

PLANET PROCTOR • JUNE 10, 2020

PLANET ABNORMAL

"I try to avoid looking backward or forward and try to keep looking upward."

~ Charlotte Bronte



HISTORY REPOSTS ITSELF
'Our Republic is in danger.'

Not Insane!

Well, not really! These days, stupidity and bullying rule, and madness is king! Anger and outrage against the injustice of a murderous police state, emboldened under the **Trump Misadministration** and supported by open-carry Far-White supporters, the horror is relentless, and our Republic has never been in more danger.

Trump's mendacious, racist agenda, focused from day one on eliminating every progressive, protective, enabling legislative action **Obama** championed, is designed and supported by the self-serving, KKKorporate puppets who long ago commandeered the once "Grand Old Party" to ensure the establishment of a fascist dictatorship in Amerikkka.

For 40 years, as did **Hitler**, the Right Wing has skillfully manipulated radio and TV, scrubbing the brains of an open-minded consumer-conditioned populace to create mistrust of governance, and then divide, militarize, and mislead through misplaced partisanship, unreasonable fear and the blatant scapegoating

■ CONTINUED

of the “new Jews” – Liberals, African Americans, Latinos, Asians, Native Americans, scientists, intellectuals, artists and foreigners of all stripes. In short, everyone who

THROUGHOUT
THE ‘PLANET,’ CLICKING
DARK RED TYPE
OPENS A RELATED
INTERNET LINK.

contributes to a diverse future that truly could make America Great – “a Gain” for all!

We are in an existential crisis because of complicit Senators who have put their own political survival above the survival of

the nation, too cowardly to contain or remove this out-of-control, crazed would-be emperor, fiddling on Presidential time, watching Fox, tweeting and playing golf, while consciously fanning the flames of a new civil war which threatens to incinerate his own home – and ours. And now he’s turned our own military against his own citizens, peacefully protesting for redress of grievances.

This madness must come to an end. If the Congress cannot curtail, contain, condemn, censure or eject this would be third-world Fascist dictator from his un-entitled position, America is finished.



KNEE JERK REACTIONS

Body blows from the artful dodger
who rose to Commander in Chief

It may already be too late; but we, the people, unlike the

Germans under Hitler in the ‘30s, must not stand for it! We cannot be complicit in this Reign of Errors.

The plight and suffering of our black and minority citizens is just the most obvious example of the dangerous militarization of our nation under the rule of the wealthy right-wing corporate-kissing oligarchs and their foreign allies.

At least, at last, a few respected and responsible

people have found the courage to speak out against the unconstitutional suppression of the right to assemble for redress of grievances, but the insane prevarications flooding public media by the likes of Trump and his hate-filled propagandists like **Limbaugh**, **Hannity** and their ilk, is enough to make one’s head explode. Let us hope heads will not soon explode from bullets...

CLICK: **SAM & PHIL’S EMERGENCY TALKING POINTS**

Yet despite all this, I’m supposed to be a humorist, committed to keeping the Planet spinning (after 25 years through thick and thick) so here goes. I hope it helps.

“The truth does not change according to our ability to stomach it.” ~ Flannery O’Connor

Just say no

NO SHIRT, NO SHOES, NO SERVICE – “NO problem” ... While working wear safety goggles and safety gear - **No problem.**“

Before boarding, please remove your shoes, your belt, empty pockets and take out your laptop – “**No problem.**”

You must be seated and wear a seatbelt with your seatback up and tray table stowed – “**No problem.**”

Please wear a mask while shopping and maintain your distance to protect others from a potentially deadly virus –

“How dare you take away my personal liberties!”

*“When the rules no longer apply,
we can write new rules.” ~ Michael Cerverns*

Just say neigh

IN THE UK, SOME SUPERMARKETS HAVE admitted that there is horse meat in their home-cooked burgers, so here are some responses:

• I’m not sure how they’re going to get over this hurdle! • Instead of choosing “rare, medium or well done,” it’s now “Win, Place or Show!” • I had some burgers for supper last night, and I still have a bit between my teeth. • But I was so hungry, I could eat a horse – and I did!

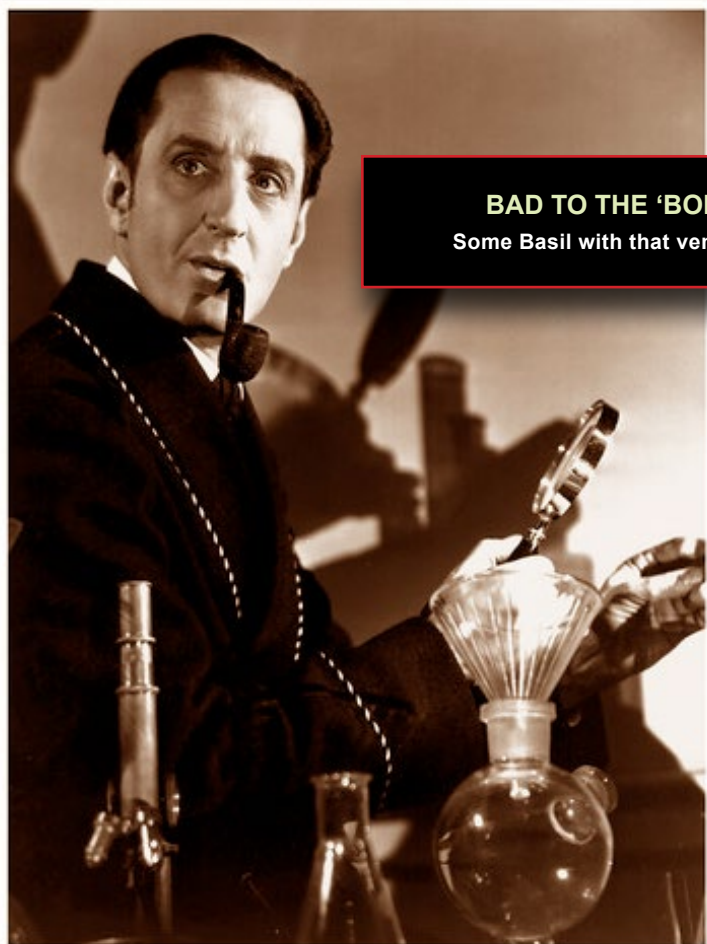
• “To beef or not to beef, that is equestrian.” • I hear the bite-size version of these burgers make great *horse d’oeuvres*, and the chains are now testing all their vegetarian burgers for traces of unicorn...

• “I’ve just checked the burgers in my freezer ... **“and they’re off!”** • I said to my spouse, “These burgers give

■ **CONTINUED**

me the trots," ... and indeed, a neighbor had to seek emergency care after ingesting a Filet of Fillie. Luckily, her condition is listed as stable.

"He was clearly a man of many qualities, even if they were clearly bad ones." ~ **Douglas Adams**



BAD TO THE 'BONE
Some Basil with that venison?

Holmes, sweet Holmes

AUTHOR SPIDER ROBINSON writes that there was the time **Sherlock Holmes** threw a dinner party for a few friends and served venison that he claimed to have shot himself. Considerable doubt on that point arose, however, when halfway through the meal, one of the guests discovered, in the midst of his portion of meat, a human toenail! The immediate consequence was projectile vomit, followed by general horror.

Holmes of course exploded in apologies, saying he could not imagine what could possibly have gone wrong.

Watson, for once having Holmes delivered into his hands, rose magnificently to his moment. "It's perfectly clear what has transpired, Holmes," he murmured, and waited for the full attention of the room.

"It's alimentary," he explained. "The 'game'— is a foot."

"A true friend is one who likes you in spite of your accomplishments." ~ **Arnold Bennet**

Nothing butt

PADDY STAGGERED HOME VERY LATE AFTER another evening with his drinking buddy, Finney. He took off his shoes to avoid waking his wife, Kathleen. He tiptoed as quietly as he could toward the stairs leading to their upstairs bedroom but misjudged the bottom step. As he caught himself by grabbing the banister, his body swung around, and he landed heavily on his rump. A whiskey bottle in each back pocket broke and made the landing especially painful.

Managing not to yell, Paddy sprung up, pulled down his pants, and looked in the hall mirror to see that his butt cheeks were cut and bleeding. He managed to quietly find a full box of plasters and began applying one as best he could on each place he saw blood. He then hid the now almost empty Band-Aid box and shuffled and stumbled his way to bed.

In the morning, Paddy woke up with searing pain in both his head and butt and Kathleen, staring at him from across the room, said, "You were drunk again last night, weren't ya?"

"Now, why would you say such a mean thing?" blustered a flustered Paddy. "Well," Kathleen said, "it could be the open front door, it could be the broken glass at the bottom of the stairs, it could be the drops of blood trailing through the house, it could be your bloodshot eyes, but mostly, it's all those Band-Aids stuck on the hall mirror."

"Some cause happiness wherever they go; others, **whenever** they go." ~ **Oscar Wilde**

Here, not now

BECAUSE OF THE PANDEMIC, I WILL NOT BE going to Kansas City this year for the annual weekend audio workshop, but I will join it virtually for virtually the first time!

CLICK: FOR MORE INFO

Sadly, our hit national touring comedy, "God Help Us" starring **Ed Asner**, written by me and **Samuel Joseph** and directed by **Mitch Levine**, cannot be performed live as planned, but **HEAR NOW** will present a special live video session with the legendary Mr. Asner, the beloved Emmy-award-winning actor, who after leaving his hometown of Kansas City, went on to an astonishing career that includes many audio plays, animated series, and block-buster

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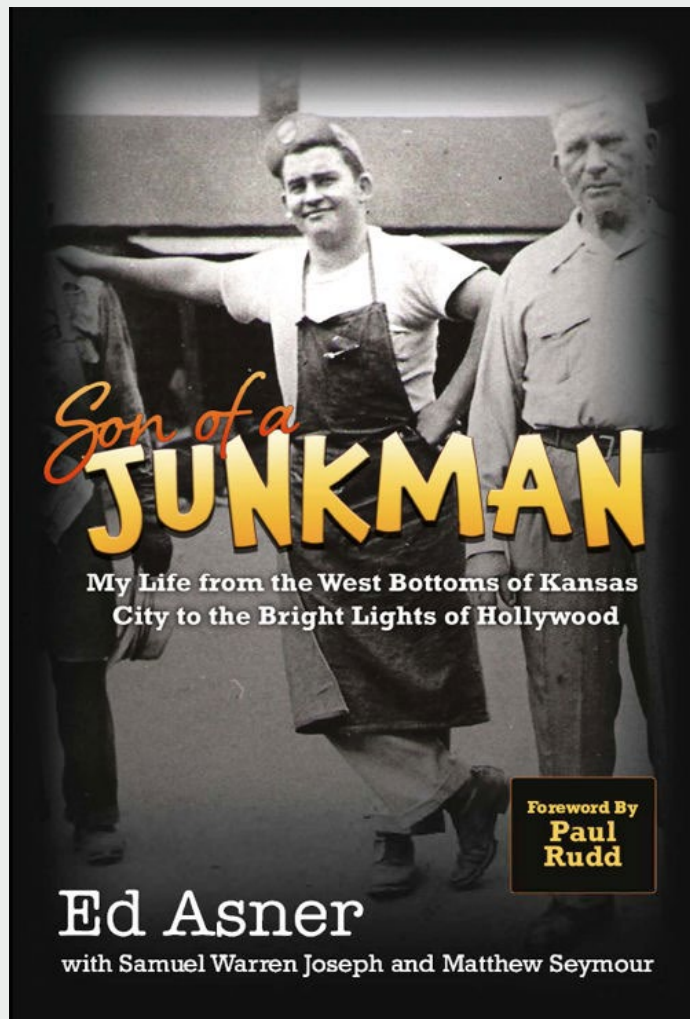
animated films.

On **Saturday, June 13**, from 1-2 pm CDT, Asner, 90, will answer questions about his voice-actor work, with follow-up questions welcome.

CLICK: REGISTER FOR ZOOM EVENT (Limited seating)

And to read more about Ed's life, read ***Son of Junkman*** by my writing partner, Samuel Joseph.

CLICK: 'SON OF A JUNKMAN' (Amazon)



"They say that God is everywhere, and yet we always think of Him as something of a recluse."

~ Emily Dickenson

But wait, there's more!

ONE HUNDRED AND TWO YEARS AGO, America's leading voice of conscience, **Eugene Victor Debs**, stepped onto a stage in Canton, Ohio and gave a soul-stirring speech against American intervention in WWI. He did so, knowing the

cost would be severe and indeed Debs was immediately charged with violating the Espionage Act of 1917 and sentenced to ten years in a federal penitentiary.

But the 63-year-old co-founder of the American Socialist Party ran for president from his jail cell in 1920 and received nearly one million votes! Today, "the man from Terre Haute" is still a personal hero to modern political thinkers like **Bernie Sanders**.

Debs' crisis is dramatized in the new audio drama written by **Elizabeth Schwartz** and **Yale Strom**, ***Debs in Canton***, starring **Phil Proctor** (Firesign Theatre, "Rugrats") as Eugene Debs, with **Melinda Peterson** as Kate Debs, **Robert Fass** as Theo Debs (Audie Winner) and an outstanding cast, directed by award-winning director-producer **Sue Zizza** of SueMedia Productions.

Originally scheduled for broadcast on NPR on May Day, it was delayed by the COVID crisis, and will now premiere on June 11-14 online.

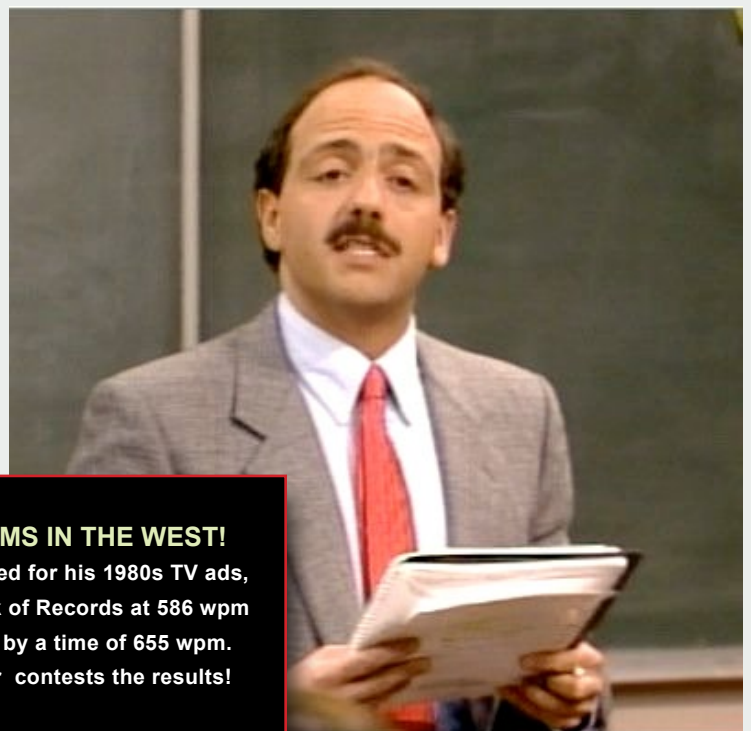
Your new monthly budget: Gas \$0, Entertainment \$0, Clothes \$0, Groceries \$2,799.

~ Phil's Phunny Phacts

Say what?

DO YOU TALK A MILE A MINUTE? THEN YOU'RE most likely from **Oregon**, statistically speaking. According to **Trivia Daily**, Oregon has America's fastest talkers! They analyzed over four million recorded phone calls between 2013 and 2015, considering word density, rate of speech, hold, and silences. All 50 states were ranked. On average, Americans were found to

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THE FASTEST GUMS IN THE WEST!

John Moschitta Jr., famed for his 1980s TV ads, held the Guinness Book of Records at 586 wpm until he was unseated by a time of 655 wpm. The native New Yorker contests the results!

speak between 110 and 150 words per minute, and those from Oregon are on the upper echelon of that ranking.

In general, the five fastest talkers came largely from the North, with **Minnesota, Massachusetts, Kansas,** and Iowa filling out the top spots, while the slowest speakers were from the South, with **Mississippi, Louisiana, South Carolina, Alabama,** and **North Carolina** falling in the ranks. To put the difference in speed in perspective, for every five words the slower speakers get out, a fast speaker squeezes out six. While that may not seem like a huge difference, have a gab with both and let your ears decide. At a safe distance, of course.

"Perserveration" is a neurological condition where someone drones on and on but never makes a point.
~ Sound familiar?

The curtain falls ...

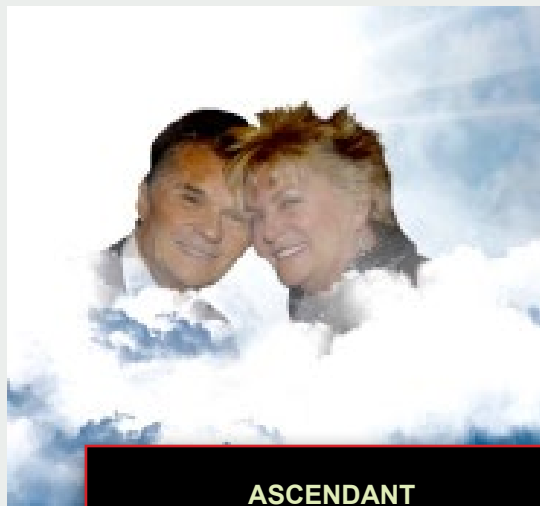
ON RICHARD HERD, OUR DEAR friend and colleague for decades at the Antaeus Theatre Company, best known for his roles in "Seinfeld" and "Star Trek," who exited the scene at age 87 from cancer complications, his wife **Patricia Crowder** confirmed.

Richard, whose acting career spanned five decades, was equally adept at comedy and drama, playing an ex-CIA agent in ***All the President's Men***, as well as roles in ***Planes, Trains and Automobiles***, ***The China Syndrome*** and many others.

And God rest you, as well, to director/actor and Emmy Award-winning writer **Mary Pat Gleason**, 70, with whom we worked on the Virginia Avenue children's project, in a

delightfully imaginative short play by an aspiring young playwright.

"Vote for Al Smith and make your wet dreams come true!" ~ Prohibition-era Political slogan



ASCENDANT
Fred and Mary Willard, above
(photo collage by Rich Ross)

Fare thee well, Fred & Mary

OF ALL THE MANY TRIBUTES I'VE HAD TO write over the decades, this is perhaps the hardest of all. The world knows that **Fred Willard** was a master of the art of improvisation and the funniest straight man God ever created. He loved sketch comedy because, in his own words, "if the audience doesn't like something, it's over in four or five minutes, and you go on to something else." As has Fred.



RICHARD HERD
The actor as 'Mr. Wilhelm' with
Jason Alexander on 'Seinfeld'

I knew Fred Willard and his creative partner and manager, **Mary**, for over 50 years. They were the staunchest of friends in an often heartless town, regularly inviting a large, lucky group of revelers into the bosom of their family to celebrate at generous parties held throughout their lives in their ever-more spacious abodes.

We will always miss "a Merry Willard Christmas," the sinful, whisky-fueled Saint Pat's Day blast, and the silly tennis court Fourth of July parade in patriotic gear with fireworks, speeches, songs and sparklers. God, Mary loved to party! And Fred loved a party!

Thanks to **Jimmy Kimmel**, he continued to delight us on "Kimmel Live!" in a stream of outlandish

characters right up to the end, and his gentle, addled genius lives on in the hilarious Netflix series "Space Force" as the feckless father of Commander **Steve Carrell**, who called him: "The funniest person that I've ever worked with."

He is survived by his beautiful daughter, **Hope Mulbarger**, and his grandson, **Freddie**, whom we've seen grow into a strong young man during the course of our extraordinary friendship. Fred may have become America's "eccentric uncle," but he was my true friend. There'll never be anyone like him again.

"We forget too soon the things we thought we could never forget." ~ **Joan Didion**

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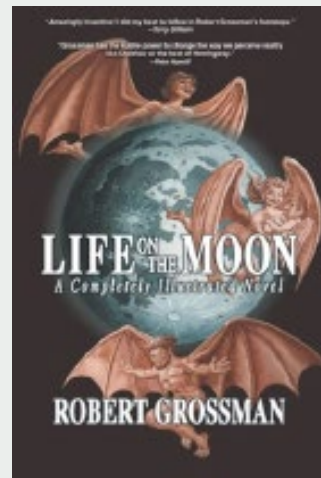
Take it away

**FLY
FRED
LUNCH
FOOD
KEVIN
BIG BABY
TELL IT
BUNKER BOY**

Give it me

Spider Robinson, Steve Bluestein, Lance Rucker, Cris Gross, Alex Emmuel, Nick Oliva, Joan Allemand, and **Kenneth Wilhite, Jr.**

And farewell, but not goodbye, to *LA Times* humorist **Chris Erskine**, who published his last column on May 31 after 30 years of sharing very sweet and personal stories of love and loss. His work continues: **Chriserskine@latimes.com**



And lastly, congratulations to our longtime friend and master airbrush artist, the late, **Robert Grossman**, for an Eisner nomination (the equivalent of the Academy Award in publishing) for Best Graphic Novel, *Life on the Moon* – and he deserves to win!

CLICK: VOTE FOR BOB HERE!

"He uses statistics as a drunken man uses lampposts - for support rather than illumination." ~ **Andrew Lang**



HAPPY COUPLING
Phil and Melinda
(photo by Rob Lewine)

Wedded blitz

CONGRATULATIONS TO MY darling and patient wife, **Melinda Peterson**, for 28 years of marriage and 32 years of love and laughter! On to the next 28, or something like it...

"What would life be without coffee?
But what is life even with coffee?" ~ **King Louis X**

Click photo to go to Podcast webpage!



"Religion is what keeps the poor from murdering the rich." ~ **Napoleon Bonaparte**

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