

KCC Newsletter

Fall 2009

**Kasilof
Community
Church**

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For years, I found it a fun challenge to guess the year and make of automobiles and trucks as they passed by. “That’s a 63 Impala,” or “wow, look at that 59 Tbird.” I wasn’t as good at this as some of my friends and my family were, but I still enjoyed it. I always enjoyed it when two “experts” would debate about why a certain vehicle was, say a 64 Mustang, not a 65. They would talk about fender types, or hood shapes, or tail lights. There was always something you could identify on the vehicle that would separate it from a similar make or year.

This past July the roads of the Kenai Peninsula were bustling with traffic. The Kasilof River bridge was being repaired, which didn’t help matters, that’s for sure. Making a trip into Soldotna required an extra helping of patience. Once there, visiting your favorite grocery store could either bring you to a heightened state of frustration or perhaps even tears.

Let me ask you something, and I want you to think seriously about the answer. Can you iden-

tify a 1961 Christian from a 1962 non-believer? Think so? Ok, let’s put those two in a crowded checkout line and observe them. How about a 1982 born-again female from a 1979 lost male, when both are driving in heavy traffic? Do you see what I am talking about here? The Bible tells us that as Christians we become new persons. We are not the same anymore, for the old life is gone. A new life has begun! (2 Cor 5:17). One of the ways that you should be able to identify a 1926 man of God from a 1936 woman of the world is simply by listening to them. Colossians 4:6 says, *“Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.”* So, how did you answer the questions? Do you see yourself as being easily identified as someone representing Jesus Christ in a world full of facades? Do others look at you and say, “That one there is a classic, a 1957 Chev.” Or do they say, “There goes a 1971 Ford Pinto?”

The “African Queen” Visits Alaska

On July 17, 2009 Peggy Dancy (aka the African Queen) met with the McGarry one-another group at the John & Sue Evanson ranch to update everyone about her work in Mozambique. Previously, she had met with the Morse one-another group for the same purpose.

During her presentation, Peggy told the group that one of the most oft asked questions she receives is, “Do you like it over there?” Her answer to this question left an impression upon this set of ears. You see, she referred to some of the challenges about living in Mozambique that aren’t neces-



Peggy Dancy caught telling African fish stories to Ruth Lawler, Marj Wiley, and Peggy McGarry.

sarily easy or comfortable, yet she said she believes this is where God wants her to be and she has no plans on leaving. Peggy referenced the Apostle Paul’s experiences in his ministry, as stated in *Phil 4:11 Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content.* The two key words from this verse that Peggy emulates in her life in Mozambique are **learned** and **content**. Peggy spoke to how she has *learned* to be *content* in Mozambique even though there are some aspects about living there that are not pleasant. That said, she is committed to serving the Lord in Mozambique and has “learned in whatever state I am, to be content.”



Peggy gave a presentation about her activities in Mozambique to (clockwise): Jim Lawler, Sue Evanson, Dave & Katie Blossom, Dave Letzring, John Evanson, Jerry McGarry, Lynn Nelson, Ann Letzring, Peggy McGarry, Elaine Larson, & Anika Ellis.



Dave Blossom & Jim Lawler visit before supper is served



Jerry McGarry shares a story with Ryan Nelson (Arnie Nelson's nephew) about the time he hit three home runs in a Peggy Dancy baseball game.

Lost and Found: The Right To Arm Bears

by Ruth Lawler

Every August my husband Jim flies our family and friends across Cook Inlet almost as far south as Augustine volcano. There on the west side of the inlet we fish for Silver Salmon at Dry Bay. We've fished there for more than 20 years, but only in the past few years have the brown bears decided to fish with us. That makes for another interesting story. Last year's story was entitled "Four Fishing Bears." It told about a sow and her 3 half grown cubs who had learned to charge at fishermen in order to scare them away and steal their catch. Those four have mysteriously disappeared, (We don't miss them.) but this year there are new thieving bears.

At the start of the Silver run Jim flew our daughter, Christy, our son Monty, his friend Hanna, and two youngsters to Dry Bay in our Cherokee Six. The kids discovered the joy of hooking a fighting Silver while the bears stayed a respectful distance. That's because an armed adult was always with the kids. There are few bear attractants more powerful than a child alone. I've been told bears are naturally curious and I don't doubt it, but the sight of a small, easy snack really piques their curiosity. As kids are apt to do, one of them left a fishing pole on the creek bank but no one was quite sure where. First lost item.

Next day Jim went back again with our missionary friend Ray, plus Pastor Dwight from Oregon, and his 3 adult sons. They found the pole, but in the excitement of fending off a large furry brown thief, Dwight lost his High Standard 357 magnum pistol and holster. All of this is on film, both video and still shots. Ray's video footage shows Jim crossing the creek with a newly caught Silver. Right on his heels comes a large bear, who also crosses the creek. Meanwhile, Ray too has a fish, and he calls to Jim, "Should I give him my fish?" "I'm not giving him my fish," answers Jim. So Ray panics. On Ray's last video clip he shows that he is armed with a pistol and that the bear is pretty close. What to do? Ray abandons his fish, only to realize later that he could have left the head and guts and sneaked away with the fish.

Since we have many friends who enjoy fishing, Jim made another trip to Dry Bay the next day and searched for the missing gun in vain. Giving up, he began fishing, catching more Silvers. On his way across the fields on his way back to the plane he discovered a bear's bed. The grass was flattened out and there

was a wet wallow in the center of it. In the middle of the wallow was Dwight's well chewed holster, with the gun nearby. I wish I'd taken a picture when Dwight returned to our house a few days later and I handed him that old lost gun, which is now a rare treasure. He thinks I should call this story "The Right To Arm Bears," but this was the second amazing lost item found.

At the start of the next trip our other friends had gone elsewhere with their fish stories and the pictures to prove them. It was my birthday, so Monty and Hanna, plus our daughter Christy and summer neighbor Dr. John were along. We caught 16 fish all told. The bears were old pro's at thieving by now but other fishermen must have pepper sprayed or otherwise discouraged them. They kept us on our toes but stole no fish because we were also becoming pro's, at protecting our catch. However, Hanna lost Monty's digital pocket camera. He and Christy had taken many bear pictures as the thieves devoured fish guts and heads, and we had learned a very important bear fact: the parts we throw away are the favorite gourmet treat for the Brownies. That's not surprising. These critters eat razor clams shell and all.

Monty wanted the pictures more than the camera, while Hanna was feeling really low about losing it. She had put it in her shallow jacket pocket, but it had fallen out. It's a long walk from the creek to the plane on the beach so we had little hope of finding it. The wind was up and the tide coming in. It was 6 p.m., we couldn't even look for it. So when Hanna rolled down her hip boots to put on her shoes and the camera fell out of the boot we all marveled at God's sense of humor. Item # 3 was lost and found.

As Jim and I had sat in the Cherokee waiting for the rest of our party to arrive, the strong wind was doing some amazing things. First it was blowing up and down the beach, very good. Then it would suddenly shift and blow across the beach, very nasty. We were fully loaded so I said a silent prayer as we took off. I know Jim always did that and figured someone else had probably joined us. Sure enough, we had barely gained enough height to clear the trees when the squirrely wind became a vicious cross wind, trying mightily to tip us upside down into those trees. It certainly helps to have a good pilot, even more a God who hears our prayers above the shrill sound of an airplane's stall warning. Maybe it was our guardian angels giving us a push, maybe the breath of God, but we cleared those trees right side up and flew home safely. I know God is our pilot.

Buelah Boulden

by Pat Shields

Buelah Boulden. That is a name I don't think I will ever forget.

For a number of weeks now, Jerry McGarry has been leading the Sunday School (SS) faithful through a study of the book of Acts. The attractive thing about SS is that it provides an opportunity for the teacher and participants to interact with each other, as well as allowing for different points of view to be shared, or even debated, on various Scriptural passages. You really should think about attending SS, I am confident you would be blessed.

One of the life stories that the book of Acts chronicles is the abrupt conversion of a man named Saul into the changed man named Paul, the very person who would become the most prolific author in all of Scriptures. In Acts 9:3 we read, "As he was nearing Damascus on this mission, a brilliant light from heaven suddenly beamed down upon him." Often referred to as the Damascus road conversion, the reader of Acts is treated to a series of events that would change Saul, who "was breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples (Acts 9:1)," into Paul, the man who would later admit that he was the worst of all sinners (1Tim 1:15).

So, how did this remarkable change come about? How is it that Saul could in one moment be a participant in the murder of Steven to instantaneously making the statement, "Lord, what do you want me to do?" Well, many would correctly point out that this took a miraculous intervention on the part of our Lord to get Saul's attention. But, remember Saul was operating under free will when he was questioned by Jesus. However, his response undeniably revealed that he knew who he was speaking to. I believe that part of the reason that Saul was able to turn his life around so quickly was because of Buelah Boulden.

Well.....kind of.

Some of you might recall that I grew up on the edge of a small town that had a creek named after mosquitoes running a few hundred feet from my bedroom window. My babysitters were named Hereford, or Daisy, or muskrat, or robin, or swallow, or brook trout. My life was never boring with these companions. But, one of my fondest acquaintances is Buelah Boulden.

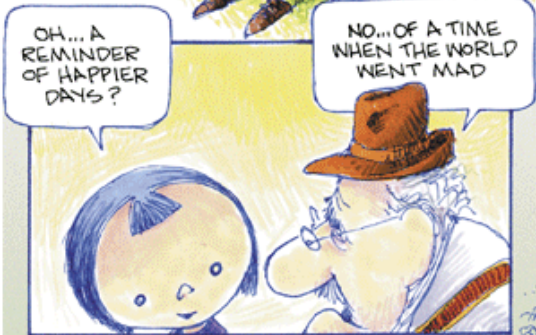
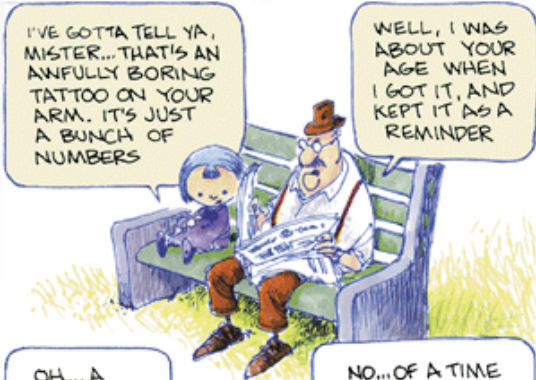
Between my bouts of mischief, I did spend about a decade serving as an Alter Boy at Sacred Heart Catholic Church. It wasn't a large church, which didn't help dissipate the stench that came from my hands (skunk and dead gopher smell didn't readily leave hands that detested soap and water). This may have been why I drew the attention of Buelah Boulden; or perhaps it was the fact that I lost my Dad at such an early age. Nevertheless, some time early in my life, Buelah must have decided that I was someone that could use a little assistance in the "I care" category of life. This is how that played out. From the time I was little all the way through high

school and on into college Buelah never forgot my birthday. Every March 17 I could count on a card with a crisp \$1 bill neatly folded inside. There weren't a lot of words written in the card, just a brief note wishing me a happy birthday. On Sunday mornings, I could always count on a smile when I looked out at the serene congregation. Then there were those annual phone calls. Buelah's husband was the manager of a local fish hatchery, and Mosquito Creek received an annual planting of Eastern Brook trout, which was needed in part because of one local boy who fished that creek nearly every day of the summer. A 15 ft³ chest freezer can hold a lot of brook trout. Buelah made it a point to always call me to let me know that the fish planting truck was on its way to Mosquito Creek.

During my high school days and on into college, believe it or not, I made a few choices that probably would not be described as sound. There was a time or two, or three, during those years that I wondered what Buelah would have thought had she known what kind of activities I was involved in. Not that she was a busybody though. Buelah never lectured me on reading my Bible or going to church or walking the straight and narrow. Rather, she chose the route of a kind word and a commitment to letting a young boy/man know she cared. Wherever Buelah is today, maybe already residing in heaven, I want her to know how much her acts of love impacted me.



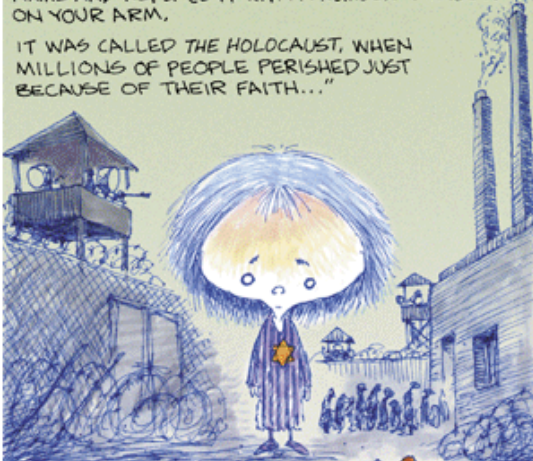
"That's a nice story," you say, but how does that have anything to do with Saul becoming Paul. Well, I strongly believe the Holy Spirit works through other people to minister to us, preparing the soil of our hearts for the seed of faith. For Saul, his Buelah Boulden may have been Stephen. Can you imagine what kind of impact Stephen had on Saul with his words of forgiveness, even as he was brutally being murdered (sound like anyone else you know). Perhaps there were other people in Saul's life, I don't know. But, it is very rare for someone to make such a dramatic change in their lives in such a short period of time without a period of preparation prior to the harvest. I just have to believe there was a Buelah Boulden in Saul's life. Who was your Buelah Boulden? What did she/he do that made an impact on your life? How did it help prepare you for the day you said, "Lord, what do you want me to do?" And, just as importantly, who are we Buelah Boulden to? Have we made the commitment to minister to someone through prayer or involvement in their lives? Can we overlook the stench of smelly hands and minister to them for no other reason than because we care. I hope so. I know that Buelah would hope so too.



"IMAGINE YOURSELF IN A LAND WHERE YOUR COUNTRYMEN FOLLOWED THE VOICE OF POLITICAL EXTREMISTS WHO DIDN'T LIKE YOUR RELIGION.

IMAGINE HAVING EVERYTHING TAKEN FROM YOU, YOUR ENTIRE FAMILY SENT TO A CONCENTRATION CAMP AS SLAVE LABORERS, THEN SYSTEMATICALLY MURDERED. IN THIS PLACE, THEY EVEN TAKE YOUR NAME AND REPLACE IT WITH A NUMBER TATTOOED ON YOUR ARM.

IT WAS CALLED THE HOLOCAUST, WHEN MILLIONS OF PEOPLE PERISHED JUST BECAUSE OF THEIR FAITH..."



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About Non Sequitur

Non Sequitur is Wiley Miller's wry look at the absurdities of everyday life. A hit with fans of all ages, the strip is syndicated in more than 700 newspapers. Non Sequitur has received four National Cartoonists Society divisional awards, the most prestigious in cartooning. It is the only comic strip to win the coveted award in its first year of syndication and the only one to ever win in both the best comic strip and best comic panel categories.

This hilarious creation is not only creative but also clever. It tackles current cultural issues such as politics, celebrities, male-female relations, materialistic desires and society's obsession with weight. Non Sequitur will have you laughing at the controversy of everyday life.

The interview with God

<http://www.theinterviewwithgod.com>

I dreamed I had an interview with God.

“So you would like to interview me?” God asked. “If you have the time” I said. God smiled. “My time is eternity. What questions do you have in mind for me?”

“What surprises you most about humankind?” God answered... “That they get bored with childhood, they rush to grow up, and then long to be children again.”

“That they lose their health to make money... and then lose their money to restore their health.”

“That by thinking anxiously about the future, they forget the present, such that they live in neither the present nor the future.”

“That they live as if they will never die, and die as though they had never lived.”

God’s hand took mine and we were silent for a while. And then I asked... “As a parent, what are some of life’s lessons you want your children to learn?”

“To learn they cannot make anyone love them. All they can do is let themselves be loved.”

“To learn that it is not good to compare themselves to others.”

“To learn to forgive by practicing forgiveness.”

“To learn that it only takes a few seconds to open profound wounds in those they love, and it can take many years to heal them.”

“To learn that a rich person is not one who has the most, but is one who needs the least.”

“To learn that there are people who love them dearly, but simply have not yet learned how to express or show their feelings.”

“To learn that two people can look at the same thing and see it differently.”

“To learn that it is not enough that they forgive one another, but they must also forgive themselves.”

“Thank you for your time,” I said humbly. “Is there anything else you would like your children to know?”

God smiled and said, “Just know that I am here... always.”

5 Embarrassing Grammatical Mistakes

by Martha Brockenbrough

<http://encarta.msn.com/encnet/features/columns/?article=embarrassinggrammar>

Two things the KCC Newsletter has never claimed to be: (1) politically correct, and (2) grammatically unchallenged. So, when the award-less editor came across this article, he wondered if Martha Brockenbrough had been perusing copies of the KCC Newsletter. To help you avoid some of those embarrassing grammatical errors that this editor doesn't mind making (obviously), take a little time to commit some of the following principals to memory.

1) Be agreeable

When it comes to language, we can't just agree to disagree--at least not when it comes to subjects and verbs. If your subject is singular, your verb must be, too. Usually, this is easy: "The boy eats the pie." "The people eat the pie."

It gets trickier when there is a descriptive phrase tucked between the subject and the verb. As peanut butter gives life and meaning to bread, this modifying phrase enhances the meaning of the sentence. But--just as peanut butter doesn't turn bread into a waffle--a modifier doesn't change the form of the verb.

So, in American usage, you'd say, "The group of people is eating the pie."

What's the trick here? Knowing how to identify the subject. In this sentence, "the group" is the subject, not "people." In any sentence, the subject is whoever or whatever is performing the action. In this case, it doesn't matter if there are 100 students eating pie; the group is the subject of that sentence, and it needs a singular verb.

In a similar vein, I just got a letter home from my daughter's school that said, "A child reads better if you read to them every day."

Even though an elementary school-age child has the energy of many people, he or she must be talked about in the singular. But if the "he or she" thing feels too stuffy, it's fine to say, "Children read better if you read to them every day."

We at the Society for the Promotion of Good Grammar consider using the plural this way to be our royal escape hatch.

2) Avoid apostrophe catastrophes

On the bright side, the "pie's" made by our dorm's cook in college were delicious. For that, she gets significant credit and my everlasting gratitude. But I did gasp in horror at the sign she made advertising them.

It is a catastrophe of apostrophe to make a plural with an apostrophe-s. Apostrophes are used for possessives. Pies, alas, don't possess much beyond crust and filling. So unless you're talking about that, keep the apostrophe out of the recipe. Apostrophes also appear in contractions, which magically appear when you make one word out of two. The apostrophe stands in for the missing letter or letters.

There is one exception, though not all apostrophe zealots agree with me on this point.

You can't easily write home about all the A's you got in English class if you don't stick the apostrophe in there. (It reads as though you're saying, "I got all As." As what? As if?)

This exception gets some grammar nerds whipped into a lather. Purists view this as an abomination, though the apostrophe zealot in England who sent me e-mail couldn't give me a better way of writing around the "As" problem. (You can work around this by putting the A in italics, but if you aren't careful when you change your typeface, you might lose it in the editing phase.)

Language nuts who are more generous with their apostrophes stick them in if's, and's, and but's. That's too far. Apostrophes do not belong in ifs, ands, or buts, because those plurals are perfectly clear without them. Clarity is the whole point of grammar, and if a rule doesn't make language more clear, then it's just silly.

The final tricky situation here is whether possessive nouns that end in s get an apostrophe only, or the apostrophe-s. Unless they're Moses or Jesus, or some other Biblical entity, they get an apostrophe-s.

I'm not kidding. I have no idea why this is so, but it's funny, so it's worth remembering.

3) I seem to have misplaced my modifier

Let's say you're trying to sell your grandmother's antique dresser online. Does this make a good advertisement? Hmm, let's see.

For sale: Antique dresser for woman with thick legs and large drawers.

It would make a great ad--if you're trying to sell your desk only to husky women wearing giant underpants. If you want anyone else to consider it, you'll want to rewrite that sentence so the descriptive modifier isn't separated from its noun.

For sale: Woman's antique dresser with thick legs and large drawers.

If you keep your sentence structure simple, you are less likely to misplace a modifier.

When in doubt, start with the subject, then move right away to your verb. This can lead to dry writing, but that's better than inadvertently hilarious writing, like this: Having finished homework, the TV was turned on.

Maybe the technology has improved since the days I used to watch The Muppet Show instead of doing my algebra, but I've never known TV to finish its homework.

A great way to avoid making mistakes like this is to write in active voice instead of passive. You know you're writing in active voice when the subject of your sentence performs the action. A sentence is in passive voice if it's not clear who did something--in this case, who turned on the TV instead of trying to earn extra credit.

4) Dangerous malapropisms: Say what?

A friend who's in the media business told me the awkward tale of a colleague who kept saying "antidote" in a meeting, when the word she was grasping for was anecdote.

This is a classic malapropism, when someone misuses a word by confusing it with an-

other word that sounds similar. A number of words sound similar, but mean very different things.

Indicted and inducted form another pair of potentially embarrassing swaps. When a person is indicted, he's charged with a crime. When a person is inducted, he's been given a new job or honor (or introduced to a new idea). You'd congratulate someone who's been inducted, and offer condolences to someone who's been indicted. Otherwise, you'd be embarrassed.

Conscience and conscious are another tricky pair. But if you stay conscious of the difference, you will have no embarrassing incidents weighing on your conscience.

Want more? Take the evil word-twin quiz.

http://encarta.msn.com/quiz_144/Word_Quiz_Evil_Twins.html

5) Words to write right: its, it's, who's, whose, their, there, they're

The saying used to be, "On the Internet, no one knows if you're a dog." (Cats are obvious, though; they always fall asleep on the keyboard.)

Likewise, when you're talking, no one can tell if you screw up whose and who's, its and it's, and there, they're and their. But when you're writing, watch out. Screw these up and you'll look like a fool.

But don't despair. Or, as grandmothers say, "There, there." You can expand your mind on this front by understanding contractions.

If what you're really saying is "it is," "there is," or "who is," then use the apostrophe version. So, it's, there's, and who's.

Use its, whose, and theirs for possessives. How do you remember this? Just remember that possessive pronouns have everything--except apostrophes.

Likewise, I have another goofy little trick for keeping their straight from they're and there. Their is a possessive. It has an i in it. I like owning things. Therefore, the one to use there is their.

There's, meanwhile, comes with a warning. There's is short for there is. "There's a fly in my soup" is correct, if disgusting. But "There's flies in my soup" is incorrect and even more disgusting. So be careful there. Even one of my smartest high school students--an award-winning writer--made this mistake in a recent piece she wrote for me.

My bet is this is a common mistake because it's easier to say "there's" than "there're," which is the correct verb form whenever you're dealing with more than one fly. Those two r sounds in a row don't exactly trip off the tongue. While you can get away with it in speech, the error will be more obvious in writing. So beware.

And now, for two final entrants into the write-it right category: loose and lose.

This one's easy. Loose rhymes with goose. And as they said in Buffy the Vampire Slayer, "How loose is your goose? Your goose is totally loose"--whatever that means.

Meanwhile, lose is a loser. It has lost its other o. And if you can remember that, you'll be a winner--grammatically speaking, at least.

Crocheted Doilies

Found and submitted by Dorothy Hermanson

There was once a man and woman who had been married for more than 60 years. They had shared everything. They had talked about everything. Nothing was held back. Well, almost nothing. They had kept no secrets from each other except that the little old woman had a shoe box in the top of her closet that she had cautioned her husband never to open or ask her about. For all of these years, he had never thought about the box, but one day the little old woman got very sick and the doctor said she would not recover.

In trying to sort out their affairs, the old man took down the shoe box and took it to his wife's bedside. She agreed that it was time that he should know what was in the box. When he opened it, he found two crocheted doilies and a stack of money totaling \$250,000.

He asked her about the contents.

"When we were to be married," she started, "My grandmother told me the secret of a happy marriage was to never argue. She told me that if I ever got angry with you, I should just keep quiet and crochet a doily."

The old man was so moved, he had to fight back tears. Only two precious doilies were inside the box! She had only been angry with him two times in all those years of living and loving. He almost burst with happiness.

"Honey," he said, "that explains the doilies, but...what about all this money? Where did it all come from?"

"Oh," she said, "that's the money I made selling the doilies."

His wife's grave side service just barely finished, when there was massive clap of thunder, followed by a tremendous bolt of lightning, accompanied by even more thunder rumbling in the distance.

The little old man looked at the pastor and calmly said, 'Well, she's there.'

Swanson River Moose Hunt, 2009

by Pat Shields

I believe it was about 1985 when I first started canoeing down the Swanson River in search of a bull moose that would provide meat for my family. My hunting partners have gone by the names of Steve, Jim, Joel, Rene, Arnie, Tim, Jon, & Jeff. Lea has a theory about this diversity of names, but we won't explore fiction right now.

Well, this year turned out like many in the past, that is, I did a little hunting locally, but my wildlife encounters mostly consisted of barking dogs, clanking boat trailers traveling down Tustumena Lake Road, and jet skis and screaming children recreating on Centennial Lake. So, into the back of the pickup went the beat up canoe that my father-in-law, Pete Weatherford, had given to me after he had made several trips down the Swanson River with it, and down river went Pat and his new hunting partner, Jeff (the camera pans over to see Lea grinning).

Hunting out of a camp on the Swanson River provides a bit more of a challenge than hauling in a camp on a pack of horses, but it is nothing like sheep hunting. When you get to the "trailhead," you unload your canoe and line it with a tarp and begin packing. Let's see, you need a tent, two sleeping bags



and pads, 5 gallons of water, a cook stove and fuel, lantern and fuel, an axe, two packboards, two hunting day-packs filled to the brim, two rifles, and food for two for a week. This may not seem like a lot, but when it gets stuffed into a canoe and both hunters

take their seats, the very obvious question becomes, “where in the world will you ever put a moose?”

After an uneventful 6 hour trip downriver to our hunting camp, we got everything unpacked, got both tents set up (one was to store our food and supplies), and headed out for an evening hunt. It really didn't concern me that we neither saw nor heard any moose, regardless of gender. After all, we had five more days of hunting ahead of us. However, the next couple of days of hunting produced the same results, but we weren't without hope. My hunting partner strolled into camp after a morning hunt, took his hat off and threw it at me and said, “What do you think?” I took one sniff of it and asked him if he forgot to put toilet paper in his pack. That didn't even faze him though. He just smiled and said, “I scared up a bull today and that's when I found his rutting pit; I rubbed his scent all over my hat, what do you think?” What did I think – well I thought he smelled like the tail end of a bull moose that had only one thing on his mind. “You ain't bringing that hat into our tent, partner,” I told him. “Don't worry, he said, “I'm saving this hat for tonight's hunt.”

On the forth day of hunting, we awoke to frost on the ground and clear skies. Our tact this day was to split up and head for two rutting pits we had found. This should hopefully put us in the vicinity of a bull moose, which we hoped to entice into the open by doing some cow calling and bull scraping with the scapulas we each had brought. I got to my spot in about a half hour and turned on my GPS. It said that my hunting partner would be located about ¼ mile to the west of me. This was perfect. We could feed off of each other's calls, making any rutting bull in the area all excited to either pick up another cow for his harem or to fight off any male challenger. I got all situated on a nice down-fall and let out my best version of a cow moose wanting a new husband. I only wish I knew what that was supposed to sound like, so in reality I just made some loud moan and hoped no other hunter was in the area. My partner responded a few minutes later by scraping the brush with his scapula followed by a grunt or two. No response. I waited about 15 minutes and scraped the brush with my scapula and grunted a few times. I then heard my partner cow call. It shouldn't be long now I thought. It wasn't. About a minute later I heard my partner yell out (not in moose language, but in Alaskan English), “That's far enough, now back off.” That “call” immediately sent chills down my spine. I knew what was happening. He had encountered a bear. I grabbed my pack, threw the scapula in it, and started out on a fast trot in his direction. I again heard him yell out, “Now, back off, don't come any closer.” Then the noise I had been waiting to hear the past few days occurred. A rifle shot. I stopped dead in my tracks and briefly contemplated what might have just happened. It was altogether possible that my friend

had been charged by a bear and he had gotten off one shot. Either he or the bear could be seriously hurt or worse yet, dead. I briefly waited to listen for another shot, or any other noise, but heard nothing. I then called out, "Are you Ok?" Thankfully I heard him yell back, "Yes!" I then needed to know something very important, so I followed up with, "Is the bear between you and I." He responded, "Yes." Oh great! Down went the safety on my rifle and into Rambo-mode I went. The last thing I wanted to see was a bear coming through the brush on a full gallop. Well, I finally made it to where my partner was standing and he still had his gun in the ready position. "What happened," I said. He told me that after he cow called he heard a "whoof," and knew immediately that the respondent was not a moose, but a bear. He said he stepped out into a little clearing and saw a brown bear sow and her two cubs approaching him at a steady pace. When he yelled out to her, "That's far enough, now back off," she did not react like most bears do when they figure out they have encountered a human. She stopped for a moment, walked around some brush and then came right at him again. That's when he told her to back off, but she kept coming, so he fired a shot in her direction. When he did this, she and her cubs reluctantly strolled off, but did not seem bothered by the noise of the 338 magnum rifle shot. By the time I got to where this had all occurred, we could hear her growling off in the distance, which could have been a response to some unruly cubs or it might have been the result of her being unhappy about being run off by the rifle shot.

After discussing (not whispering) the situation for 15 minutes or so, Jeff and I decided to take a hike to another area and do some more hunting. As we were leaving, he made the comment, "I sure hope she doesn't end up in our camp." I didn't say anything to that comment, but I did think to myself that no way this bear would travel to our camp. I had been hunting in this area for more than 20 years and had never had a bear in camp or on any moose gut-piles, and I had harvested multiple moose in the vicinity.

We made the ½ mile hike to a nearby lake and did a little moose calling, but were greeted by nothing other than the warm sunshine that had made its way above the tree-tops. We observed all of the footprints in the mud surrounding the lake and could identify various shorebirds, wolf, moose, extratufs (human), and of course our new friend, bear. We decided to head back to camp and plan our evening hunt.

As we approached our campsite, I saw Jeff shoulder his gun and say, "bear." I thought he was trying to get a reaction out of me, but when I looked into camp I could see that we had received a visitor while we were gone. Our supply tent had been torn up and

the remains of our supplies were strewn all over camp. Gone was much of our food. “I can’t believe that sow came into our camp,” I said, “this has never happened to me before.” “Well, it has now,” responded Jeff.

We made the obvious decision that our hunting trip for 2009 was over. It was time to pack up and get out of there. I pulled my cell phone out and dialed Lea, because she wasn’t expecting to pick us up at the pull-out point for a couple of days yet. As I was talking to her on the phone, I heard some splashing in the river, and Jeff was already walking down to see what was making the noise. That’s when I heard him yelling, “Get out of here.” Our friend was back. I hung up with Lea, even though I knew she was not going to be happy about the sudden end of our conversation. The sow and her two cubs had crossed the river to the opposite shore, but were now back in the water attempting to cross back to our side of the stream. They were about 150 yards downstream of us and the last thing we wanted was to have them back in camp while we were packing up. Our yelling did nothing, so Jeff fired a shot in their direction. Momma bear slowly climbed back up on the bank and growled a few times. But, back in the water she went. Again Jeff fired and once again the sow and her cubs crawled back up on the bank. This same scenario happened four times. After the fourth shot, we watched the sow continue on into the brush and we heard her quite a ways away from the river growling and snapping brush. We went back to camp and started packing up our supplies.

After getting camp all cleaned up and packed up (~1 hour), Jeff and I sat down for a few minutes to once again discuss all that had happened. We were not happy with this bear’s behavior. Our presence and our shooting had never seemed to really bother her much at all.

Well, it was time to head for home, so I picked up a couple of items and started for the canoe, which was about



25 yards away. I had just got started when I heard Jeff yell, "Bear!" I turned, grabbed my gun and saw the sow walking into camp. She and her cubs had obviously crossed the river downstream from camp and had circled back and came in silently to look for more food. Jeff told me to be ready to fire, if needed, because he was going to put one in the ground at her feet. He fired off his 338 rifle and all this did was cause the sow to slowly turn around and slumber off into some nearby alder. But, she didn't stay there long. She came back, this time snapping her jaws. She really wanted to get at our pile of belongings, which of course were positioned between her and us. Jeff and I slowly moved to our left, keeping as much open ground as possible between the sow and us. If she charged, we did not want any brush to block our view. Again, Jeff told me to be ready to shoot because he was going to put a round right in front of her. Right then, I was pretty sure that one of us was going to end up taking a shot at a charging bear, which is not an easy shot with a rifle and scope at close range. Most people prefer a pump shotgun with slugs in these situations. But, with my eye in the scope, finger on the trigger, and the safety in the fire position, I waited for Jeff to shoot, which he did. Dirt flew up from the ground just a couple of feet in front of the jaw-snapping sow. This time, she turned and walked off into the brush with one of her cubs bawling. They walked probably about 100 yards away. That's when Jeff and I quickly went to our pile of supplies and with one hand holding a rifle to our shoulder, we used the other to grab a bag and toss it toward the river. After getting the pile moved one toss closer to the canoe, I started hauling the camp supplies down to the river and throwing them into the canoe while Jeff kept his eye out for our friend.

When the last bag had been tossed into the canoe (not neatly stacked mind you), I yelled at Jeff and down to the river he came, jumped into the canoe, and off we went. For those of you who are Beverly Hillbilly's fans, our canoe looked just like their truck; the only thing missing was Granny. We paddled down river, keeping a close eye out on the south bank, the side of the river where our camp had been located. After a couple of miles, we pulled over where we could unload our mess and repack it for the rest of the trip.

During our departure, my cell phone had rung, but this was one call I for sure didn't have time to take. I knew it had to be Lea. It was. She couldn't take it anymore. After cutting off our first call with shouts of "Hey bear, get out of here," she needed to know what was going on. I kind of figured she was a little nervous, but I didn't realize she had emailed a number of you asking for prayer.

As Jeff and I paddled downstream, we again discussed the whole ordeal and came to the following conclusions:

- This was a young bear, probably 4 or 5 years old, with her first litter of cubs.
- She had come to the cow moose call to investigate the possibility of taking a moose calf, if available.
- Although she looked very healthy, the added burden of nursing two cubs had left this sow needing additional calories.
- Most likely this bear had been around humans before, either as a cub herself, or as an adult, and she now associated people with an easy source of food.
- She followed our scent back to camp and tore up our supply tent to obtain food.
- Although our camp was very, very clean, with our food in ziplock bags inside a tote placed inside a tent, we should have made a food cache.
- Because of the belligerent behavior she displayed, and the reluctance to leave, even when confronted by yelling and shooting, this is a problem bear that will likely teach these same behaviors to her cubs, and therefore should have been shot.

PostScript

A few days after getting home from our hunt, we heard of two other hunting parties that had an encounter with a brown bear sow and her two cubs. One group was camped on the Swanson River and from a distance they observed a brown bear sow tear up one of their coolers before heading straight in the direction of another camp. The second report was from some hunters located about 10-12 miles from our Swanson River camp. They had climbed a small hill to do some moose calling. After letting out a few calls, they watched a brown bear sow and two cubs come out of the brush and onto the same trail they had walked in on. When these hunters saw that she was going to come all the way to where they were at, they climbed down the hill to retrieve their packs. But, the sow had already reached the area. It took four rifle shots in her direction to convince her to move off. They picked up their packs and quickly hiked the two miles they needed to cover to get back to their truck. A couple hundred yards short of getting there, they were confronted by the same sow and her cubs. This is where her life came to an end. The cubs were not shot at this point, but because they are young of the year offspring, their chances of survival are very minimal. Is this the same sow that harassed us. Most who hear of this story believe it is, but at this time, we can't be 100% sure.

Shyness is Selfishness

by Ruth Lawler

How can this be? Aren't we supposed to feel sorry for these shy people? I don't think so. Some of them may be ill and have a psychiatric disorder requiring professional help, but most are simply selfish. Now don't rush off the page in a huff or call me insensitive to damaged psyches. Let me explain.

By selfishness I don't mean the grasping, hoarding variety that seeks to rake in all it desires in order to enrich itself. I'm talking about the me, myself and I variety. The kind of person so focused on self that they begin to imagine themselves the center of the universe. When we are babies that philosophy works, we actually are the center of our family focus. We even corner a lot of attention from relatives and yes, even perfect strangers. But as we grow up we learn there are many, many other folks in our world with needs, desires and hang-ups very similar to ours. We are not the center of things, so as we mature we learn to share and serve and give and take with those around us.

So if you consider yourself shy, stop a minute and consider why you are shy. Do you still consider yourself the center of your world? Do you want to run and hide when people want to talk with you? Are you afraid of making a poor impression on strangers whom you meet? Does the mere thought of speaking to a group portend the end of the world for you? If so, WHY?

Well, for most of us it all boils down to the me, myself and I syndrome.

"I'm going to look/sound stupid.

"I'm going to make a fool of myself."

"I might trip over the podium and fall flat on my face."

"People will go away thinking bad thoughts of Me, and talk about Me!"

"I don't have anything worth saying"

"I just have this terrible fear and I don't want to conquer it because it makes people feel sorry for ME!"

Yes, shyness is selfishness. Banish selfishness! You do have something to say, and there are people who want to hear it. You might trip over the podium or even your own words, but you will recover. People might find fault with what you say or do, but so what? You can't please everyone! Just bear in mind that you are a child of God, made in His image, with something to say, something to contribute. Most people will benefit from contact with you, and you probably can't do anything about those folks who don't; so if you can't change their attitude, quit worrying about them. Just share yourself. Always be courteous and respectful, kind yet truthful. Focus on your audience and not on yourself. Venture into the world with an attitude of give and take, not an attitude of ME. It is mainly through giving that we please God, get blessings in return and contribute to our world. Don't be selfish.