarded up. I don't know what I was expecting – a cold beer would have been nice – but at least the icebox is still there, right where the guidebook said it would be. Unplugged and on the concrete pad behind the store.

I've been wondering about this icebox for months, and fantasizing about it for days. Hikers on the 700-mile Grand Enchantment Trail – who are few and very, very far between – cherish our resupply packages. We pack them with M&Ms and extra socks and bottles of blue Gatorade and mail them off to post offices in small towns every couple hundred miles or so. Or, in ghost-towns like Klondyke, where the post office shut down decades ago, we mail our supply packages to “Klondyke General Store, Freezer Behind the Store, Klondyke AZ” and wonder if the legendary freezer actually exists.

It does.



after Martha Jane died in a horse accident, Jeff built a cabin up in Rattlesnake Canyon where his only daughter was promptly bit by a snake and died. This was 1917 in the low desert lands, and I can't imagine a place further away from the frozen foxholes of German battlefields or a life more removed from the un-gainly tanks burning their way across Europe. Still, the Power family had made their patriotic sacrifice: the oldest son, Charley, had been wounded in the war.

I imagine Old Man Power, a widower with one dead child and another wounded, the day the letter came for two more of his sons. He'd have ridden down to town for supplies and the mail, and I can see his shoulders slump as he stands just where I am now, the sun casting long afternoon shadows down the road. I can hear his silence when he read the official letter, imagine the way he folded the paper with sharp creases and firmly placed it in his shirt pocket. Like a man clutching a grenade to his chest and carrying it far away from the people he loves. I imagine the long ride back to his cabin, this bomb near his heart only deepening his resolve. It's a romanticized version of events, I know. But Old Man Power is a legend, and legends have their way of growing half-truths around them like layers of calloused skin.

He'd have told his boys that they weren't going to war, and Tom and John would have agreed. Someone needed to stay home to see after the Old Man, and their land. It would have been a short conversation, the stoic nodding of three cowboy hats, and an irrevocable decision. Tom and John refused to register for the draft. They kept to the cattle and the cabin and the calls of raptors circling above.

It was a few weeks before Sheriff Robert McBride and his posse closed in around the cabin. They came at dawn, when the sunlight hadn't yet tipped and trickled over the canyon walls and the air was still cold. The shootout that morning, February 10, 1918, lasted only a few minutes. By the time anyone knew what had happened, the Sheriff and two of his deputies were dead. Tom, the youngest, was bleeding from his forehead and the Old Man wasn't going to last long. The reports say his sons made him comfortable – I like to think they laid him at the banks of his favorite spring to watch a last desert daybreak wash over his boots

– then packed up and fled South with their ranch-hand Tom Sisson. It was just the three of them, a couple of horses, and an old pack mule.

**But this mule is clearly blazing his own trails.
He's saddle-free and nuzzling my bare shoulder
with a surprisingly soft mahogany coat. I found him – or he found me –
back behind the closed-down general store in Klondyke, Arizona.
When I press my forehead against the glass to look inside,
a spider peers back.**

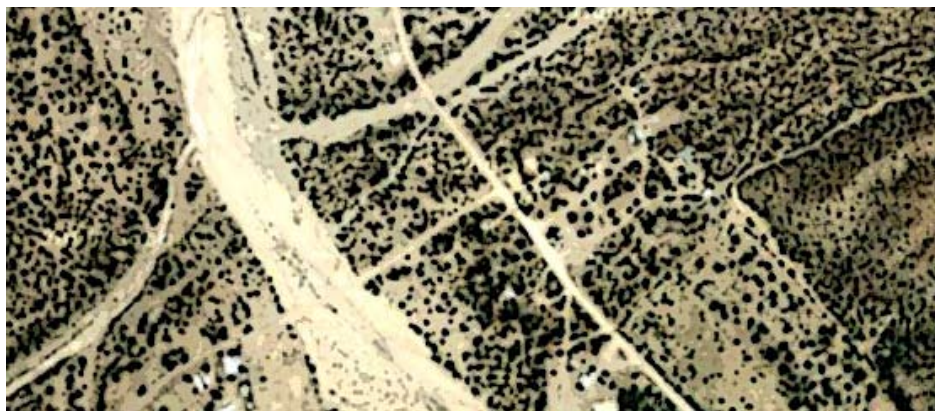
Refrigeration came late to Klondyke, along with other modern conveniences. Standing in the only intersection in town with just a mule for company and miles of empty dirt road behind me, it's not hard to imagine this place as it was a century ago. For most of its history Klondyke has been a drowsy, placid town – even at its heyday during the gold rush there were no more than 500 miners plus a lady or two. These days it's down to about 40, mostly ranching families dotted throughout the canyons. As I made my way towards Klondyke over the past few days, walking through the shallow waters of Aravaipa Canyon and napping in the shade of its sharp red walls, I could hear echoes of voices every now and then, or cows grumbling in the night. Ranchers have been homesteading these hidden, lush canyons and their mesas for decades and don't pay much mind to passers-through like me. They're in this land for the long haul – it doesn't matter who comes and goes.

One of these families is infamous in Arizona – about the only thing Klondyke is known for, really. I read about Jeff and Martha Jane Power back when I was planning this trip, back when “Rattlesnake Canyon” was just a name and I hadn't yet fought off a Mojave Rattler with my hiking poles. Ironically, the year

I've never killed a man or broken too many laws, but I know the way your heart swells up into your lungs and your throat when you're running from something. I know the way the wide, empty horizons of the Southwest make you think, for just a minute or a day, that everything has to end in freedom after all. Maybe the Power brothers and Tom Sisson and their mule felt the same. But they still couldn't outrun Arizona's largest manhunt in history. They surrendered to a U.S. Army patrol less than a month later, just barely across the Mexican border.

I've claimed my supply box from the freezer and am eating M&Ms in the shade of the community bulletin board that once boasted the “Wanted” poster for the Power gang. Now it is advertising the sale of the general store and a tractor in good-condition. The mule followed me from the freezer and is nudging the box beside me with his wet nose. I'm still eating M&M's when I spot dust down the road, a cloud rolling up above the crunch of tires on gravel. A well-used pickup stops just short of the bulletin board and the man inside looks past me and straight at the mule.

"Rusty, what in the hell are you doing out here?" He leaves the engine running as he steps out in Levis and a t-shirt, swings a rope around Rusty's neck, and loads him into the back. He nods at me through the rolled-down window and pulls a u-turn in the road. Rusty looks back at me with his wide brown eyes and is gone.



**Some people say we're all running from something,
one way or another.**

Tom Sisson died in prison. The Power brothers spent 42 years behind bars in Florence, Arizona, just a few counties away from the now infamous Sheriff Joe Arpaio, who keeps Iraq War resisters imprisoned in old army tents in the deadly heat of the desert. Sheriff Arpaio is under investigation by the U.S. Department of Justice for human rights violations, but that hasn't stopped him from reportedly abusing war resisters or military deserters in his jail. I wonder if the Power brothers would have survived for 42 years had they been imprisoned under someone like Arpaio.

As it is, Tom and John both died free men, in the very land for which they once ignored a war. Someone had to see after it. I'll walk past the Klondyke cemetery a few miles down the way, where the brothers are buried next to their sister and mother, beside the bones of the Old Man. I won't spend much time studying the headstones – the sun is plunging low in the sky and it's time to move on.

Some people say we're all running from something, one way or another. From wars and calls to patriotic duty, from a lasso around your body and fences keeping you in, from the click of tourist cameras and the advance of modern conveniences. I suppose those people would say that I'm running, too. That I'm hiding out here in the creases and folds of the canyons. I don't mean to hide, really. I'm just here to lay a few desert wildflowers on the graves of nearly-forgotten legends. And, if I can, I'd like to see after the land.

Avy Harris grew up in the foothills of Colorado where she became passionate about exploration and environmental justice. She's carried her backpack everywhere from Arizona to Thailand, and is currently wrapping up her time teaching in South Korea. She will move to Ethiopia this summer, and you can follow her travels at <http://AvyAroundTheWorld.wordpress.com/>.



ALAN JOSLYN
Highlands Ranch, CO

KEEAN & DANIEL
Salt Lake City, UT



ALLAN GREENWOOD
Excelsior, MN



RICK LARSEN
Santa Cruz, CA



CRISTA WORTHY
Los Angeles, CA



STEVE PEAKE
Nashville, TN



CHRIS HELFRICH
Salt Lake City, UT



JIM CAHALAN
Home, PA



BRIAN GATLIN
Grand Canyon, AZ

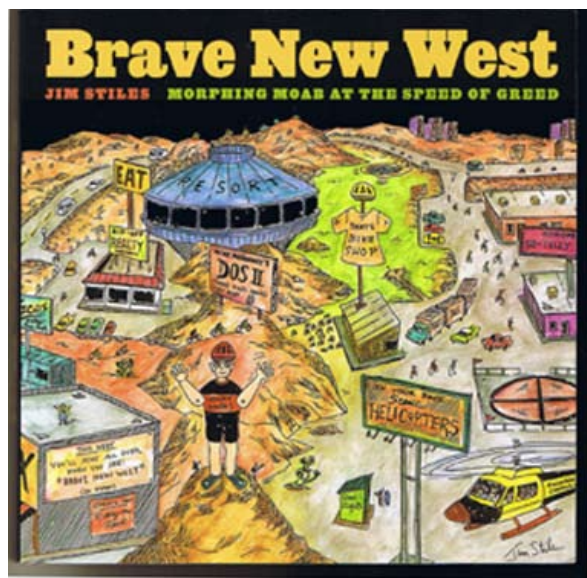


GREG SMITH
Ventura, CA

more

BACKBONE

BRUCE BENGE
Grand Jct, CO



"Jim Stiles holds up a mirror to those of us living in the American West, exposing issues we may not want to face. We are all complicit in the shadow side of growth. His words are born not so much out of anger but a broken heart. He says he writes elegies for the landscape he loves, that he is 'hopelessly clinging to the past.' I would call Stiles a writer from the future. Brave New West is a book of import because of what it chooses to expose."

-- Terry Tempest Williams

SIGNED COPIES OF
Brave New West

are now available directly from

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\$20.00 postage paid
checks only at this time

Instant Moab....

Terry Knouff

I happened across a quote the other day. It was by a hipster musician named Gabe Saporta, lead singer of the band "Cobra Starship", and it surprised me, not just because it represented a coherent opinion, but because of the effect it had on me. He's reported to have said "Nostalgia is the failure of true emotion". Maybe if Mr Saporta had posted his thought on Facebook he would have just used the parlance of the times (or media) and said "Nostalgia FAIL ! ".

Either way I take exception with the thought that nostalgia is a failure. I've spent many happy hours immersed in nostalgia, and it has always felt like a valid emotion to me. Really who hasn't wanted to step back in time to "the good ol' days", even if those "days" are just an ambered amalgam of the best of times, and a repudiation of the worst.

I went searching for a counter-quote to the Nostalgia/Fail and found what I thought probably nails it for most people these days. It's attributed to another rocker, Lou Reed, late of the proto-Alt band, "Velvet Underground" and goes like this "I don't like nostalgia unless it's mine". Can't say that I wholeheartedly agree with Mr Reed either, because I do relish the nostalgia of others, not ALL others mind you, but some.

Mr Jim Stiles is one of those whose nostalgia I do enjoy considering. Stiles and I have some common interests, the Canyon Lands being chief among them. His recollections of "better days" in the heart of the redrock desert country have been a source of enjoyment to me, and no doubt to you as you took the effort to come to the Zephyr website and maybe do some of your own "emotional failing".

I realize the Zephyr isn't just about the past, and as Jim has graciously allowed me to share some photos here, I'm mindful about looking at presenting some "modern" views of the area as well. But for now, I'm beginning these photo essays with a nod to things "gone by". Which brings me to the quote I really wanted to use, by British writer Margaret Barber "To look backward for a while is to refresh the eye, to restore it, and to render it the more fit for its prime function of looking forward."

So till next time, from Moab
yours, Terry Knouff
instantmoab@gmail.com

(U/L) Eye of the Whale Arch, near Moab, Utah. Manipulated Polaroid SX70 TimeZero film. Now defunct.

(L/R) The Square Tree, Cahone, Colorado. This fabled topiary once flourished on former US Route 666 (don't worry, it's a 'man's number'). Manipulated Polaroid SX70 print

(U/R) When the angle is just right, this sign will point you to some Entrada Sandstone. Arches National Park. Manipulated Polaroid SX70 print.

(L/L) Junction of old US 163 and UT 211, the so-called 'Church Rock'. Manipulated Polaroid SX70



Movie set gas station. North of Moab, Utah. From the "film", "Sundown, A Vampire in Retreat". My brother and sister painted and aged this set. People stopped to buy gas, and beer. Polaroid P/N film. 1988

To see more of Terry's photographs, check out his online gallery
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/tknouff/>



(R) Green River Utah melon stand, best in the west. Gelatin silver print from Polaroid P/N negative. 1988

(L) Back when a Cafe sign implied nothing more than a cup-a-joe, and a hearty helping of grease. No Wi/Fi, no Grande, no Foursquare (look it up). The former Canyonlands Cafe, was on Main Street, Moab, Utah. Polaroid SX70 print.



The old Robber's Roost Motel sign, Main St, Green River Utah. Replaced several years ago with a new yet unimproved version.



Park Service sign-shop fail. North of Arches National Park. Polaroid SX70. (Don't go looking, it's long gone)



Old movie set, north of Moab, Utah. 1988. Polaroid Positive/Negative film

Terry Knouff has been loving the Canyonlands country since 1979, and living in it since 1987. But his first love (not counting Claudia Fancier in the 4th grade) is photography. Especially instant photography, the kind the Polaroid Corporation once provided to the world. Those days are past, Polaroid went belly up, and the Canyonlands have , by some estimations, been loved to death. But life goes on, and Terry continues to find enjoyment in the Canyon Country near his home in Moab, Utah, and in the art of Photography. He has since found some satisfaction in digital photography, but of late he's yearned for the "good-old-days" of his instant photography youth. He is currently exploring instant films offered by other companies and former employees of Polaroid, under the banner of the "Impossible Film Project". And building his perfect instant photography beast, The Frankenroid. You can find his photography online at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/tknouff/>



MY FAVOURITE TOURISTS...#1

JEFF WOODS... the Welsh Wanderer

Jim Stiles

The first time I met Jeff Woods of Swansea, Wales, I was a ranger at Arches National Park. Most of the time I worked out of the Devils Garden, 18 miles inside the park. But today, I'd been called down to the visitor center to cover for another ranger on sick leave. The questions were easy to answer, but consistently the same. After awhile I could answer before they asked: "Two hours, if you don't want to get out of your car" (How long does it take to see this place?) and "Outside and to the left" (Where's the bathroom?).

Most of the tourists looked the same... a lot of polyester and doubleknit shirts out there. But when this one particular visitor shuffled through the double plate glass doors, I sensed instantly that my day was about to be changed. The man stood barely five and a half feet tall (at 5'8" I towered over the little fella), and he sported a scraggly, fiery red beard that actually made him look more elf-like than ferocious. But mostly, I noticed his pack. His pack, a giant red nylon monstrosity with about thirty zippered compartments clinging to every square inch of it, towered over all of us. It barely cleared the doorway as he passed through. Red beard headed directly for the information county and me.

Meanwhile, a gentleman and his wife had approached me for information and advice. They had hoped to see 13 national parks in six days and there wasn't a moment to lose. They figured they had about 90 minutes to devote to the Arches and they wanted me to budget their precious time for them. The man with the red beard and enormous pack muscled his way beside them, eager to ask a question of his own.

But the couple was not about to leave. Stylishly attired in his and her matching Mickey and Minnie Mouse royal blue, zippered, jumpsuits, the man asked about the condition of the road.

"Not that it matters," he explained. "Our motorhome may be 36 feet long, but it can go darn near anywhere."

Suddenly a muffled explosion split the conversation in half. Minnie, with a look of absolute horror, buried her face in her hands and turned away. Her husband, angry and offended, turned to the hairy elf next to him and confronted him -- man to man.

"Excuse me!" he said with self-righteous indignation, "But you farted in front of my wife!"

"I'm terribly sorry," the accused replied with British aplomb, "but I didn't know it was her turn."

Mr. Mouse turned shakily to me. "Ranger! I demand that you do something! This man's behavior is OUTRAGEOUS!"

"Well, sir," I replied. "I'll have to check the Code of Federal Regulations. That would be CFR 36. I'm not real clear on just what the law is regarding flatulence, but I'll be glad to find out."

His wife shrieked again and ran out the front door and he was right behind her.

The air cleared, so to speak, and activity in the visitor center resumed a semblance of normalcy. My gaseous friend remained standing by the counter.

"Well, I must say," he began, "you Yanks are a bit sensitive at times. And what was that bloody costume they had on? Do you people always dress in pairs?"

"We Americans are truly a diverse people," I explained, "as well as sensitive.... and who might you be?"

"Geoffrey Woods. Call me Jeff... I'm hitching around the world, and I thought I'd drop in for a few directions."

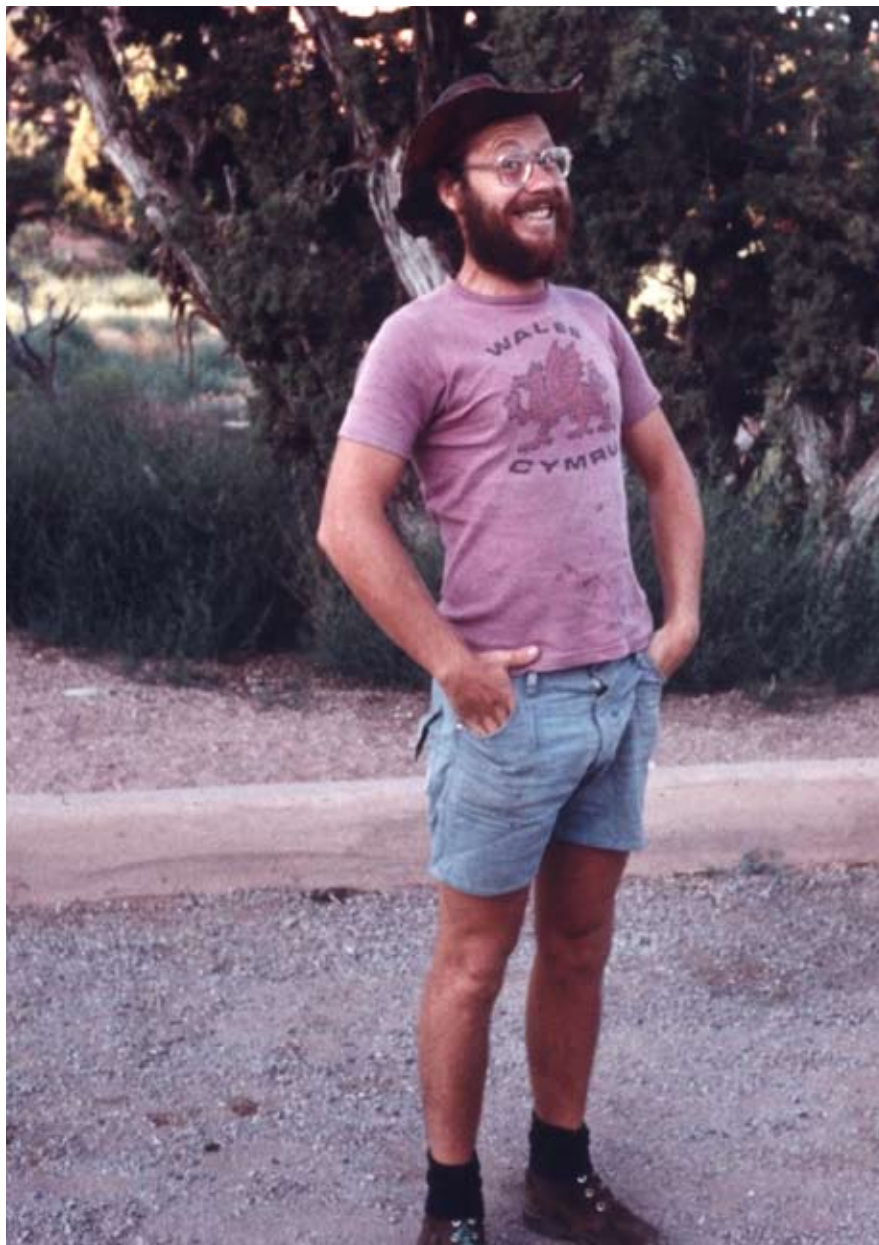
Jeff was looking for Canyonlands National Park. He planned on taking an extensive backpacking trip, he said, and also wanted to spend some time on the river. I showed him the maps, which he studied at length, and gave him the names of some rangers at Canyonlands that could help him, if he needed any. We shook hands and he said goodbye.

And that was that. I told a few of my friends about the incident with Jeff and Mickey and Minnie, but it soon faded from my memory. A couple weeks later, I left Moab for a trip to the Maze District of Canyonlands. I'd managed to put five days of annual leave together and I wanted to see this stone labyrinth first hand, after only reading about it for so many years.

Although the Maze itself is only forty miles southwest of Moab, as the crow flies, the rest of us have to take a more circuitous route. Just to reach the Hans Flat Ranger Station, you have to travel north on US 191 to Crescent Jct (30 miles), then west on I-

70 past Green River to the junction with State Route 24 (36 miles), then south on SR 24 to the junction with a dirt road (26 miles), then 60 miles east on a sandy, washboard dirt track that leads to Hans Flat and beyond. The plan was to meet my friend Mike Salamacha, a seasonal at the Maze, and stay the night at the Hans Flat residence. The next day, we planned to head downcountry.

After a long dusty ride from the pavement, I reached Hans Flat at sunset, just ahead of a wicked thunderstorm that was moving in from the southwest. I found

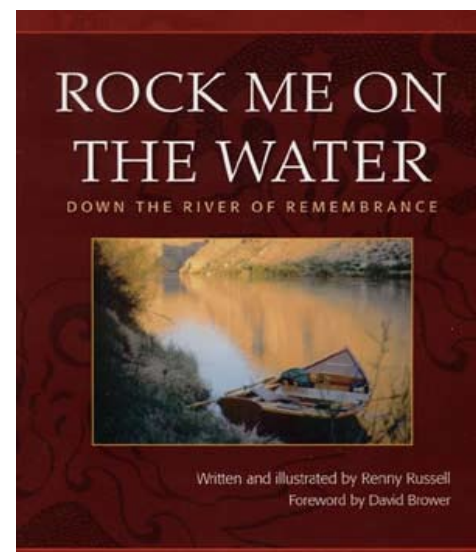


"Renny Russell's *Rock Me on the Water* is at its heart courageous. To return to the same power of nature that took his brother thirty years previous—to be with it, to confront it, to take solace in it, and to be inspired and healed by it—is remarkable in itself. His book is, as well, a testament to the evocative rhythms of the wilds. In this complicated dance, this profoundly personal journey, Renny Russell also gives us an amazingly spirited tour of one of the truly great landscapes of the American West and a keen understanding of its power to shape a life."

Robert Redford

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<http://www.rennyrussell.com/>

From Renny Russell,
the author of...



Salamacha and after moving some gear from my car, we sat down with a beer to study the topos and plan the next day's trip.

We had barely settled in to our chairs when the doorbell rang. At Hans Flat, no one rings the doorbell. At the time only three or four rangers lived at Hans Flat. They were the only human inhabitants in an area that spanned millions of acres. I got up to open the door. I couldn't believe it. It was that Limey again.

"Hello mate," he said. "Fancy meeting you again way out here."

I looked around for his car and then remembered he was hitching. Still I'd neither seen nor heard any vehicle at all.

"Aren't you exhausted?" I asked.

"No," he replied. "I am."

I was confused, "What did you say?"

"I said," he explained, "No, I am."

"No, I am?" What kind of answer is that?" I asked.

"Well," he explained, "You said to me

'Aren't you exhausted?' and I replied,

'No, I am.' What is so difficult about that?"

"How did you get here," I asked.

"Oh... walked up from the river," he explained.

"The river? What? Which river?"

"Oh, you know, mate...the Colorado."

By now, Salamacha had joined us and knew the distances better than I. He was amazed.

"That's a good thirty miles," Mike said. "You came all that way in one day?"

Jeff shrugged. "Well it was a bit up hill, wasn't it?"

We brought Jeff inside, and he told us his story. Here's what he had accomplished in a matter of a few days. After charming a woman ranger with his tale of adventure, she loaned him the use of her two-man rubber raft. He floated down the river and after several days had reached Spanish Bottom last evening. This morning.... this morning, he strapped his pack and the rubber raft (deflated) to his back and hauled this enormous load to the Doll's House, two thousand feet about the river. There, he hid the raft behind some rocks, and with only his fifty pound pack to slow him down, managed to walk another 32 miles and end up mooching a beer off Salamacha just a few minutes after sunset. Mike and I studied the Limey closely as he took a last gulp of Budweiser.

"Awfully weak, this American beer," he grumbled. "Mind if I have another?"

Mike uncapped one more and handed him the bottle.

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"Well," he explained, "You said to me 'Aren't you exhausted?' and I replied, 'No, I am.' What is so difficult about that?"

I looked at Salamacha. He shrugged and went outside. Salamacha was a lot wiser than I've ever been.

"So," I continued, "Are you tired or not?"

"Yes and no," he answered.

"Yes and no? Can't you make up your mind if you're tired or not?"

"Of course, I can. I've answered your question as honestly and directly as I know how."

"Isn't that just like the British to make something simple into something complicated?"

"Yes," he groaned, "it's not!"

I almost hit him with my beer bottle. "What in the hell are you talking about?" I roared. "What the hell is WRONG with you?"

"Let me explain this to you, Yank. You said to me 'Aren't you tired?' That is to say 'Are you not tired?' Well, of course, after walking 32 miles in twelve hours, I'm very tired indeed. So my answer, properly phrased, should be:

'No, I am.' Do you understand?"

"Well, not exactly. Aren't you turning everything backwards?"

"Yes..... I'm not."

Salamacha walked over. "Here Stiles.... Have another beer."

The next day, Mike and I headed for the Maze Overlook, and Jeff came along. He still needed to recover the raft, cached somewhere above Spanish Bottom. We reached the overlook in the afternoon, and the next morning, Jeff took a route via Pete's Mesa to the Dolls House, while Salamacha and I explored the Maze. Twenty-four hours later, he'd rejoined us. When we saw him come around a bend in the canyon, he looked like a giant duffle bag with feet.

That afternoon, as we trudged through pools of quicksand in a beautiful, deep side canyon, the Limey pulled up next to an old cottonwood tree and opened his pack. Mike and I stopped, and came back to the tree.

"Why are you stopping?" Mike asked.

"Tea time, mates," he said.

Sure enough, he pulled out his stove, a pot, a canteen, and a tea bag. Jolly good show. He advised us to get out our cups, so the three of us did the civilized thing and had our cup o'tea at four.

It was pretty much like that for the rest of our time in the Maze. I started wishing I had a crumpet, and I didn't even know what a crumpet was. Two days later, we were back on top. From Hans Flat, Jeff drove with me back to Moab, where he immediately re-packed and took off again. A few days later, I heard a ranger report on the park radio that he'd issued a warning to a hiker without a permit. Some crazy guy trying to walk the White Rim. What's a hundred miles or so?



For his next trick, Jeff walked the Colorado River to Spanish Bottom. When I later asked Jeff how he'd intended to perform this particular feat, he explained that he'd heard it was a "low water year."

In the months and years that have passed since our first meeting, Jeff Woods has come and gone many times. He helped me build a cabin and used up all my tea bags. He drove my ex-wife's car off a cliff. He ran over a cow in a VW bus on the road to Hanksville. (It was, he said, a black cow, on a black road, on a black night.) He went around the world. Twice. He got mugged in Albuquerque, but chased down his attackers and single-handedly disabled their pickup truck. Today, Jeff Woods rails against our materialistic society and the apartheid policies of South Africa at an all girls' Catholic College in Scranton, Pennsylvania... I hate Jeff Woods.

The last time my little buddy came to town, I introduced him to some friends of mine. Jeff told them about the hikes, the black cow, the mugging, the ex-wife's car.... nobody believed him. When he'd left, I heard someone say, "Isn't he the most outrageous person you've ever met?"

No, I replied. He is.

**LIFETIME
BACKBONE
MEMBER**

**SEDONA,
ARIZONA**

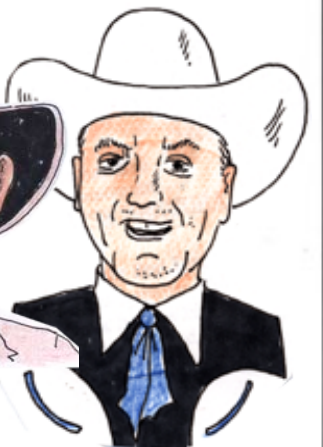
**ANNE
SNOWDEN
CROSMAN**



GREG KROLL
Santa fe, NM



TOM THORNE...
SLC, UT



'U F O HILL'---Mystery Solved



EXTRATERRESTRIAL? BEINGS FROM BEYOND?

For decades, I was convinced I'd found an alien landing site. Almost 20 years ago, I wrote this:

'Alien visitations? The proof is here, on an isolate ridge in the northern part of Grand County. We call it UFO Hill.

In a 300 foot circle, near the summit of a rocky ridge, every juniper tree stands dead---singed, as if by some intense heat or radiation, but NOT by fire. What occurred here? One can only imagine...

'It was a clear night, full of stars. The Anasazi hunting party could not have had a more successful day. Weary but pleased with their good fortune, they set up camp along the ridgeline.

But it was the night the sun came out. The brilliant orb appeared out of nowhere, blinded some of them and terrified them all. The Light hovered for more than an hour and one of their party vanished before their very eyes. When the Light finally disappeared into the sky, the men, desperate with fear and in agonizing pain, made their way to the great river and the cool relief it provided them.

'But the Light became their new god. And to pay homage to their god, the hunters carried hundreds of river stones to the ridge. They built a monument here...to the Light.

'Today the dead trees recall the night. And the pile of river stones, still there after all these centuries, marks the place where the Light appeared.'

NOPE...JUST HOLLYWOOD



AND THEN...

YouTube spoiled my fantasy. Searching for old films shot in the Moab area, I recently stumbled upon a video of the movie "Rio Conchos" opening credits. There it was...my dead forest. And in another scene no longer on YouTube, the footage of Native Americans burying their chief under a large pile of...you guessed it, RIVER STONES.

Another alleged alien encounter bites the dust.

Here's the YouTube link:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GJq3QRQInn0>



**BOBBY MAGILL
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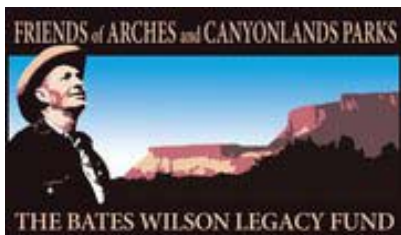
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These are the noble
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members who didn't
send a photo.
But I am standing by
...pen in hand...JS

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in memory of
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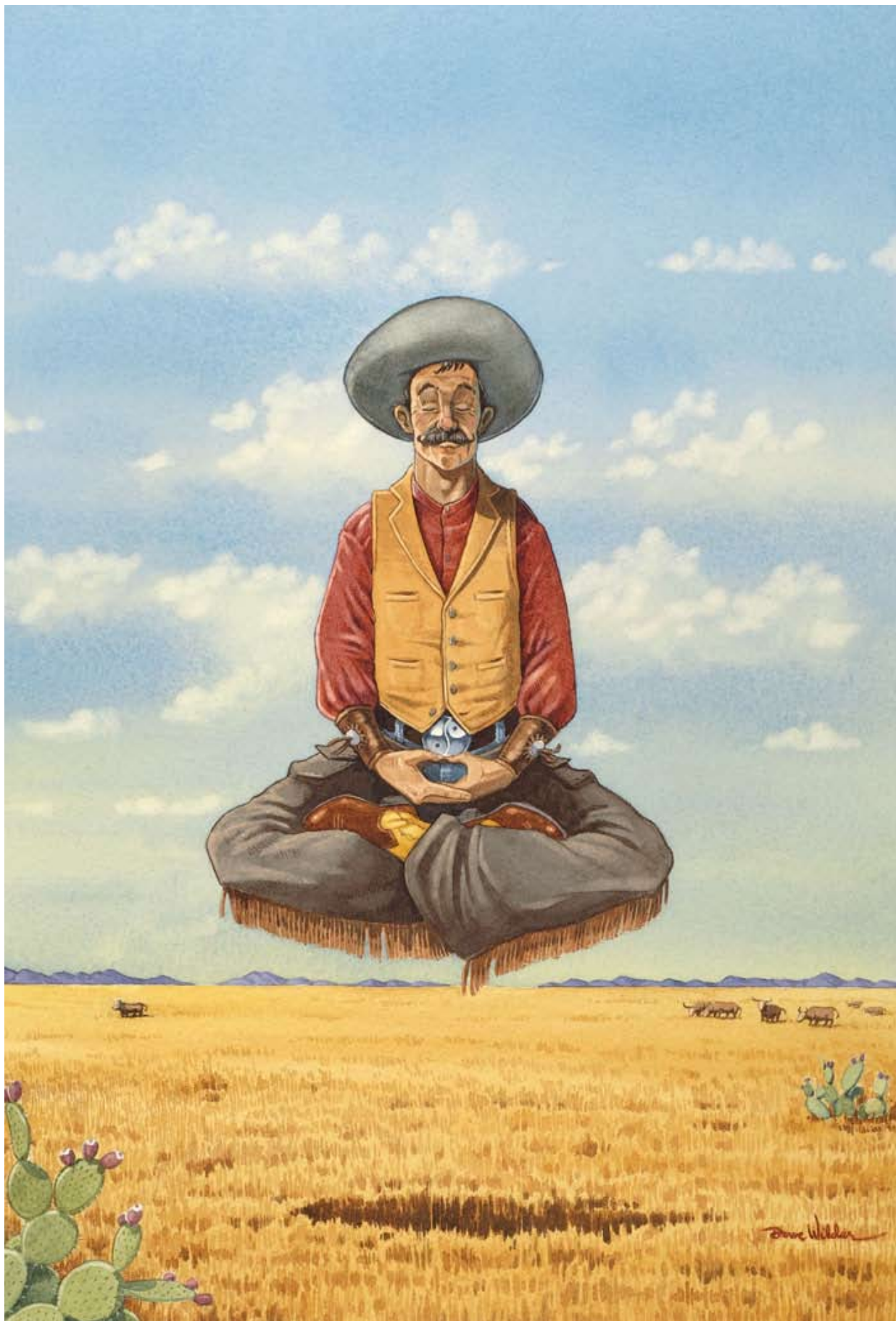
**LIFETIME
BACKBONER**

STEVE RUSSELL
Moab, UT



THE *WILDER* WEST...

the ART & WIT & WISDOM of DAVE WILDER



Louis L'Amour Redux

It was quiet, too damn quiet.

Crouched behind a boulder in the blistering heat of an August afternoon Virgil Justice took stock of his current predicament. The hole in his left side was still bleeding badly and the mixture of blood and sweat glued his shirt to his skin. The lead slug had gone clean through an inch below his rib cage and he tried to tell himself the wound wasn't fatal. The thought didn't bring much comfort as the pain and the heat conspired to fog his mind and dull his reflexes. He knew that he would need every ounce of strength and all the wits he possessed to survive the ordeal that was to come. He checked the action on his trusty Colt revolver and counted the cartridges that remained in the loops of his belt. Twelve. Might be just enough if a whisper of luck were to come his way. Pulling his Stetson down low to shade his eyes he took a chance and stole a look down at the dusty valley below.

His lame and windblown horse still lay at the base of the cliff where he had put the poor beast out of its misery. No buzzards had yet appeared and nothing but dust devils seemed to be moving on the flat, lifeless plain. Or was there? Off to the west a cloud of dust was moving against the wind. Squinting against the glare he could soon see them, twenty armed men riding hard along the trail he had just taken. It was the Logan gang all right, crazed with rotgut whisky and hell bent on revenge for the death of their leader whom Virgil had been forced to kill in self-defense. There were too many of them and Virgil knew it. Soon they would be on top of him. He felt the bile rise in the back of his throat as a cold chill raced down his spine. "Fuck it," he said and pulled out his cell phone to dial 911.

---Dave Wilder

Dave Wilder's art can be seen at:

<http://www.wilderarts.com>

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<http://www.highplainsfilms.org/>



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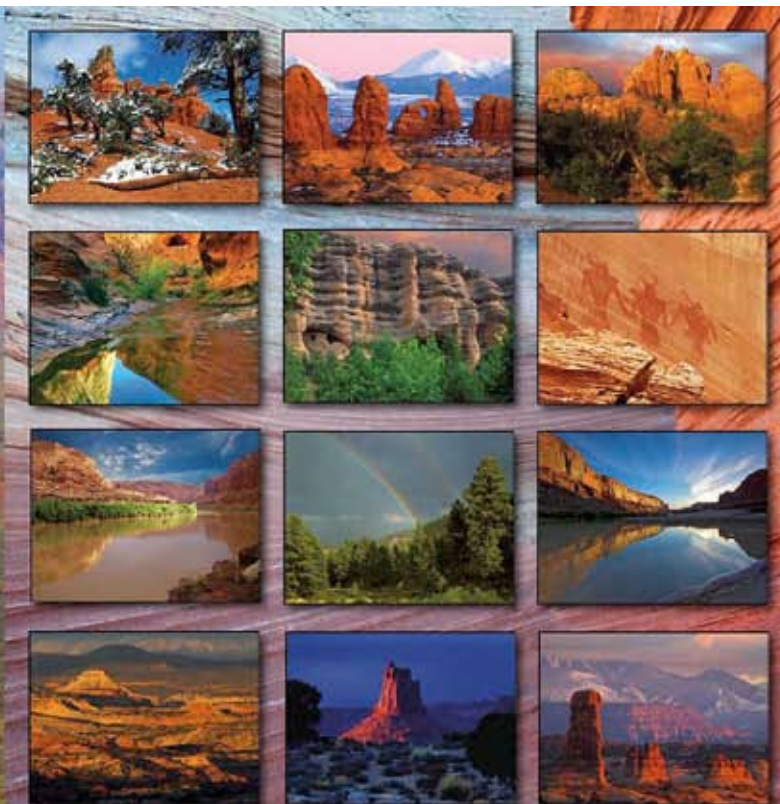
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LOSING SOLITUDE

By Martin Murie

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BRIGHT SPOT IN OHIO

We have a thriving antiwar demonstration going in Yellow Springs, a town that served as an Underground Railroad station for blacks escaping slavery. Once, we were visited by three men from Pakistan who were defending Islam. We have been interviewed several times by the local paper.

Recently the local radio station talked to us.

The demonstration was started by a woman who was jailed for three months for defying the powers-that-be in the School of the Americas. That was eight years ago. We are going on nine years now.

So, every Saturday Alison and I drive eight miles from Xenia (couldn't afford the prices for real estate in Y.S.).

We have fun talking to regulars. Today we had 25 people on the four corners of the intersection.

I am writing this because my recent poster reads:

**STOP WARS
IT'S UP TO US
WHO LOVE THIS LAND
HIT THE STREETS**

I quote from the first paragraph of a piece in "In These Times" by Stephen Lerner, under the title "Take the Fight to the Streets:"

"THIS CAN BE OUR MOMENT. A new activism is emerging in the United States and abroad, where people, in unexpected places, are standing up to challenge the rich and powerful. From recent uprisings in Egypt, to young people and workers in Europe marching and striking against shortsighted austerity plans, to the battle of nurses, teachers, firefighters and community members in Wisconsin, and the sit-ins and occupation of banks starting around the country, a movement is starting to grow."

Organizing for peace & justice, for equity & the common good, has an entirely different feeling from that of trying to jack up enthusiasm for some military adventure dictated by the interests of huge corporations. Corporations, which

have been systematically robbing the workforce of this country by outsourcing jobs, cannot then demand the loyalty of that workforce by asking them to pay for military protection of the corporate interests. Particularly when the corporations themselves pay damn all in taxes.

Now we are fighting in Libya. We need to remember that each nation has its own path to salvation and that we

should not attack others in defense of Democracy. Each nation has a different pathway to Democracy and we should be helpful in peaceful ways. The United States should not be in the killing mode to please the rulers of our nation. This is just plain dumb.

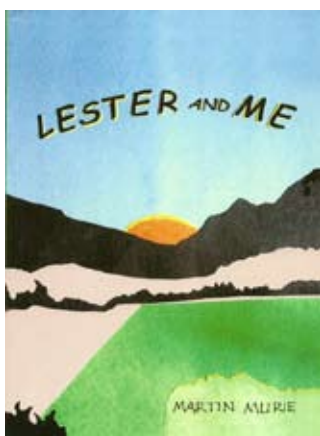
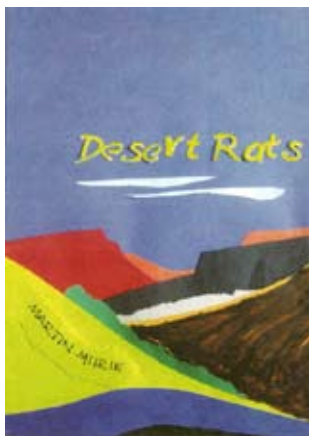
Still quoting, Alexander Cockburn, in Anderson Valley Advertiser (Mendocino County, California), headlined, "Libya, Oh What a Stupid War:

"For his part, Obama wasn't keen on intervention, seeing it as another costly swamp, yet another war, and one opposed by Defense Secretary Gates and the Joint Chief of Staff. But by now the liberal interventionists and the Neo-cons were in full cry, and Obama, perennially fearful of being outflanked, succumbed, hastening to one of the least convincing statement of war aims in the nation's history."

He's already earned a threat of impeachment from leftist Congressman Dennis Kucinich for arrogating war-making powers constitutionally reserved for the U.S. Congress, though it has to be said that protests from the left have been pretty feeble."

Back at the demonstration, I make my rounds from corner to corner, stopping passing pedestrians to ask them "Have you ever thought of joining us?" The replies are always interesting. Sometimes I say, "Taking that step will change your life." That is true. It takes a little gumption to take that crucial step, to show your face to passing cars and walkers of the sidewalks. Some blame the weather and I accept that. Sometimes rain or snow or cold makes the demonstration miserable. My parting shot is "I'll look for you next Saturday." Recruits are few, but steady-- this, after all, is a very small town -- they soon become "regulars." We have a drummer now that livens things up on even the most miserable day.

LET'S HIT THE STREETS



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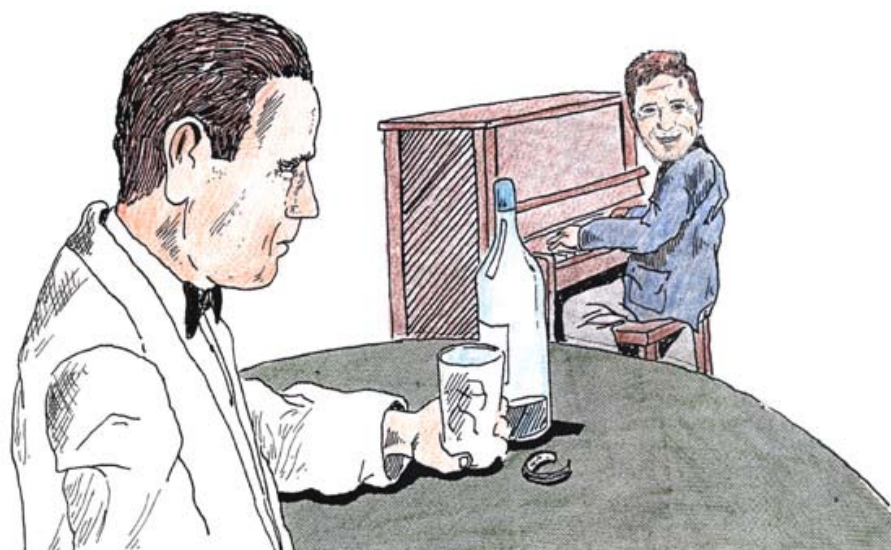
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TWO YEARS IN THE KINGDOM OF MOROCCO

BY CHARLIE KOLB



Spring has come to the Atlas. The apple trees are blooming and the poplars on the riverbank are furred with a delicate haze of pale green leaves. The willows are heavy with fuzzy grey catkins and the songbirds have returned to perch on my windowsill when I open them wide to let in the shafting morning sunlight. Tourists go in and out of the village on motorbikes or riding in expensive Land Rovers. "Adventure Tours" they are called, though I have a hard time seeing how a one or two day stop in my village is considered an adventure. 14 months here and even I feel that I have barely seen a fraction of what the Atlas and its people have to share with the world.

A few weeks ago I stood out on the fringes of a wheat field with a friend of mine who I will call "MoHa". He is the brother of a local store owner whom I know well, and one of the few people willing to let me work in his fields with him. I try to come here once a week and learn about the farming methods practiced in this area for millennia. After diverting water from the river through a maze of shallow ditches, we removed the plugs of earth and sod and watched as the water filled his small wheat field row by row.

As I watched, the wind swept down the valley from the heights and brushed the tender green shoots of the new wheat as a loving father might playfully ruffle the hair of his small child in passing. It was cloudy and cool that day, but not unpleasant, and I reveled in the smell of wet earth and the feel of growing things. As MoHa and I waited for the water to fill his field, we sat on the edge of the ditch, him smoking a cigarette and me staring at a small earthworm twisting sinuously in my open palm. Looking at its pale pink skin, at the delicate organs and structures at work beneath the translucent surface, I felt like a small child again, having just turned over a rock in my mother's garden. Though her garden is 6000 miles away on the other side of the world, this worm looked no different than the ones I had watched so long ago.

Above us the banded mountains soared overhead, and by the river ancient willows bowed and stooped as if weary from the long months of another winter quietly endured. At noon, I thanked MoHa for letting me help and walked the long road back into the village, leaving a trail of muddy footprints to mark my passage.

Later that week, I found myself walking through the dirt streets and alleyways of the old part of the village toward the earthen house of the family that provided a home for me in those first crucial months spent here almost a year ago now. My path took me across the graveyard with its quiet stones protruding from a sea of waving golden grass. A memory surfaced from the previous year of a small girl with a flashing smile and beautiful eyes. Kalima. One morning in late summer she simply did not wake to her mother's touch; she sleeps now beneath one of these silent stones, marked red with a splash of paint, raw colored like a fresh wound. Her passing shook us all.

Death comes as no surprise to the people here; the harshness of this destroyed place is not lost on the Berbers of the Ait Haddidou. Death is a constant companion that shadows the children as they play and is greeted by the stooped and weathered elders as an old friend if perchance he comes to call. I am sure they would invite him in for tea and bread if they were able.

A village near here made national news when nine children died in a single unrelenting period of cold several winters ago. Paved roads and power lines followed the tragedy, but countless other villages suffer in remote silence and families continue to bury their dead quietly and resignedly, though they may go before their time.

Such harshness eats at me at times. Even in my terrifying periods of illness, being weak and alone unable to walk or speak, I was protected by virtue of being an American. I knew that I could be evacuated at the push of a button, and on a flight home within a day. There is no such escape for my friends here. This harshness is their reality; it is all they know and places outside the Atlas seem like a

pleasant, but surreal, dream.

When I reached the house, I yelled a greeting from the door before walking inside. I shook hands with my host mother Rkia, father Said, and my siblings Mohamed, Rachid, and Fatima. When I reached the baby, Sufiyan, almost 2 years old, he looked up at me shyly with his big brown eyes. "Slm" (shake hands) I said, and he held out his left to me. I smiled and said "yadnin" (other one), and he offered his right. I took it in mine and shook it once solemnly. He grinned at me, flashing his baby teeth, before burying his head in his mother's arms. Now a toddler, Suf was barely able to crawl when I arrived here last year. Now he not only walks, but runs; he has learned to say some simple words and can now ask for what he wants. Watching him grow and change is another reminder of the passage of my time here and of all the wonderful things I have seen.

I sat down next to Said, in my proper place as another adult male, and spoke with Rkia from across the room. She left after a few minutes and returned with a conical clay tajine filled with spiced meat and vegetables which I ate with relish. I stopped eating meat a few months ago and Rkia no longer offered it to me, instead moving it to an area of the dish where others would eat it. We ate with our hands, using crusty fresh bread baked that morning as utensils. A teapot and basin was offered to each of us to wash up after the meal was finished and the children went out to play. Rkia, Said, and I stayed in the small room and enjoyed a cup of sweet Moroccan tea to aid in digestion. I left soon after that and stopped again in the graveyard watching the light play over the stones and shimmer on the swaying grass.

On another afternoon, I leaned against a wall next to a shop and talked with some older men with whom I have become friends. As we spoke quietly about the state of the world and the weather, the sound of singing reached my ears and we all turned to watch as a procession of children made its way up the street toward us.

They moved slowly, dressed in fine clothes, and sang a quiet song as they walked. Most Berber music has a loud, fast tempo and is sung with a frenetic energy. The song sang by the children, mostly young girls, was slow and dreamlike—reverent and peaceful, like a dirge or lament. Above their heads was a human figure dressed in a fine women's jelaba and, at the back of the group, a small boy held a cross aloft. It was exceptionally strange, and I had never seen anything like it here before. Yet it still seemed strangely familiar. I turned to the man next to me to ask about the procession, which was now even with our group. "They are calling the rain," he said solemnly. I looked up at the cobalt sky, cloudless and dry; no rain had fallen in months. I then gestured to the cross and asked what it was. "Did you not know that many of the Berber peoples were Christian before the Arabs came and conquered Morocco?" I shook my head in wonderment and we fell silent for a time. From questions asked later and from what little I can piece together of this strange occurrence, what I had witnessed was a Roman Catholic saint's procession, combined with an ancient Berber rain ceremony. It was a sight to behold.

The following day, I went outside to walk and watched as clouds gathered, towering and swelling on the eastern horizon. The wheat shook in the fierce winds before the storm and the pale tender petals of new apple blossoms swirled around me like summer snow. As I reached my door, the rain began to fall.

I have made two good friends here in the village, I will call them "Said" and "Mostafa". They are 18 and 19 respectively, and good listeners. Spending time with them, I sometimes forget I am speaking another language and we talk and laugh long into the night.

Some evenings, they stop by my home to smoke a hookah with me in my living room. Hookahs are common here and exceptionally well made. Mine was



won in poker game played with other volunteers who gathered in Errachidia for the occasion. Said, Mostafa, and I will sit on the cushions in my living room and watch the smoke curl upward into the sunbeams shafting from my skylight. We talk about mundane things: school, girls we have known, families, and various traditions from our discrete cultures. They dream of going to America one day, but with visas notoriously expensive and difficult to obtain here, it is unlikely they will ever make it. But I hope they do.

Said woke me a 6:00 one morning by pounding on my door. I had been expecting and dreading his arrival; he wanted me to go running with him. I trudged down the stairs, brushing the sleep from my eyes, and opened the door. He was outside in short pants and a sweatshirt, trotting in place like an overly energetic pony. I yawned heavily—I have never been a morning person—and bade him wait a few minutes while I bolted a cup of coffee.

The village was quiet so early; store owners were unlocking their shops, and café owners were setting out and wiping down their white plastic tables and chairs. They waved at me as I passed, and I heard my Berber name “Hassan” being called repeatedly, followed by congratulations and wishes of good health.

We left the village trotting north, Said running ahead like a gazelle and me following behind like a kicked shepherd’s dog. We turned onto a dirt road that parallels the village on the other side of the fields and stopped to look at the village. It is situated on a hill above the river and the pink and brown buildings glowed with the rich, honeyed light of sunrise. The dewy wheat fields sparkled in the still air, and snatches of birdsong drifted by on a wind that smelled of apple blossoms. Men in their jelabas and women in their woolen cloaks made their way out to their plots with picks and shovels. Most of the women held a serrated scythe called an “amouger” that they would use to cut fresh alfalfa for their donkeys and mules back home.

We regained the main road by the middle school and turned back toward my house. Said left me there, panting by my door, and ran off to get ready for school. I turned and climbed the stairs for more coffee. Later, I stood in the sun on my rooftop, cup of coffee in hand, and watched Said and Mostafa walking arm and arm toward the school. Said turned back toward my house, saw me, and waved. I smiled. It is good to have friends.

On the third day of his stay in the village, we started out early to climb the folded mountain that I watch from my roof in the evenings. The climb is steep and rugged—there is no trail...



A Fulbright scholar came to my village one day last week. The Fulbright program is a nine-month term in a foreign country, and its scholars teach English or do research while they are here. They have a cut and dry project ready for them when they arrive, and they are paid almost 10 times my salary each month. This one I had met in Errachidia at a friend’s home and he followed me back to my village. He stayed for several days, watching as I spoke Berber with my friends and reacting politely to the fact that none of them would speak to him in Arabic, a language he knows well. I tried to convince them to speak to him, but Arabic is not well-liked on the mountain and Berber pride runs deep and strong in this valley. Instead, I acted as translator and we got along alright.

On the third day of his stay in the village, we started out early to climb the folded mountain that I watch from my roof in the evenings. The climb is steep and rugged—there is no trail—so we surmised that it would take the better part of a day to summit and return.

The initial climb is in a dark canyon of slate and limestone, the floor littered with smoothed stones and flood debris. A trickle of water flowed down its center, following the path of least resistance to the River Melloul far below. Rounding a bend in the canyon, I found the source of the water, a gushing seep where the limestone met the shale. It flowed lazily down the rocks, coated with a film of dark algae and fringed with cushions of moss. I placed my palm on the damp face of the rock and closed my eyes. I could feel the coolness of the water as it trickled between my fingers, the sun beat down overhead, and a hawk cried faintly as it rode on a thermal high above. Caught up in the moment, I felt that I could feel the pulse of the earth itself, weak and thready in these desiccated foothills, but, despite all the harm done to this place, it still lived. I stepped back and we walked on; as I climbed I could feel the water drying on my palm like a crust of blood.

We began the laborious ascent of the mountains flanks, following faint water-trails and picking our way amongst blooming and fragrant “ifssi” plants. On a false summit, we stopped to rest and drink some of the water we had brought in our packs. A warm breeze drifted over us, blowing away up the mountain and following its twisted contours. Borne upon the wind were hundreds of tiny butterflies. All pure white and nearly translucent in the sunlight, they fluttered in

pairs among the flowers, before being borne past our heads like soft snowflakes, their scaly wings brushing our faces as they passed.

It made me smile, and gave me joy to witness such a display of quiet beauty far away up here in the middle of nothingness and shattered rock. By the time we reached the summit the butterflies had gone.

**Death comes as no surprise to the people here;
the harshness of this destroyed place is not lost
on the Berbers of the Ait Haddidou.**

**Death is a constant companion that shadows
the children as they play**

There is so much more I could tell you; of the quiet conversations shared over tea with wise old men, of the quiet hours spent watching the fields grow and change, and of so many sights and experiences that are impossible to express on the written page.

I could tell you how, in a neighboring village at sundown, as the call to prayer echoes through the streets, the mules and donkeys come streaming in from the fields running, kicking, and cavorting like wild things, before stopping before the doors of their owner’s homes.

I could tell of the stars that shine at night, of crimson sun and icy moon. So much to say, but all I will end with this; another year lies before me and I welcome it with open arms.

“The views and opinions expressed in this article are solely those of the author and do not reflect the views or opinions of the U.S. Government”

CHARLIE KOLB is almost a native Coloradan, and has worked as a seasonal ranger for the National Park Service, but will be working with the Peace Corps until 2012.

The Zephyr looks forward to sharing-regular reports from Charlie. You can also follow him via his blogs:

<http://charlieofmorocco.blogspot.com>

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THE ORIGIN OF COMB RIDGE

Robert Fillmore, Western State College of Colorado in Gunnison, CO

(An excerpt and images from his new book: *Geological Evolution of the Colorado Plateau*)



Comb Ridge is a lofty sinuous spine of red sandstone that stretches over 80 miles across northern Arizona and southeast Utah. This monocline, as these structures are called, begins near Kayenta and snakes northward to fade away near the west flank of the Abajo Mountains. Monoclines are a peculiar component of the Colorado Plateau, with their long ridges of steeply tilted strata in a region otherwise known for its miles of flat-lying sedimentary rocks. They are hard to miss. Although not confined to the Colorado Plateau, their concentration here is unique. Similar structures make up the San Rafael Swell, Capitol reef, and Colorado National monument near Grand Junction. All are closely related in origin and timing.

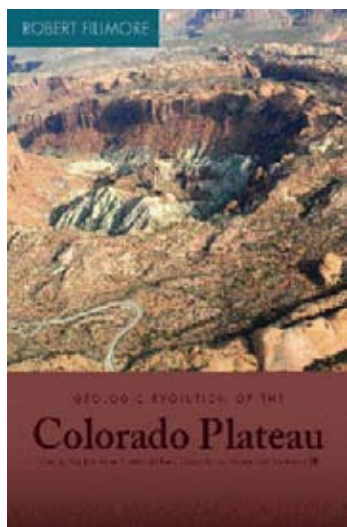
The term monocline refers to a single-limbed fold; in simple geometric terms, a gargantuan ramp. The ramp of steeply tilted strata separates uplifted regions from those that have dropped downwards, relatively speaking. At Comb Ridge the uplifted region lies to the west in the form of Monument Upwarp, which includes Cedar Mesa, the San Juan River Canyon, and Monument Valley. The net result is older Paleozoic rocks to the west separated from younger Mesozoic rocks immediately east by the colossal

ramp of Comb Ridge. Another notable result of this uplift is the ensuing deep incision into the uplift by energized rivers as their runoff seeks a path to lower elevations. The deep narrow canyons of Cedar Mesa owe their existence to Monument Upwarp.

Monoclines are a peculiar component of the Colorado Plateau, with their long ridges of steeply tilted strata in a region otherwise known for its miles of flat-lying sedimentary rocks. They are hard to miss.

The monoclines formed at the same time as the jagged Rocky Mountains of Colorado and Wyoming. This mountain-building event is the result of a widespread pulse of compression that rippled across western North America 65 to 50 million years ago. The stronger crust of the Colorado Plateau resisted the large scale uplift of alpine mountains but did not escape unscathed.

next page



GEOLOGICAL EVOLUTION OF THE COLORADO PLATEAU BY ROBERT FILLMORE

Robert Fillmore's clear, easy-to-read text documents spectacular features of the eastern Colorado Plateau, one of the most interesting and scenic geologic regions in the world. The area covered in detail stretches from the Book Cliffs to the deep canyons of the San Juan River area. The events that shaped this vast region are clearly described and include the most recent interpretations of ongoing geologic forces. The book also includes mile-by-mile road logs with explanations of the various features for most of the scenic roads in the region, including Arches National Park, Canyonlands National Park, and the Natural Bridges area.

Robert Fillmore is professor of geology at Western State College of Colorado in Gunnison. He is the author of *Geology of the Parks, Monuments, and Wildlands of Southern Utah*.

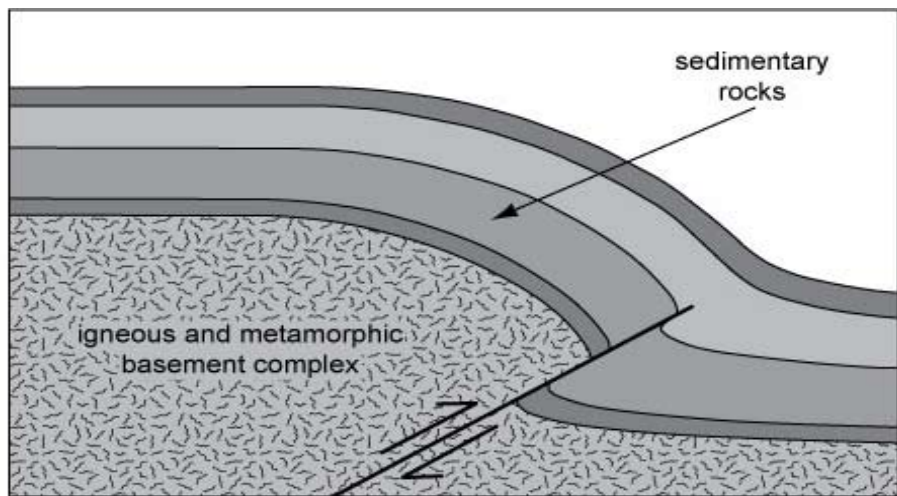
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COMB RIDGE ORIGINS (CONTINUED)



Most monoclines are the surface expression of a reverse fault in the older rocks deep beneath the surface (see attached figure for possible inclusion here). This intense compression shoved older rocks eastward and upward over younger rocks along a low angle fault, tilting the sedimentary layers far above. The surface representation of this deep fault after ~50 million years of erosion creates the current incarnation of Comb Ridge – a hogback of fiercely resistant red sandstone coupled with the adjacent cottonwood-lined valley of Comb Wash, hewn from easily eroded shale and siltstone. Both are clear expressions of the monocline.

RF



Cross-section through a typical monocline showing the inferred reverse fault at depth that at the surface is expressed as a simple ramp-type fold.



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HERB RINGER'S AMERICAN WEST



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HERB RINGER came West from his home in New Jersey in 1939. Camera in hand, Herb captured the American West, from the Canadian Border to the Rio Grande and from the Big Sur coast to the High Plains.

We believe Herb's collection of Life in the West is one of the finest. His work has been published in The Zephyr for 20 years. I am pleased finally, to offer Herb's photographs in color. We are also building a new 'album' of his work, elsewhere on this site.

My dear friend died on December 11, 1998...JS



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From Mudd, Stiles & The Heath Monitor Files

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The population of the world, long expected to stabilize just above 9 billion in the middle of the century, will instead keep growing and may hit 10.1 billion by the year 2100, the United Nations projected in a report released Tuesday.

http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/04/world/04population.html?_r=1&hp



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TPG is teaming up with Singapore's sovereign wealth fund to take a significant minority stake in Delta Dunia, a coal mining services company, in one of the largest private equity deals ever done in Indonesia.

<http://www.ibtimes.com/articles/93525/20101218/tpg-and-gic-to-invest-in-indonesian-coal-company.htm>

OZONE HOLE CHANGES SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE WEATHER

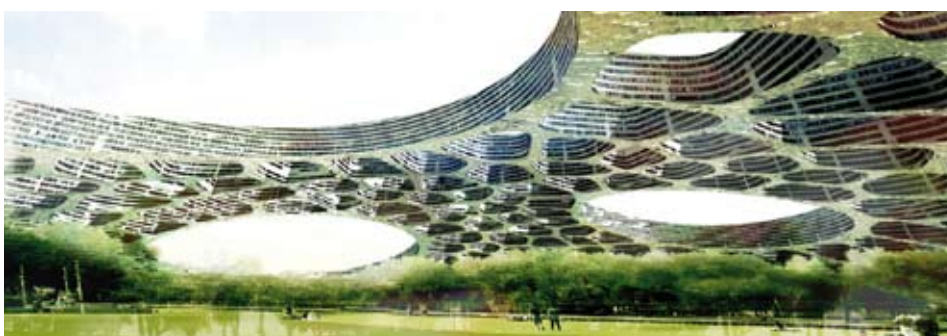
The Antarctic ozone hole is changing weather patterns across the Southern Hemisphere, even affecting the tropics, scientists have concluded.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-13161265>



SKYSCRAPERS OF THE FUTURE

<http://www.npr.org/blogs/pictureshow/2011/04/12/135324809/skyscrapers-of-the-future>



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<http://www.mensjournal.com/the-ghost-park>



CLIMATE CHANGE TO REDUCE SOUTHWEST WATER SUPPLIES

Scarce water supplies in the western US will probably dwindle further as a result of climate change, causing problems for millions in the region, a government report has said.

Climate change could cut water flow in several of the American West's largest river basins by up to 20% this century, the interior department report said.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-13190689>

BAD ECONOMY GOOD FOR BIRTH CONTROL?

http://lifeinc.today.com/_news/2011/04/06/6420323-is-the-bad-economy-good-birth-control



GRACELAND REPLICA OPENS IN DENMARK

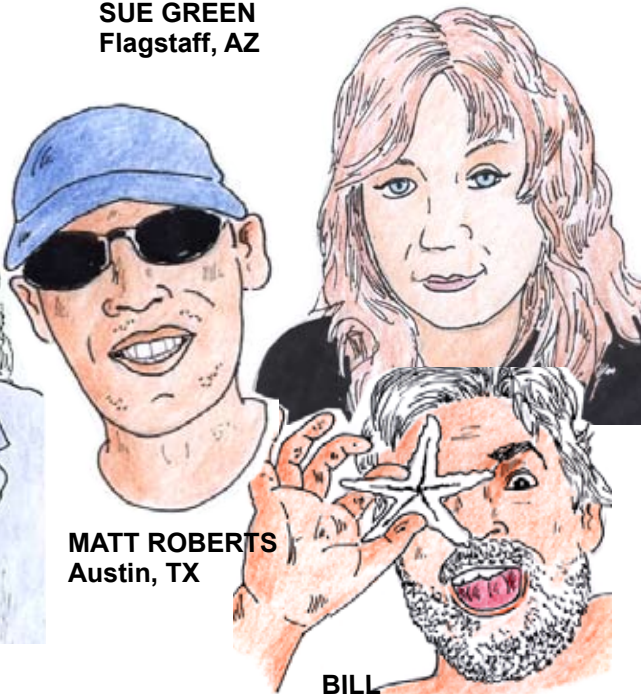
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-13091099>



WHITENING CLOUDS WITH SEA WATER? TO SAVE THE WORLD???

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-12983795>

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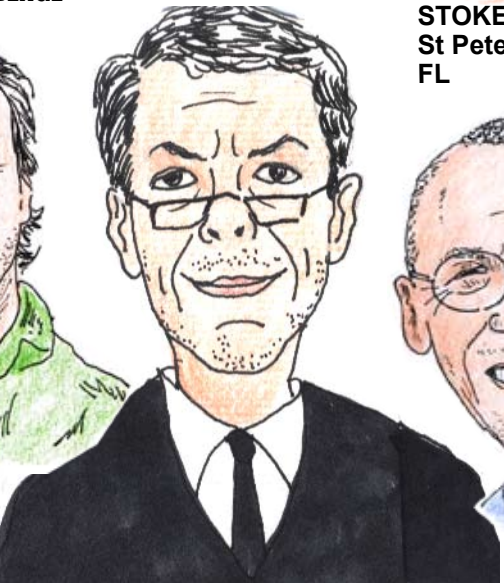
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BY JIM STILES

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THE ELEPHANT in the ROOM

Nobody wants to talk about...shhh...population. WHY?

Kathleene Parker

Let's talk about elephants! Or, as Bones says in the television series of the same name, "the unacknowledged pachyderm in the facility."

They metaphorical pachyderm is ignored on our planet—with often negative consequences to real elephants and other creatures. The elephant—population—is huge and growing, but we run our world as though it doesn't grow or is of little consequence, when in fact it is probably the single most powerful force influencing the planet or our lives. From climate change, to gridlocked traffic, to rising food and gas prices, to the diminishing numbers of other species with whom we share the planet, it is a primary underlying factor.

There are two types of overpopulation: the more widely acknowledged one of densely populated and, not-coincidentally, often impoverished nations; and the less acknowledged, but likely more dangerous, overpopulation of highly populated and highly developed nations, especially China, India and the United States.

The United States, as referred to in the last Zephyr, with its population of 308 million, is the world's 3rd most populated and 4th fastest growing nation, on track to be a China-like one billion late century. Bangladesh's overpopulation is a huge problem for Bangladesh, but little consequence for the world—not so with our overpopulation.

Famous naturalist and BBC film producer Sir David Attenborough recently focused on the elephant in the room when he spoke to Britain's Royal Academy of Arts and Commerce.

"I suspect that you could read a score of reports by (scientific) bodies concerned with global problems—and see that population is clearly one of the drivers that underlies all of them—and yet find no reference to this obvious fact...," he admonished. "There seems to be some bizarre taboo around the subject. It's not quite nice, not PC, possibly even racist to mention it."

Tellingly, Al Gore's *An Inconvenient Truth* called population a primary cause of global warming. Yet, when he defined solutions, he ignored the politically incorrect pachyderm!



fertilizer) costs; and climate change, likely coupled with more droughts and desertification, even as population increases by 80 million a year toward 8 to 10 billion in the mid-to-late-century.

That's up from the 7 billion we will reach later this year and that up from the 4 billion as recently as the 1970s!

Attenborough phrased the situation bluntly, "The sooner we stabilize our numbers, the sooner we stop running up the 'down' escalator. Stop population increase—stop the escalator—and we have some chance of reaching the top—that is to say a decent life for all."

And, perhaps we will have some chance of slowing the largest species extinction—currently underway and directly driven by humans' mushrooming numbers and demands on the Earth—since the die off of the dinosaurs 60 million years ago. Perhaps there'll be some chance of giving the planet's faltering ecosystems, such as the rain forests and the oceans, a chance to recover, and some chance of minimizing the impacts of climate change. Yet, tellingly, there was silence on the subject of population in the voluminous documents issued by the Copenhagen and Cancun climate summits.

Most discussions, reporting and television programs on environmental, energy or resource topics ignore Attenborough's metaphorical escalator and assume that every technological advancement will bring advancement, when in fact technology is not even keeping up with demands created by the spread of industrialization (such as in China and India) and population increase. For example, just one new city recently built in China will use more energy than is conserved in the U. S. with all those Congressionally-mandated squiggly light bulbs!

The silence on population is largely because of the disproportionate influence on public officials and policy held by Big Media—owned by major corporations with a stake in keeping population booming everywhere—which ignores or overtly misleads on the topic.

The United States, with its population of 308 million, is the world's 3rd most populated and 4th fourth fastest growing nation, on track to be a China-like one billion late century.

Bangladesh's overpopulation is a huge problem for Bangladesh, but little consequence for the world—not so with our overpopulation.

Attenborough warned that British scientists, including the previous president of the Royal Society (the equivalent of our National Academy of Sciences), had "referred to the approaching 'perfect storm' of population growth, climate change and peak-oil production, leading inexorably to more and more insecurity in the supply of food, water and energy."

Peak oil—another dangerous and ignored pachyderm—was an issue raised in the 1950s by Exxon scientist M. King Hubbert, who predicted that the world was reaching peak oil production after which supplies would dwindle rapidly. He correctly forecast U. S. peak oil in about 1970 and predicted that peak oil for the planet would arrive near the beginning of the 21st century. While global oil-production numbers are still being evaluated, some believe that has happened. Critically, the second half of oil reserves will be harder to find, more costly (in dollars and in energy) to extract and must fuel a population billions higher and more energy-demanding than that which used the first half of oil reserves!

Attenborough warned—as do an increasing and ever-more vociferous number of those who study resource issues—of a likely looming planetary disaster resulting from a convergence of dwindling fuel supplies; less favorable agricultural conditions (depleted soils, less water for irrigation), along with rising fuel (and

In the United States, we hear about the "stable birth rate" or our "low" one-percent growth rate. Yet, births in 2007 exceeded the 1957 peak of the baby boom, while a one-percent growth rate means the population will double in less than 60 years!

The media tout the Green Revolution, ignoring that the scientist who pioneered it, Norman Borlaug, warned that, at best, he was buying the world a few decades to address population. Indeed, with rising fuel prices and greater costs to pump water or harvest and ship crops, dwindling water supplies globally, the rising costs of pesticides and fertilizers and other factors, the Green Revolution is faltering.

The media do not tell us that in some nations many couples have no access to family planning. In others, like the Philippines, birth control is illegal, no matter a couple's religious beliefs or desperate circumstances—such as the need not to have a 5th or 6th child.

Remember the moral outrage over China's one-child policy, coupled with the silence as to the disaster China confronted without it? (I do not favor China's draconian policy. Taiwan, Iran and other nations achieved far better results through education, incentives and by appealing to patriotism.) Conversely,

there is near media silence on the lack of global leadership or funding for voluntary family planning, including in some of the most volatile nations, like Egypt, with a young, exploding, well-educated population, few jobs and famine lurking on every horizon.

This is the worst, most arrogant form of "rich versus poor" politics. After all, it is poor nations that will pay the highest price for the global warming caused mostly by developed nations ...the slightest increase in drought or desertification —the slightest increase in the severity of storms or in sea levels— will hurt the poor first, worst and always.

The media gush about Brazil, now a whopping 200 million people with a booming economy, ignoring that much of its energy and growth come at the expense of the rain forest. Domestically and in Europe, the media theme is handwringing over the "birth dearth," a la conservative commentator Ben Wattenberg, or not enough young people to care for the old, a theme Attenborough blasts.

"The notion of ever more old people needing ever more young people, who will in turn grow old and need ever more young people and so on ad infinitum is an obvious ecological Ponzi scheme," he said, pointing out that the only population

policies in most rich nations (including our own,) with their huge per-person environmental footprints, are policies encouraging more growth!

This is the worst, most arrogant form of "rich versus poor" politics. After all, it is poor nations that will pay the highest price for the global warming caused mostly by developed nations. Since poor nations survive on the margins, the slightest increase in fuel prices, hence food prices—the slightest increase in drought or desertification—the slightest increase in the severity of storms or in sea levels—will hurt the poor first, worst and always.

That's an elephant that it is more than time—morally, ethically, intellectually, scientifically—to acknowledge!

U.S. CENSUS BUREAU POPULATION CLOCK

U.S. 311,320,136

World 6,917,346,625

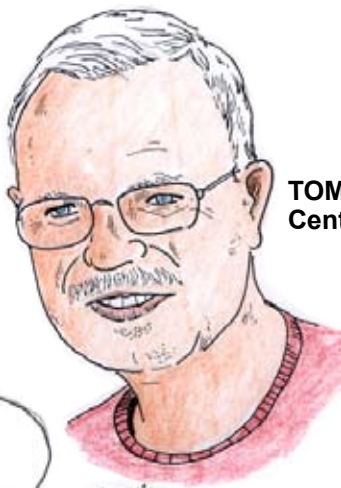
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Louisville, KY



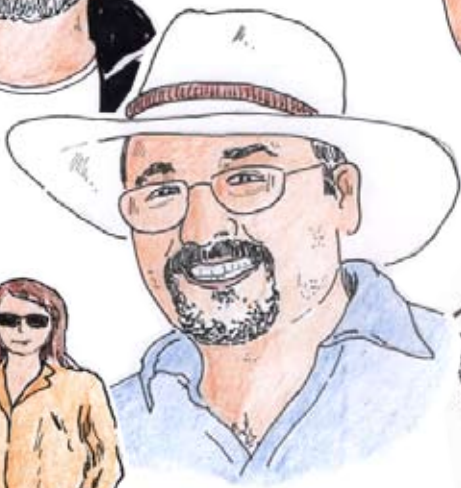
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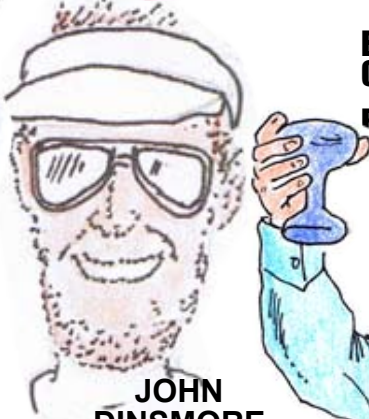
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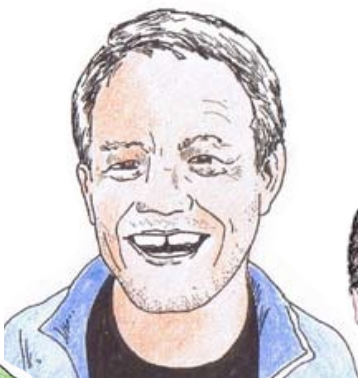
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Wall Street, Climate Change, and What's Crazy: An Archeological Perspective on Change

By Scott Thompson

I.

"The reality is that most governments, strongly influenced by the fossil fuel industry, continue to allow and even subsidize development of fossil fuel deposits...[This is crazy because] Continued business as usual fossil fuel use will result in loss of all Arctic summer sea ice within the next several decades."

— James Hansen and thirteen other climate scientists, 2011

Yes, I added the phrase in brackets and no, it was not implied by the text as written. Pardon my bad manners, James.

I did that because allowing the summer Arctic sea ice to melt in conjunction with a sustained atmospheric CO₂ level greater than 350 parts per million (ppm) is like playing Russian Roulette with five bullets in the chamber.

There are two reasons why such a comparison is apt. First, as long as the atmospheric concentration of CO₂ is greater than 350 ppm, the atmosphere will continue to warm. And, because it's now at 390 ppm and climbing at 2 ppm each year, we're already locked into a sustained period of further warming, and *that* means that once the summer sea ice is gone, it's not coming back within any time period relevant to our species. Second, when the sea ice is gone, the dark ocean water that replaces it will absorb heat from the sun that the sea ice once reflected back into space—thus warming the ocean even more, every summer, in an escalating cycle.

Truth time now. I wonder if within institutional Wall Street there isn't a spreading concern that informed discussions of climate change might spook the markets into a downward trend.



CO₂ figures so prominently as a greenhouse gas because, once it's emitted, significant portions hang in the atmosphere for a millennium or longer, continuing the warming. It's like sticking the world's ice sheets in an oven for a thousand years.

As everyone with an intact corpus callosum knows, what's generating ever more CO₂ in our atmosphere is burning oil, coal, and natural gas, however derived, in addition to deforestation. Therefore, any government that subsidizes companies for producing these fossil fuels, especially oil and coal, especially when these companies are expanding their sources of extraction, is aiding and abetting a planet-wide process of self-destruction.

Enter a news story on page A3 of the May 12, 2011, edition of the *Wall Street Journal*, "Oil CEOs on the Hot Seat." While I don't normally read the *Journal*, I happened to see this one because the paper was free at the hotel where Gail and I were staying. The story was about an upcoming Senate Finance Committee hearing on tax breaks—government subsidies—for oil companies. Per the story, the oil industry claimed that 85.5 billion dollars in tax breaks over the next ten years would be on the table.

I thought, *"Son-of-a-bitch, am I reading this right? That our government is subsidizing oil companies to the tune of 8.55 billion dollars per annum (maybe it's more if you include coal; I don't know!) to produce the very greenhouse gas that has the crucial role in destroying the stability of the world's climate? That's crazy!"*

True enough, but that's not what was crazy about the story. What was crazy about the story, in my opinion, is that it made no mention of the fundamental relationship between these gargantuan government subsidies, the resulting price of fossil fuels, and the quantity of CO₂ emissions. When the stability of your planet's climate is at stake, and when the story is about an issue central to the crisis, you need to add at least a brief comment tying the subject to climate change.

Yet I assume that the reporters who wrote the story thoroughly lack craziness. What I do suspect is that, like any good alcoholic's wife (or husband), they knew what not to say. For one thing, they probably understood that what their readers were interested in was tracking the fate of these tax breaks in order to gauge their effect on oil company profits. And, for another, I suspect that the paper's management has little or no interest in addressing climate change in a way that would be congruent with the best (as opposed to the most cautious) climate science.

Truth time now. I wonder if within institutional Wall Street there isn't a spreading concern that informed discussions of climate change might spook the markets into a downward trend. And I wonder if the silence I'm calling crazy—and, as far as the world's future is concerned, it is—isn't the manifestation of a tacit understanding to shut up about bad news, fueled by underlying panic.

In any case, the gist of the *Journal's* story was that Senate Democrats were about to grill various oil company CEOs on their corporate tax breaks. House Speaker John Boehner's remark was that erasing the subsidies would be "tax hikes [that] will raise gas prices, destroy jobs in this country and increase our dependence on foreign oil." Pointing out that this was a cynical comment is the kindest thing I can think of to say.

Now just because some Democrats were willing to grandstand about oil company tax breaks doesn't mean that those tax breaks will be eliminated or that Democrats are getting serious about climate change. To the contrary: "...the Obama administration approved a proposal by Shell to drill five new exploratory deep-water oil wells in the Gulf of Mexico, the second such approval for the gulf since the lifting of a federal moratorium on deepwater drilling last October."

Now that really shows you, because deep water drilling, and all the hazards that go with it, is one of a variety of ways the fossil fuel industry is expanding the scope of its exploration — the others being tar sands, oil shale, Arctic exploration, mountain-top removal coal mining, and hydro-fracking to enhance natural gas production. All perpetuate or at least risk ecological destruction on a scale heretofore unknown in order to suck out the last of the fossil fuels from the Earth; exactly what the eminent climate scientist James Hansen warned us we must NOT do if we want to live on a habitable planet.

II.

"...class divisions became a deep fracture line weakening the fabric of Chacoan society. The divisions were not unlike those between Wall Street and Main Street in the United States during the banking crisis and economic recession of 2008 to 2010."

— Archeologist David E. Stuart, 2010



But, for about 150 years prior to its collapse in 1130 CE, Chaco Canyon was indeed the power center of an economic system spanning the San Juan Basin

Chaco Canyon in northwestern New Mexico is a strange, stark place. Stippled with greasewood, threaded by an unremarkable seasonal wash, and framed by low, broken-stone mesas, the canyon doesn't seem the likely core of the most robust society in America prior to the Anglo-American juggernaut. But, for about 150 years prior to its collapse in 1130 CE, Chaco Canyon was indeed the power center of an economic system spanning the San Juan Basin, which fills up northwestern New Mexico and overflows into southwestern Colorado, southeastern Utah, and northeastern Arizona.

When Gail and I first visited the canyon in 2003, I couldn't stop photographing Pueblo Bonito. First built in the 800s by the Anasazi (properly called "the Ancient Ones" by their Pueblo Indian descendants), by 1115 it had expanded to include 33 kivas and nearly 700 rooms, roughly half of the latter devoted to storage. To explain the scale of this achievement, no larger apartment structure was built in North America until the 1880s. (See David E. Stuart, *Anasazi America*, p. 80). Its ruins, as preserved and shored up in spots by the U.S. Park Service, still radiate grandeur and power. I found myself gazing in reverential silence at the magnificent 11th and 12th century masonry, the deep, wide kivas, and the strange canyon walls. We've been to Pueblo Bonito twice now, and I've done some people-watching on site. Almost everyone I've seen there, whether Native American or not, regardless of their age and background, reacted in the way Gail

and I did.

It's a place that gets to you.

We know a good deal about the Chaco Anasazi culture now, thanks to the fine work of many Southwestern archeologists. The Chaco Canyon elites solidified their status and authority by solving a crisis throughout the San Juan Basin in the late 900s. Or, closer to the truth, they provided a partial solution and the climate did the rest. The problem they addressed grew out of the relationship between population growth and the resultant scarcity of resources, worsening over a long period of time.

From about 300-900 CE, the number of settlements in the region grew tenfold. Up until about 700, the small villages hugged mesas or mountains, so that when the intermittent rains faltered and crops failed, people could resort to hunting and foraging. They had a workable back-up system. But, after the population grew past a critical point, people began to settle on any land with rich soil and access to water, and so the back-up system fell away. On top of that, between 900-1100 the number of settlements increased tenfold again. The back-up system was not only gone; it was annihilated.

I can't help thinking there's a similarity between the kind of solutions the Chaco elites churned out in response to their massive crisis and the way our own elites have thus far responded to climate change.

When the rains failed in the late 900s, after the villages ran through all the corn they had stored, there was widespread malnutrition and violence broke out. The Chaco Anasazi took the lead by building roads and establishing a network of great-houses across the San Juan Basin, each of which contained multitudinous storage rooms—thereby setting up a trade system that included thousands of farmsteads across the Basin. Under this system, if a village's crops failed on a given year, there was a back-up supply. Now there was a true growth economy, based on trade, regulated by the Chaco elites, which allowed the population to continue to exponentially grow. Not unlike our own growth economy.

The Chaco elites also seem to have administered a highly structured system of religious rituals, performed in kivas at the great-houses, including those in Chaco Canyon. The ritual system and economic system reinforced each other, in much the same way conservative churches today avidly support the ideology of free market capitalism.

While the trade system did help re-establish stability, the truth is that the Chaco elites lucked out, because circa 1000 CE the rains stabilized for another ninety years. Not surprisingly, their system reached its peak of power and influence during this time.

Beginning in the late 1000s, however, the bills for exponential growth came due. Good fields that had been farmed for corn for generations began to lose their fertility. Meanwhile, people increasingly turned to farming marginal lands as the population continued to grow. Life became a fearful struggle for many. Then a drought hit in 1090. The elites responded by building more roads and great-houses, as they had done a century before. It must have seemed like the

right solution to them, and it was surely backed up by their ideology and rituals. But, in the face of the more complex circumstances they now faced, it was a stereotyped, irrelevant solution. When a subsequent drought hit in 1130, their system fell apart and a generation of war and chaos ensued. (See the chapter "Power, Complexity, and Failure," in David E. Stuart's book, *Pueblo Peoples on the Pajarito Plateau*).

I can't help thinking there's a similarity between the kind of solutions the Chaco elites churned out in response to their massive crisis and the way our own elites have thus far responded to climate change. First, both the Chacoan and American honchos chose to ignore the actual dimensions of the problem they each faced, despite plenty of evidence on the ground. Second, their respective problems threatened their economic well being as well as their status within their respective systems. Third, both the Chacoan and American elites were only willing to implement off-base solutions that their respective ideologies told them were acceptable.

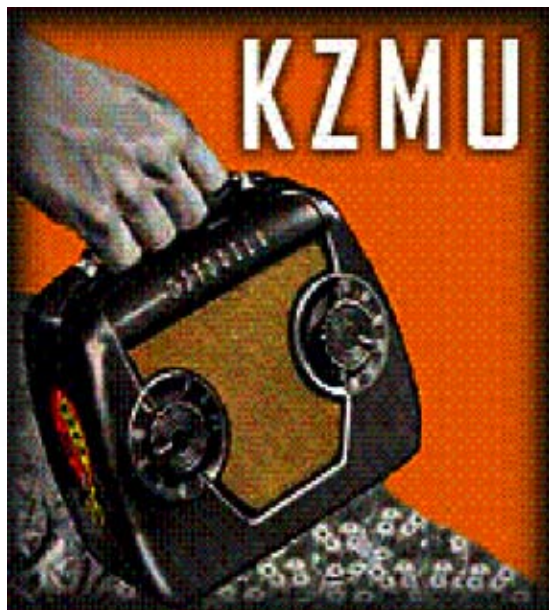
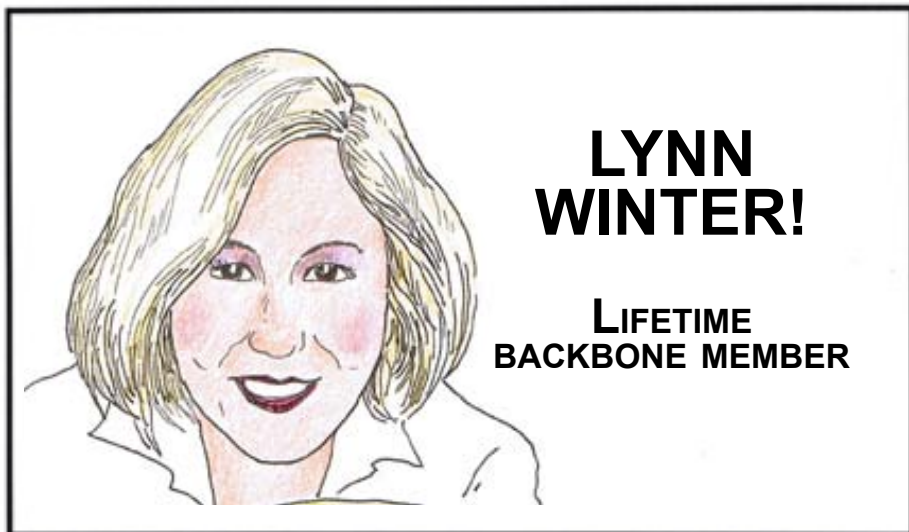
I guess we shouldn't be surprised. For the Chacoan elites, a workable solution would have meant dissolving their society altogether and telling their people to migrate elsewhere, namely the uplands surrounding the San Juan Basin, where they had a better chance of finding rain. And, for our own elites, a workable solution means accepting that rapid reductions in CO2 emissions will change the way the economic system functions, especially its relationship to natural resources, and that their own place in the system, especially for those on Wall Street, will change as well.

What's different is that our own elites may still have some time to forestall a disaster.

But I'm not betting on their acumen.

Note - I quoted from James Hansen et al's thoughtful article, "The Case for Young People and Nature: A Path to a Healthy, Natural, Prosperous Future," pp. 2, 17, as found on Hansen's website,

<http://www.columbia.edu/~jeh1/>



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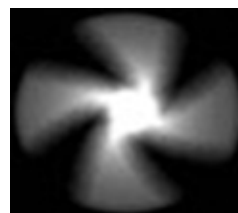
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U.S. Public Lands Solar Policy---WRONG from the START

This press release from solardoneright.org was issued in early April. Please follow the link following the statement to read the entire document, 'Wrong from the Start.'

NEW REPORT BLASTS ADMINISTRATION'S PUBLIC LANDS SOLAR POLICY

APRIL 4, 2011 – The Obama administration's mammoth environmental impact statement for its public lands solar program is fatally flawed, has no legal justification, and should be scrapped, a leading solar energy advocacy group says.

Solar Done Right (SDR), a coalition of conservation and energy policy groups and advocates, released a report today that blasts the administration's public lands solar policy, saying that the alternatives detailed in the draft Solar Energy Development Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) targeting public lands as the first development priority for renewable energy is "a grave mistake in need of reversal."

The report, "US Public Lands Solar Policy: Wrong From The Start," details

the 2005 Energy Policy Act," said the report's lead author Janine Blaeloch, Director of Western Lands Project and a co-founder of SDR. "But the Act doesn't order Interior to put solar plants on public lands. It just says that Congress thinks ten gigawatts of public lands solar would be a good idea. There's no mandate."

The 11,000-page PEIS identifies 24 Solar Energy Zones (SEZs) in six southwestern states, covering 677,000 acres of public lands – more than 1,000 square miles – much of it with immense ecological and cultural value. The administration's "Preferred Alternative" would allow development on more than 20 million acres outside the SEZs, an area the size of the State of Maine.

"Despite all the damage public lands solar development will cause, the Obama administration's PEIS ignores sensible alternatives such as conservation and distributed generation," said Kevin Emmerich of Basin and Range Watch in Nevada, an SDR member group.

"The PEIS charts a path of needless harm to the southwestern environment."

"The Interior Department wants to generate 10 gigawatts of solar on public lands by 2015," added Ceal Smith of the San Luis Valley Renewable Communities Alliance, the SDR member group in Colorado.

"It would be faster, cheaper for ratepayers and would create many more jobs if we focused on massive distributed solar generation in our vast urban land-



Destroying Our Public Lands is Not The Answer

the serious environmental damage that such wholesale energy development on public lands would cause, and the inefficiencies inherent in remote, utility-scale power generation.

According to the report, massive solar power plants and the transmission lines they require would do irreversible, long-term, ecological damage to these lands, threatening rare species and consuming scarce groundwater, while doing little to reduce the nation's carbon emissions, with some desert projects even releasing carbon deposits that have been sequestered for many thousands of years.

Perhaps most startlingly, the report challenges the administration's claim that its hands are tied by renewable energy provisions in the Energy Policy Act, passed by Congress in 2005.

"The push for public lands solar has been justified as following a mandate in

scapes. It makes no sense to bulldoze our valuable, intact and irreplaceable public lands first."

READ THIS!!!!!!

U.S. PUBLIC LANDS SOLAR POLICY: WRONG FROM THE START

<http://solardoneright.org/images/uploads/WrongFromTheStart.pdf>

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LinesAcrossTheSand.com

Due to be released in 2011

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The Desert Rat's OUTRAGE OF THE MONTH!!!

Carbon emissions 'hidden' in imported goods revealed

Glen Peters of research group Cicero, lead authors of the PNAS report, told BBC News: "There is a degree of delusion about emissions cuts in developed nations. They are not really cuts at all if countries are simply buying in products they used to manufacture."

"We really need all countries to be developing and publishing the full extent of their emissions, whether they are produced domestically or outsourced through traded goods." BBC News

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-13187156>



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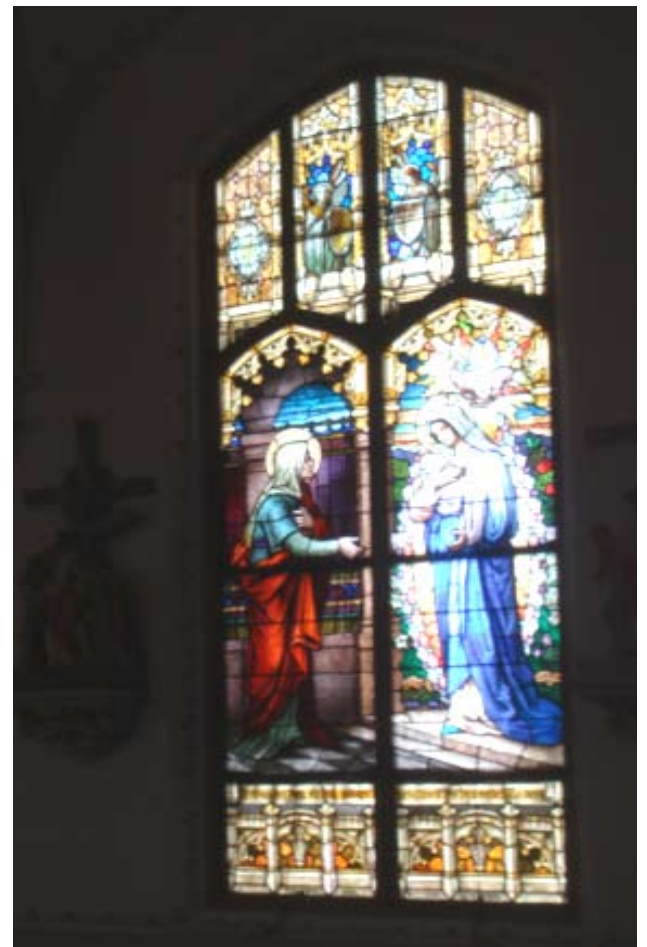


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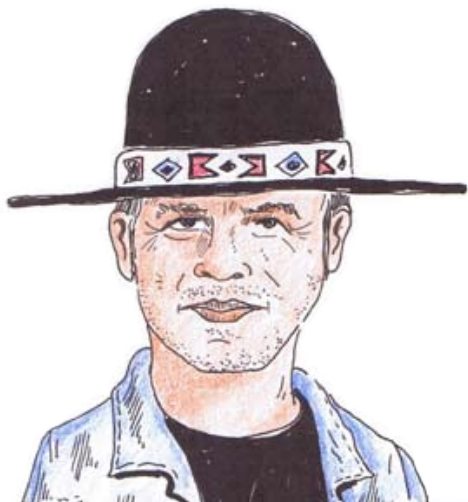
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Basin and Range Watch is a group of volunteers who live in the Western United States, working to stop the destruction of our desert homeland.

Industrial renewable energy companies are seeking to develop millions of acres of unspoiled habitat in our region. Our goal is to identify the problems of energy sprawl and find solutions that will preserve our natural ecosystems and open spaces. We support renewable energy but advocate for better national and state planning.

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Point Blank

Walking on Holy Ground Unaware

Jack Bollan

The tour group, including myself and two colleagues, walked along the wall of the Old City of Jerusalem, approaching the room that ancient tradition claims was the location of the Last Supper. Complex personal religious feelings had me in a state of wonder and awe.

My inner state was suddenly shattered by a disturbance behind me on the wall--two men shouting angrily. One of my colleagues had faced off with another member of the tour group. Nose to nose, my colleague was threatening to beat the hell out of the man if he didn't back off. The man was accusing my colleague of hitting on his wife.

It was a momentary deal. The man backed off, and my colleague walked away. The group continued on to the room where charismatic Christians were dancing, singing, and praying. But I never fully recovered from that moment of sharp contrast between what was going on inside me and what was going on inside those men.

How can meaning and perception be so different? I probably should have beaten the hell out of both of the men and reminded them that the ground upon which they stood is holy. But what good would it have done in the midst of a city that is itself full of paradoxes of deep religious meaning and petty conflict?

Episodes like the one that happened in Jerusalem force me to look at and revise my values. I don't know how to keep the faith in a world that does not share my meanings. I hate to think of my ideals as something others cannot, with a little right thought, understand and accept.

I went to a Christmas party a few weeks back. Here was me, old man, surrounded by a bunch of twenty-something's. The only thing in common was smart phones and addiction to same. I wondered why the host and hostess had invited us and insisted on us coming in text after text. I mean, God! I'm not Ed Abbey or Justin Bieber or somebody; just an old dude.

But then I watched as the hostess consumed bowl after bowl of my wife's artichoke and hot Italian sausage soup. Now, for me, the soup is pleasantly hallucinogenic, creating illusions of a childhood that probably never existed--very Ratatouille-like. It obviously has similar effects on the hostess of the Christmas party and explains my anachronistic presence there. But it doesn't have that effect on everyone.

Is my love of the Moab area and Canyon Country just a taste unique to my particular tongue and psychology? Hell, my wife won't even begin to let me go there like I used to, like I want to. She just doesn't care that much for the long drive from Grand Junction, even down highway 128.

I remember what the area looked like when I was a kid all those years ago. We had relatives there. But my dad didn't drive from Dolores to Moab to see relatives. He drove there because he loved the remote, natural beauty of the area. There was no I-70 through Green River then, no Lake Powell, and no such thing as a "mountain bike". The license plates in Moab said either "Utah" or "Colorado." A trip to the Arches was solitary communion of beautiful Earth with her creature.

My adult exposure to the area came just before the Eastern Slope invasion. I worked at Powell the summer after I got out of the Army. The lake had filled that year for the first time.

Years before, I had seen Glen Canyon with my family and 120 other jeeps just before Lake Powell flooded the Mormon crossing at Hole-in-the-Rock. It was comely before and after the flooding. For some reason, during that first summer, it didn't bother me that they had dammed the River and flooded the canyons. By the time I had worked there a couple of summers, it did bother me. But Powell wasn't crowded then, and its shores didn't look like the area just outside the Grand Junction city dump.

I loved to take highway 128 back then. You had to ford the creeks. So I would goose it on up to about a hundred on the stretches and lay hard on the brakes at the several crossings. You didn't have to watch out for cops or bikers.

Within a few years, however, I became concerned; my trendy Boulder-based brother-in-law started talking about biking in Moab. To be fair, he is not the

type to hit on another guy's wife on the Old Wall of Jerusalem, and he is the only person I know who, at seventeen years old, did Westwater Canyon on a homemade (kid-made) wood-and-inner tube raft. And his skill as a rafts man is legendary in a small circle. So he has some squatter's rights. And how could he have known that the Department of the Interior's website would one day say about Westwater:

"Westwater Canyon is the first whitewater stretch of the Colorado River in Utah. It is an exceedingly popular trip due to the Canyon's relative proximity to metropolitan areas, its classic desert scenery, and several challenging rapids. Westwater Canyon includes class IV rapids and is therefore only recommended

for experienced boaters. As with any remote river segment, Westwater can be a very humbling and dangerous place if not treated with proper respect and ability."

My brother-in-law survived long enough to be part of the problem. And when he and his trendy buddies started talking about Canyon Country like it was Disneyland, I saw the handwriting on the wall. Their play would be the end of Canyon Country as I knew it.

Sure enough, within a few years a trip down highway 128 no longer required fording streams. The license plates at Arches now included not just every state in the union, but even some from North American

neighbors. Someone was building a housing division at Dewey Bridge. Careless children burned Dewey Bridge. The washing out of a remote desert road with access to the Green River entailed the loss of millions of dollars in tourist income. Finding a camping spot required reservations. The solitude was gone, or at least greatly diminished.

...the associated belief in a benign self-correcting force is as hollow a solution to the environmental issues facing the modern West as is the idea of heaven a hollow solution to the problems that face humans and humankind.

Now Moab is a play haven for all types of people. Canyon Country is not what it was. Certainly, more people enjoy it today than they did when I was a kid and young adult, and how can I expect them to understand my values? I would love to kick their asses politically, but I am in the minority and will probably stay that way throughout the remainder of my life. And, to be honest, I would concede Jerusalem to the infidels rather than carry on an interminable and unwinnable crusade.

I could hope that economic conditions would keep the infidels away from Canyon Country, but that is an awful wish that comes back on my children and grandchildren. I can certainly rest comfortable that the desert will eventually reclaim its land, but the associated belief in a benign self-correcting force is as hollow a solution to the environmental issues facing the modern West as is the idea of heaven a hollow solution to the problems that face humans and humankind.

So here I am again, walking the wall of the Old City, the Last Supper just a short distance away. In my head are meanings that my fellow travelers don't share and can't share because they are so personal, so tied up with what I am and where I've been.

We can't share the same desert. But I'm not arrogant enough to scream at them and tell them that they're wrong and drive them out of the temple. And I'm not irreverent enough to break Delicate Arch in a grand protest, as Ed Abbey might have done by now.

These hordes tread on holy ground unaware. And if there is victory in this for me—and it is an infinitesimally small victory at best—it is that I recognize that truth.

JACK BOLLAN lives in Grand Junction, Colorado



TOM TILL

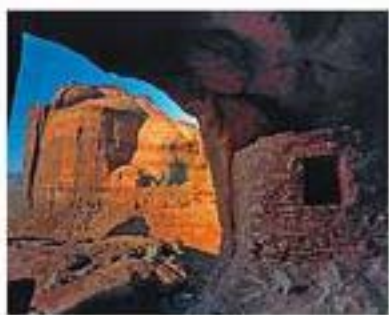
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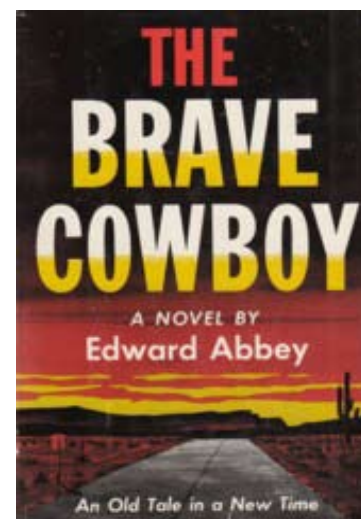
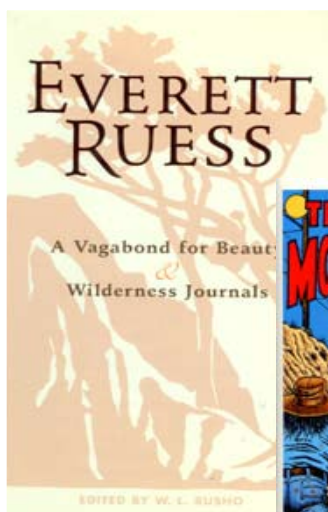
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SEASONAL RANGERS

The 'Fat Cat Feds' who live on Ramen Noodles

Jim Stiles

Whenever the American economy starts to slide and unemployment rises, we can always predict a simultaneous increase in complaints about government workers. Whether they work at the federal, state or local level, the insults come faster and harder as jobs become tighter. The recent upheaval in Wisconsin over teacher pay, benefits and bargaining rights is a painful example. It looked like a revolution up there and it was hard to determine just who wanted to lynch who. Certainly the teachers thought they were getting a raw deal and their long sit-ins at the state capitol drew global attention.

Other Wisconsinites bitterly opposed the teachers and demanded across the board cuts. And these were *teachers*, employed by the state. If anything, animosity toward *federal* employees is even harsher. For as long as I can remember, "the Feds," have been the target of derision and ridicule. They get paid too much, their vacations are too long, their benefits are too generous and their productivity is somewhere on a par with house cats.

I'm sure I can find a: "How many feds does it take to screw in a light bulb?" joke if I look hard enough. Worst of all, the lament insists that you can't get rid of these Feds. They are fire-proof. They are albatrosses around the taxpayers' necks. They are single-handedly driving the country to ruin.

Well...not so fast.

I cannot say that the insults are *totally* without merit. I've sure known my fair share of government screw-offs; in fact, I was a Fed myself once. For more than a decade, I was a seasonal ranger at Arches National Park. I wasn't a particularly hard worker and I was known more than once to fall asleep under a juniper tree while on trail patrol. So in terms of my sloth and indolence, I plead guilty.

But the idea that I, or any seasonal employee of the National Park Service was somehow a drain on the U.S. Treasury is something that still actually makes me guffaw. Yes...GUFFAW. Seasonal employment in the NPS was like the a last vestige of the feudal system, and we were its serfs.

"Seasonal Serfs reporting for duty, sir."

But the idea that I, or any seasonal employees of the National Park Service were somehow a drain on the U.S. Treasury is something I still chuckle over. Seasonal employment in the NPS was like the a last vestige of the feudal system, and we were its serfs.

As I used to make my way through the Devils Garden in pursuit of camping fees, young boys and girls would timidly approach me, urged on by their beaming parents, to proclaim, "When I grow up, I want to be a ranger too!"

I would stare at the kids, and then at their parents, and then I would fall to my knees, in my loden green jeans and I would extend my arms in plaintive supplication and I'd say:

"Please, for the love of God, don't let your children end up like me. It's horrible. Horrible...living on Ramen Noodles and sleeping in my car during the off-season. Sneaking down to use the toilet at the park visitor center at eight in the morning. I beseech you...don't wish this nightmarish future on your children..or their children! Or their children's children!"

Okay..maybe I just *wished* I'd said all those things. But they were all true.

During my days in the Park Service, seasonal employees were the notable exception to the Fat Cat Fed rule. Seasonals were paid low wages, received no benefits, and often had to even buy their own uniforms when their meager clothes allowance failed to cover the costs. We lived in sub-marginal housing that would

have been condemned had it been anywhere but seasonal housing. For years I lived in a rotten, rodent-infested trailer at the Arches campground. The deer mouse turds began to collect in the walls and at one point, we pulled out the cheap paneling to find a foot's worth of solid mouse crap. When we beat on the walls, they sounded like a rain stick.

Worst of all, we had no guarantee that we'd even get re-hired the following season, regardless of job performance. Seasonals could be terminated at any time for "lack of funding," an excuse NPS managers could use whenever they wanted to terminate an employee and could find no other justification.

"Sorry, Bub, but this year money is tighter than bark on a tree."

There was no recourse, no appeals system, no medical benefits. It's no wonder we spent so much time asleep under trees.

And yet, for all our napping, it was and has always been the seasonal NPS employees that the public sees and interacts with and, ironically, the reason the

Park Service manages to sustain a fairly decent reputation. When you ask questions at a visitor center, or experience a campfire program, or take a ranger-led hike, those are most likely seasonal rangers and interpreters leading the way.

Once, I needed to show my bosses at Arches some resource damage along the Landscape Arch trail, and though I was off-duty, I agreed to meet them the next morning at the trailhead. They arrived in their Class As, fur felt smoky hats firmly screwed to their noggins. I was in cutoffs and sneakers.

But when hikers repeatedly stopped them on the trail to ask for directions, they had to grimace and shrug and re-direct the

questions to me. They had no idea where Double O arch was---It was one of the most triumphant moments of my life.

When I finally left the Park Service, after a decade, I was grateful for the opportunity to work in the national parks but wondered how much longer seasonal

employees would tolerate the bad pay and slum-like conditions. I assumed that sooner or later, and hopefully sooner, the revolution would come.

But it never did.

I recently heard from a long-lost ranger buddy of mine. After all these years, he is still trying to gain permanent ranger status, and with no real hope in sight. According to Assistant Superintendent Paul Henderson at Canyonlands NP, "Seasonals have always been 'at-will' employees – no guarantees, and you can terminate them at any time for either 'lack of work or lack of funds.'" Paul was a seasonal himself and sympathetic to the plight of the seasonals, but agrees, not much has changed in 25 years.

So the next time you're angry about the debt and the deficit and the federal government in general, and you feel like taking out your frustrations on federal employees, and you see a young man or woman dressed in green and grey, first take note of what they're eating—if it's Ramen noodles or Doritos and dip, take pity on them. In fact, take them out to lunch. Most likely it's been a long time since they could afford a decent meal.

