

OUR CORNER

Flies versus nerds

I've always held that it would be better to fight 100 duck-sized horses than one horse-sized duck.

But after this last week, I'm no longer as convinced size is more advantageous than large numbers.



RAY MILLER-STILL
EDITOR

Now, I want to make this clear — I'm a clean guy. Disorganized, sure, and easily distracted. But I'm all about making sure the kitchen is clean after a large dinner, the carpets are vacuumed after a get-together, and laundry is done quickly and efficiently. The dryer isn't meant to be a part-time closet, folks.

So when my house came under assault from a swarm of flies, I absolutely lost my mind.

At first, these obnoxious sky raisins arrived after a strange (read: putrid) smell started emanating from somewhere between the laundry room on the first floor and the clothes closet on the second. We have an exterminator on retainer, so we called to let him know it seemed likely one of his traps caught something.

He never did find anything, but he helped deodorize in the crawlspace and I, foolishly, thought the episode was over, since the flies disappeared as well.

Little did I know they were only the advance party, scouting out new locations to infest.

A month later, without warning, I walked into my home to find dozens of the things on

See **FLIES**, Page 7

Historic era ends, another begins

The Frank Chopp era is over. Washington's longest-serving speaker of the state House of Representatives quietly exited earlier this month from the seat of power he occupied through two decades.

The Seattle Democrat, who evolved into one of the most dominant political forces in state history during his reign, submitted a short resignation note to the chief clerk, collected a few last belongings and by early afternoon had cleared out of the office.

And the John Lovick era began.

That same afternoon workers scraped Chopp's name from the door and put up Lovick's along with the title Acting Speaker.

Lovick, a Mill Creek Democrat and former Snohomish County executive, moved in Monday, making history the moment he sat down.

He is black, the first person of color to be given

the duties and responsibilities of House Speaker. Though the gig is temporary — he'll serve until January when a new speaker is elected by the full House — it's no less a barrier-breaking accomplishment.



JERRY CORNFIELD
THE PETRI DISH

"I am proud to stand on the broad shoulders of a lot of people who served (in the Legislature) before me," Lovick said.

Before Chopp departed, the two men spent a couple hours going over the levers of power Lovick would control. On Lovick's first day, he made a point to meet the men and women employees, partisan and non-partisan, who are the gears of the legislative machinery he'll be steering.

"There's so much structure in place," Lovick said. "This is a well-oiled machine that runs exceptionally well."

This is not going to be a cake walk.

Lovick spent part of the first week wrestling with separate reviews of two House members.

One involves Democratic

"I am proud to stand on the broad shoulders of a lot of people who served (in the Legislature) before me."

John Lovick,
44th Legislative District

Rep. Jeff Morris of Mount Vernon. A complaint concerning Morris' managerial manners prompted caucus leaders late last year to launch a fact-finding inquiry and likely contributed to the veteran lawmaker losing a committee chairmanship in the 2019 session.

That report is finished and some of its recommendations are getting implemented. Yet the report, including its findings and recommendations, hasn't been released despite requests from reporters.

"I want to look at it, read it myself," Lovick said. He also said he wanted to talk with House Majority Leader Pat Sullivan, D-Covington, and caucus Chairman Eric Pettigrew, D-Seattle, on Wednesday about the situation. "I want to be sure this is done properly."

The other involves an investigation of Rep. Matt

Shea, R-Spokane. This is a little more complicated.

Shea is not accused of any wrongdoing in the workplace. The conservative's political behavior is inciting the probe.

The Guardian newspaper has reported that Shea engaged in Internet chats in 2017 with three other men proposing to confront "leftists" with a variety of tactics, including violence, surveillance and intimidation.

Recently, 55 Democratic state lawmakers, including Lovick, called on House Republican leaders to reprimand Shea for what they view as his abhorrent action. A few Democrats wanted to vote for Shea's expulsion in the session — but Chopp didn't let that happen.

However, before Chopp left, he did make sure Chief Clerk Bernard Dean got the go-ahead to look into what

See **CORNFIELD**, Page 7

Freedom of religion is precious, cannot be taken for granted

Uyghurs are a Muslim and ethnic minority who live in the northwestern province of China called Xinjiang (pronounced Shin Jang). Ninety percent of China is made up of an ethnic group called Han.

During the past several decades the Communist government has tried to destroy the Uyghur culture. Uyghur children are only taught the official Mandarin Chinese, not their native language. Han Chinese have been settled in this province by the government in order to dilute Uyghur population. Half the population of Xinjiang is now made up of Han Chinese. The native culture is being suppressed.

Uyghurs do not attend their mosques for fear of government harassment. No one calls the Muslim faithful to prayer. Western reporters who fly to Xinjiang are shadowed by Chinese security. In the case of a

Christian Science reporter in an article entitled, "Reporting in Xinjiang: A War Zone With No War," there were five security personnel who followed her wherever she went. There were seven minders following a PBS reporter when he visited Xinjiang.

No Uyghur would talk to either reporter for fear of reprisals. Since 2017, between one and two million Uyghurs have been detained and sent to re-education camps.

The Beijing Monitor Bureau Chief, Ann Scott Tyson, has covered war zones where victims were very willing to share their stories. This was not the case in Xinjiang. Cameras are everywhere. Facial recognition programs check citizens' faces. Police stop people who are walking at checkpoints that are spaced at 200-yard intervals. The guards take their pictures and search them.

According to the PBS reporter, he counted 250 cameras posted in a very small portion of the town he was in.

Bureau Chief Tyson was awakened by loud Chinese patriotic music at 5



RICH ELFERS
IN FOCUS

See **ELFERS**, Page 7

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Bring in businesses, not housing, to downtown

I am writing about the city's development of the parking lot behind Arts Alive. I am an avid student for almost two decades at Arts Alive!, the only place for art lessons in south King and north Pierce counties.

I believe that the loss of city parking will also impact the senior center, Valley Cities, etc. A downtown without adequate parking will die.

Our current businesses nearby also deserve to be preserved and are a part of our heritage as a town. I think turning it over to a housing development to make a quick buck shouldn't be part of the city's plan. There's enough housing and development around town.

Cathy Kombol
Enumclaw

THE COURIER-HERALD

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Flies

From Page 6

my windows.

My wife and I, we went HAM — she in the living room, literally drowning flies with her home-made environmentally-friendly cleaning solution from afar before collecting their tiny corpses, me in the kitchen doing my best impersonation of an angry Bruce Banner with a fly swatter. Ray smash.

After the massacre, we scrubbed and vacuumed and bleached our house like we were cleaning up Chernobyl itself. The only thing missing were the full-body hazmat suits and Geiger counters.

We collapsed on the couch hours afterward, unaware that the nightmare had only just begun.

They returned the next afternoon like nothing happened.

I left my wife to fight the good fight while I put my height advantage to use, scouring the exterior of our home for any sign of where the flies might be originating or entering. I made several educated guesses and fortified the domicile — I've yet to hear of flies being

I started feeling like a Bond villain in my own kitchen; I'd be eating my Wheaties and watching John Oliver or Trevor Noah when I'd hear the frantic buzzing of a fly caught in one of my various snares. Swiveling on the bar stool, I'd turn to face the doomed insect, fingers steepled, smile cold. I just want you to know that this is nothing personal, Mr. Fly. It's purely business.

able to defeat anything as tough as duct tape.

Again they returned, in even bigger numbers than before. I was beginning to wonder if these were zombie flies, returning from their tiny graves over and over to haunt us.

At this point, we decided to go full Home Alone — fly paper by the windows, traps in the corners, zappers outside, you name it. If I could have rigged a flamethrower to go off any time a fly buzzed below it, trust me, I would've.

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snares. Swiveling on the bar stool, I'd turn to face the doomed insect, fingers steepled, smile cold.

I just want you to know that this is nothing personal, Mr. Fly. It's purely business.

By this point, we've killed hundreds of flies, and hoped our message to the horde was clear: Beware, here there be humans.

We hoped in vain.

By the next afternoon, I brought in my secret weapon — my pump-action Bug-A-Salt shotgun.

I bought this on a whim years ago, and remains my prize Good-will find to this day.

Normally, it sits by my work desk during the summer months to catch any wandering *musca domestica* unawares, next to a

container of Morton Iodized Salt. I kept a kill count on my whiteboard.

Those hunts were strolls in the park compared to the bloodbath awaiting me at home.

It didn't matter that the largest battle in Game Of Thrones history was happening in front of me that Sunday night — when the fly buzzed past my ear, I grabbed my Bug-A-Salt hidden under the couch cushions and seasoned the living room like it was a Thanksgiving turkey, the fate of Winterfall be damned.

House Miller-Still: Not today, flies.

Maybe it was the excessive use of kitchen spices. Maybe it was the fly heads on toothpicks, placed London Bridge-style around the yard. Maybe, just maybe, it was me threatening to ruin "Endgame" for them.

Whatever the reason, they've since left us alone. For now.

But me and my Bug-A-Salt? We stand ready for the next time we hear the buzz, buzzing in the deep.

Let them come. There's still one man yet in this house who still draws breath.

Cornfield

From Page 6

transpired. Dean said he's evaluating what kind of private investigator to hire since the concerns center on Shea's actions outside the legislative workplace. It could be weeks before anyone is selected, he said.

Lovick wants to tread cautiously.

"I frankly don't think there's any reason not to afford (Shea) his due process," said Lovick, a retired state trooper and former Snohomish County sheriff.

It's only been a couple days, but Lovick is relishing his new role. He's also aware how big the shoes he's filling.

"Frank's a good friend," he said. "Moving into the office that Frank's been in for 20 years, it's very difficult for me."

Jerry Cornfield: 360-352-8623; jcornfield@heraldnet.com. Twitter: @dospueblos.

Elfers

From Page 6

a.m. in the city of Hotan. This apparently occurs every morning and also at other times of the day. Columns of Chinese soldiers regularly jog down the street shouting slogans as they go. This is a show of force and intimidation by the Chinese government.

The Communist Party that controls China has one overriding goal: to remain in power.

The Muslims are a threat to the government because they are different. Therefore, they are oppressed and harassed.

According to a story from the PBS

reporter, many Uyghurs have fled China and settled in other nations, including the United States. To find out the stories of what is happening in Xinjiang, this reporter decided to interview a young Uyghur man living in Virginia close to Washington, D.C. Most of his family have been able to leave China, except his mother, who has been turned down over and over again. When she applied to leave, Chinese bureaucrats rejected her applications on minor technicalities.

The son has publicly protested. With each protest, his mother was sent off to a re-education camp to confess her transgressions and to learn to be a better Chinese.

When mother and son talked on the phone, she was often in tears from fear

and stress.

The son was able to talk with Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. As a result of this talk and the resultant international publicity, the mother was transferred to a prison where he has been unable to contact her.

Not only is the Chinese government oppressing Uyghurs in China, but it is also trying to intimidate and silence them in the United States.

We are fortunate to have freedom of religion in the United States. That includes Muslims, Jews and other religious minorities. Secret police do not shadow us. We are free to move around as we please.

This right is precious and needs to be protected. Immigrants need to be respected and their rights to worship

as they please made secure. Many have come to this country to escape religious and ethnic persecution just like the Uyghurs. This country is great because we are a settler nation. We have a patriotic tradition of allowing for differences and for opening our doors to those who have been oppressed in their native lands.

It's a shame that many Americans have forgotten their own immigrant histories and have protested against new arrivals, reminding the immigrants of the fear that caused them to flee their native lands for a new life in the U.S. Americans who act this way are an embarrassment to our national values. We all could be living in fear and oppression like the Uyghurs in Xinjiang province.

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Shakespeare and sex jokes, Act III

Another summer, another trip to the Ashland, Oregon Shakespeare Festival! If you haven't read up on why I focus on sex jokes in Shakespeare's works, I suggest you read Act I and Act II before proceeding.



RAY MILLER-STILL
EDITOR

But if you want the long-story-short version, the only reason my wife was able to get me interested in The Bard was by telling me about all the hidden sex jokes in his plays. I was immediately hooked, and Shakespeare has never been the same since.

But for this iteration, I want to shift focus a little bit, because I've ran into several pervasive misconceptions about the Shakespeare Festival that I want to clear up.

First and foremost, the annual Shakespeare Festival is not really annual, nor is it really a festival.

Kathryn and I venture there every summer for roughly a week because that's when she's finally on vacation, after trying to stuff her students' heads with literature — both classic and modern — for the last nine months.

But plays are going

on for more than half the year, starting early March and ending in late October. In fact, if you have an opportunity to travel to southern Oregon before or after the sweltering summer heat hits the hamlet, I highly suggest you do.

And as for the "festival" portion of the event's name, there are no mead halls or musi-

cians, brave knights or fair maidens, ax throwing, archery, or any other sort of medieval recreations like you will find at the upcoming Midsummer Renaissance Faire in Bonney Lake, and I've yet to see a single attendee dress up in costume (sadly). There's just the magic of the stage.

(OK — there is one bar, Oberon's Tavern, that is fantastically reminiscent of the ren faire scene. The food is excellent, the drinks refreshing, and many of the hipsters that play at night put on their best impersonations of trolls being introduced to the concept of pitch and melody. And after a couple of pints, it doesn't sound too bad, either.)

Second, while Shakespeare's works are prominently featured, there are many other plays being performed. This year, we saw "Indecent," a play

about the 1920s Yiddish play "God of Vengeance," and "Between Two Knees," a dark comedy about the life of Native Americans between then 1890 massacre and the 1973 takeover at Wounded Knee.

"Indecent" turned out to be the highlight of the year. If you only had the opportunity to see one play this year, it should be that one.

But surprisingly, "As You Like It" — one of Shakespeare's lesser-known comedies — was the runner-up, beating out the highly-anticipated "Macbeth."

Funnily enough, my wife and I were severely warned by some elderly theatre-goers about how much sex was in "Macbeth." It made us laugh since there are so many other things — the violence, the gore, the pedicide — we would have expected to be warned about.

(And, wow, does that say a lot about our Puritanical roots that, as a society, we're more shocked by sex than watching an extremely graphic suicide on stage.)

And in all honesty, there wasn't that much sex anyway; Macbeth and his wife are just so often portrayed as cold-blooded and heartless, that it obviously shocked these poor older women

when the characters got half-naked and down-and-dirty while simultaneously plotting the murder of their king (Danforth Comins, hubba hubba).

The director's choice to make this scene steamier than it's historically been played fleshed out the Macbeths to help the audience connect to them. As the protagonists, they need a larger emotional range than just being power-hungry and stabby; otherwise, viewers won't be emotionally invested.

It also lent itself an additional joke: "Bear welcome in your eye/ your hand, your tongue: look like the innocent flower," Lade Macbeth urged her husband, "but be the serpent under't," she continued, grabbing at his pants.

Unfortunately, "Macbeth" is a poor example of sex in Shakespeare, lending little gutter humor to the gruesome play. But where it comes up short, "As You Like It" leaves you begging for more.

For those unfamiliar with the play, here's a short summary through my eyes: Orlando de Boys, an up-and-coming nobleman denied education and riches by his older brother, tries to earn some fame, and beats the kingdom's duke's best

wrestler in a match. The duke bans him from the city, but not before he catches the attention of Rosalind.

Unfortunately, Rosalind is the daughter of the kingdom's former duke (who has also been banished), and due to that relationship, Rosalind is banished as well. With her goes Celia, the duke's daughter, in search of Rosalind's father in a nearby forest. To avoid trouble on the road, Rosalind dresses as a man.

Meanwhile, Orlando is living up his new life in the same forest Rosalind has traveled to, and has taken to taping up poems on every tree he can find. Rosalind finds these and, without revealing her identity, convinces Orlando to prove his undying affection to his lady love by having Orlando try and "woo" man-disguised Rosalind, which Rosalind said is an attempt to try and "cure" Orlando of his love.

I'll stop there to not spoil the ending.

Already, the cross-dressing is great fodder for some dirty jokes, but — as the Shakespeare Festival is wont to do — many of the characters in this year's play had their sexes swapped: the banished Duke Senior, normally Rosalind's father, was played as a woman; Jaques, normally a male follower of Duke Senior, was swapped with a woman as well;

and Aubrey Le Beau, normally a woman, was played androgynously. All this leads to some great conversations, and jokes, about sex.

But it's not always the words and innuendo Shakespeare uses to tell those jokes, but also how the words are accented.

Take this short monologue from the play's fool, Touchstone:

"And then he drew a dial from his poke,/ And, looking on it with lack-lustre eye,/ Says very wisely, 'It is 10 o'clock:/ Thus we may see,' quoth he, 'how the world wags:/ 'Tis but an hour ago since it was nine,/ And after one hour more 'twill be eleven;/ And so, from hour to hour, we ripe and ripe,/ And then, from hour to hour, we rot and rot;/ And thereby hangs a tale.'"

"From hour to hour," may seem innocent in a modern British or American accent, with Touchstone simply commenting on how first we age into our prime, and then decay until we die.

But said in an accent from Shakespeare's time period, "hour" easily turns to "whore," and now instead of rotting away from old age, Touchstone is now alluding to being eaten away by some horrible sexually transmitted disease.

And, of course, "a tale" was Elizabethan slang for ye old male genitals.

How the world wags, indeed.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

We look forward to Neighbors Night Out every year

I am a relative newcomer to Enumclaw. We bought property on the Plateau in 1980 and I moved into town proper in 2006. This is such a wonderful town. I love it here. We are surrounded by a beautiful countryside and the town itself is friendly and has many amenities. I enjoy our town so much I wanted to do something for our community. There are many ways to get involved in the community — the monthly Coffee with the Mayor, the open City Council meetings, the library, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Senior and Youth Centers. Many of these places have volunteer opportunities for those of us who want to give back to the community.

Another great way of getting to know your town and neighborhood is coming up early in August. Tuesday, Aug. 6 is Neighbors Night Out — Enumclaw's version of National Night Out. It is a special night put aside to become acquainted with your neighbors. We have

been celebrating in our area for the past five years or so. We have about 20 families in a 2-3 block area and gather in a large lawn between two homes. We each bring a small food dish to share and basically talk about ourselves, our families, meet new neighbors, discuss what's going on in town and in the world. Each year the fire department and police department have been able to stop by. We know they may not be able to visit but we appreciate it when they can, as that helps form the partnerships that are so valuable in keeping Enumclaw the delightful place that it is. I live in an established neighborhood near the center of town, but I think this would be a terrific opportunity for the newer developments on the outskirts of town as they are all new families. It is a tremendous way to build a sense of community.

Does this sound like fun to you? It's easy to organize. There are some great tips in the July 24 Courier Herald story (and ad on page 23). The website neighborsnightout.org and Neighbors Night Out Facebook page also offer more information. I hope you have a truly Enumclaw event!

Mary Bartley
Enumclaw

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DO NOT TOUCH

As soon as I saw the photo, I moved on pure instinct, grabbing my wife's wrist and sprinting out the door, giving her absolutely no time to properly reshelve the records she was browsing.

It didn't matter that it was broad daylight, or that other people were in the vicinity — we were getting oh-you-tee OUT, and never coming back.

I only stopped to explain three city blocks later, but continued to put distance between us and it.

This is my one and only ghost story, and it all started when Kathryn, my then-girlfriend-now-wife, suggested we head down to the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in August 2015, since I had never been.

As I've written multiple times, the experience changed my life forever. But this tale isn't about the festival.

See, Kathryn got her undergraduate degree at Willamette University in Salem, Oregon. At this point in our relationship, she had already visited the Evergreen State College, my alma mater, but I had yet to see where she went to school.

The campus is gorgeous, no matter what time of the year you visit; because it's the oldest university in the Western United States, the architecture lends the college more than a little gravitas (although beautiful dorms doesn't always translate to comfort, as Kathryn'll tell you).

After showing me her classrooms and where she volunteered at a sexual assault hotline, we decided to grab a bite to eat where she and her friends would hang out in Salem and check out some of the stores.

We were specifically looking for any antique shops, since we just bought a portable record player (yes, we're those kinds of Millennials).

As luck would have it — or unluck, as I'd later think — we found the perfect place to browse for some Styx and Rolling Stones albums.

But my eyes were quickly drawn to another item;

See **HAUNTED**, Page 10



RAY MILLER-STILL
EDITOR

If you had the chance, would you do things differently?

My first marriage fell apart in 1987. I moved out of my home into an apartment. It was a time of turmoil. I felt a deep sense of betrayal and an even deeper concern for the plight of my children ages 5 and 7. I had always wanted to be a father — to be the dad I wished I had — and now that dream seemed to be turning into a nightmare.

As I often have done in times of deep stress, I searched for understanding of how and why I found myself in this situation. I went to the local library and found a newly published book by Ken Grimwood called "Replay." This book gave me a perspective on

what was happening to me.

Here is an Amazon description of the book: "Jeff Winston was 43 and trapped in a tepid marriage and a dead-end job, waiting for that time when he could be truly happy, when he died.

And when he woke he was 18 again, with all his memories of the next 25 years intact. He could live his life again, avoiding the mistakes, making money from his knowledge of the future, seeking happiness.

Until he dies at 43 and wakes up back in college again..."



RICH ELFERS
IN FOCUS

This book has a similar theme to the movie "Groundhog Day" which appeared in movie theaters in 1993.

As I read the book, I wondered how my life would have turned out had I been like Jeff Winston, knowing the future. I certainly

would have made different decisions; most would be better. But one of the joys of my life, my children, would never have come into existence, and that would have brought me great pain and regret. Jeff Winston experienced some of the same feelings at the loss of his daughter who would never

have been born.

Each time Jeff Winston came back, he made different choices that brought different results. Since he knew the future, he knew how to make money quickly by betting on the World Series where he already knew who won and who lost. He had a greater range of options as a result.

He chose different careers. He became involved with different women with whom he developed close relationships. He got to experiment with "What if?" questions.

The book caused me to reflect on my life. I came to realize that the major

See **ELFERS**, Page 8

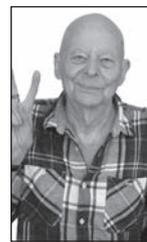
The man behind Enumclaw's Italian restaurant

For a relatively small, suburban enclave, Enumclaw certainly has its share of restaurants. Just off the top of my head, I count nine or 10 privately-owned, independent eateries, plus all the fast-food chain franchises.

What's more, the cuisine in most of the autonomous operations is quite satisfactory; that is, they may not offer the swank service or quality chefs of Seattle's Canlis, but for the price and negligible travel time, they're surely good enough.

Take for example, the Restorante Italiano, "Il Siciliano." A few weeks ago, I sat down one afternoon

with the owner, Dario Brancato. He's the heavy-set, warm and friendly fellow who often sets at the far end of the bar, surveying his kingdom. They don't come much more Italian than Dario. He was born and raised in a small town in Sicily and his family immigrated here when he was 14 years old. (That being the case, our goofy president might not approve of him.) They flew directly from Sicily into SeaTac and, even though they had relatives here to welcome them, that



WALLY DUCHATEAU
WALLY'S WORLD

must have been quite an eye-opening experience for a young teenager.

The family settled in Auburn. Dario graduated from high school in 1999 and attended Green River Community College for a couple years, where he studied marketing and business. He also spent nearly 20 years driving back and forth in the God-awful commuter traffic to Gig Harbor and Seattle, working in various Italian restaurants.

He'd always enjoyed creating and preparing

meals with his mother and grandmother. Early in life, Dario decided he wanted to own and operate a restaurant and finally, in 2015, he bought the Siciliano. It's a family operation and his father and wife both work with him. (He has two sons, ages 5 years and four months.)

As you'd expect, the cuisine couldn't get any more authentic. Their pizzas are made from first-class, all-Italian ingredients and baked in a wood burning oven that actually came from Naples. Eighty percent of the restaurant's wine

See **WALLY**, Page 8

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Thank you to all who supported Jordi

On behalf of Jordi Lafley and his family, we would like to extend our thanks and gratitude to everyone who donated, came out and joined us at Jerseys for Jordi last month. We truly appreciate all the kindness and generosity our community has to offer along with the money that was raised to help defer the extraneous expenses associated with his treatment.

Special shout outs go to The Claw, Cole Street Brewery, Pursuit Distillery, and Plateau Popcorn. We could

not have done this without you!

Monica Munger, The Jerseys for Jordi Team
Enumclaw

Thanks, everyone, for your support

We want to thank all the friends and relatives that sent cards, flowers and food and attended the services for Sharon Kujawa.

The Kujawa and Meyer families

Haunted

From Page 6

a small, porcelain doll.

It wasn't just the doll, though. It was the glass display case the doll was inside, and the conspicuous sign in the corner stating, "Haunted composite doll — for your safety, DO NOT TOUCH."

Now, just a year earlier, Kathryn and I watched the "Annabelle" movie, the first spinoff from "The

Conjuring" series that follow Ed and Loraine Warren, famous (or infamous) paranormal investigators.

For those not in the know, the Annabelle in these movies is based on a real doll, though the real-life version is a Raggedy Anne doll, less terrifying than the porcelain monstrosity used in the films. Following that same line of logic, the movies play up the supernatural occurrences associated with

the doll, but it's history is less than innocent; there are reports of the doll appearing in rooms it wasn't left in, shifting into impossible positions, and even causing physical harm.

So with all that in mind, here I was, face-to-face with another purportedly haunted child's toy, complete with pale porcelain skin and, despite its lack of eyes, its stare managed to pierce your immortal soul. I asked the folks running

the shop what the story behind it was. I'm afraid I can't recall the details, just that the tale contained your stereotypical possessed doll tropes. It was even for sale, though the price was marked up in order to discourage people from buying it.

Mhmm. Now, I believe in ghosts and spirits, but I haven't experienced anything personally that I would consider paranormal, let alone a legit haunting.

But when it comes to spirits (or as the Warrens claimed, demons) possessing inanimate objects, I'm a skeptic.

At the same time, I've never liked dolls, especially these sorts, as their decent into "uncanny valley" gives me goosebumps (My wife would have a blast filming a short horror movie based in C.C.'s Collectibles' doll room).

So what do I do, faced with unconvincing claims of supernatural activity and compensating for the fact that I just find the doll to be straight-up unsettling?

I make fun of it. Kathryn, of course, already had enough of the doll, and was browsing the records for something to go along with the awesome Baroque-style Beatles album we picked up at the Shakespeare festival. At one point, she shoots me a warning over her shoulder, and getting bolder as I go along.

I make fun of its face. I criticize its hair. At one point, I think I called it a second-rate ghoul not even fit to haunt the boy's bathroom at Hogwarts.

And that's when I pulled out my phone.

My plan probably involved sending a photo to my Mom, since she is super creeped out by Annabelle (though is unaware the real doll was a Raggedy Anne, and she has one she cherishes).

But as soon as I hit the shutter button and viewed the photo, I knew something was very, very wrong.

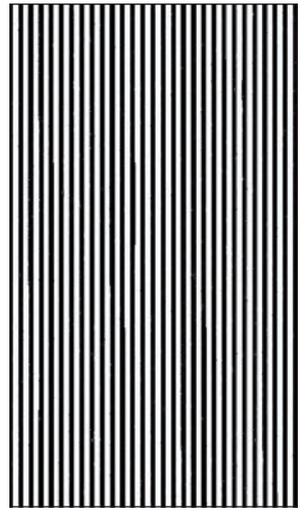


PHOTO BY RAY MILLER-STILL

This is the photo I attempted to take of the haunted doll I found in Salem, Oregon. I keep it on my phone just for the occasion of sharing the story around Halloween — and to remind myself to be a little more humble, at least around spooky things.

I only showed Kathryn three blocks later while catching our breaths.

The camera couldn't capture the doll's image; all I got was a mess of vertical black and white lines across the screen. I still have the picture on my phone today — it's the one you can see above.

My fear quickly gave way to my reporter brain; I had to go back to recreate this experience. But Kathryn, ever the wiser, convinced me that we shouldn't be those white people in horror movies.

It was probably for the best, but I do wonder where that doll is now, and if it's making some other arrogant meat-head regret their foolish actions.

At least it isn't me.

RICK KRANZ
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Blotter

From Page 5

until the individual was voluntarily removed from the scene by a mobile crisis team.

- Black Diamond police received a call from Valley Communication Radio regarding a theft of copper wire from a residence being built in the 32800 block of Maple Avenue Southeast. Officers contacted the supervisor in charge of the construction site and were told the wire had been inside the house and was stolen between 4 p.m. on Oct. 15 and 7 a.m. on Oct. 16. There were no immediate suspects.

October 14

- At approximately 8:45 p.m., officers were told to watch for a juvenile who had left his residence without permission and was believed to be in the city. Officers located the juvenile and returned him to the family residence without incident.

- At approximately 3:20 a.m., officers met with a representative from the Auburn Police Department and took custody of an individual wanted on a Black Diamond warrant. City officers transported the person to the Issaquah jail where he was booked.