



Tall Tales from the Editor

Innocent eyes or Headache induced

My bride Sioux, aka "Upper Management," had gone to town to do our weekly grocery shopping. I was going to spend the day getting our vegetable garden and orchard in some sort of order. That means pulling and killing any nasty weeds I might encounter.

Our two-and-a-half-year-old border collie Barney McGee, aka "Monster Boy," was out in the yard with me. He was herding birds and squirrels from tree to tree.

Utah, our senior border collie, lay on the gravel in our driveway. He was bathing in the hot sun as he chased squirrels and/or girls in his body-twitching dream. I'm not sure why Utah prefers a bed of gravel to, say, a softer grassy lawn. Maybe the heat from the sun-warmed gravel makes his arthritic back legs feel better. Hmm.

I decided to lie down on the gravel in our driveway, too. No, it wasn't because I had been on a hard party and found myself sprawled out like a smashed pumpkin in the drive with gravel imbedded in my teeth. Not this time. No, this time I wanted to see if maybe it was more comfortable than it looked. It was a scientific experiment about which I might be able to write a paper and post it on a website alongside all the other useless drivel found on one's computer.

After a minute of sharp, jagged-edged gravel cutting into my back and rear, I gave the bed of gravel a comfort rating of zero.

"How do you lay on this gravel for hours on end?" I asked Utah as I pushed myself up off our meat-cleaver-hacking driveway. I had just about made it on my knees when I was hit in the back with the force of a flying karate kick that knocked me flat on my stomach gasping for breath. I felt as if a lineman for the Indianapolis Colts had just hit me in the backside—a hit that would be watched over and over in instant replay while I was airborne catching the game-winning pass in the end zone. (The same replay also would show me dropping the ball, over and over.)

Once I was able to breathe again, I slowly stood up and brushed off the debris—fir needles, broken fir cones, twigs, sap with bits of gravel in it, dirt, you name it. McGee was staring up the

big fir tree to my left, frantically barking at unseen ghosts.

"How many times do I have to tell you, McGee?" He looked at me as I admonished him. "I'm not a circus springboard for your acrobatic tricks when you try to catch real or imaginary birds in our treetops. Geez, that tree is ninety feet tall and, believe it or not, you can't jump that high."

I decided that it was time for a break. A cup or two of coffee and some aspirin for my back seemed in order.

As the coffee was brewing, McGee convinced me to wrestle around with him on the living room floor. The next thing I knew I was sprawled out again, semiconscious with the most excruciating pain in my head—pain worse than any migraine that I have ever been blessed with.

Like a hammer driving a tenpenny nail to its head with one swing, our two heads collided during our wrestling match. McGee was licking my hand, the one that was trying to excavate my

McGee was licking my hand, the one that was trying to excavate my hearing aid that had been driven from one side of my head to the other.

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I staggered into the kitchen, poured my cup of coffee and promptly burned my lip. I wondered if it was time for something stronger than coffee but noooooo, it wasn't even 11 am yet. As if I cared.

When Sioux got home, she asked, "Why are you in bed, honey? Are you sick?"

"No, I just have multiple injuries." "From gardening?" she asked.

"I wish. No, from our youngest boy," I answered as McGee looked at us from the foot of the bed with his most innocent eyes. "Refresh my memory, honey. Didn't I get a vasectomy decades ago so I wouldn't have to deal with wild, out-of-control children other than myself?"

"That's right, sweet love. That's why we have dogs."

I then told Sioux my story of the day. When she was leaving the room, I asked, "Could you please turn out the light? I have a headache that feels like a herd of buffalo stampeding through my brain."

Headaches, headaches, headaches. One can get them listening to national or

world events on the news, talk radio, daily conversations with friends or strangers. Then there are the headaches provided for the few people left who still read the news in any depth or check sources to actually verify information—especially when it's sent to you via e-mail. I can't believe the endless numbers of conspiracies, propaganda and outright lies that continually circulate on the Internet. Those can really get your head throbbing.

An ongoing super migraine was caused when the mortgage market imploded on itself. How is it that it's all the fault of the homeowner? The lending institutions okayed people who didn't make enough money to make payments and/or never bothered to check facts on loan applications. Why would they? They made their money by selling bad paper (loans) to unsuspecting investors. In the end, after the stock market crashed, Wall Street bankers still got their money (remember the "Bailout"?), while the rest of the country went broke, causing more people (through cutbacks in hours and pay and job loss) to lose their homes.

What a headache I had recently after reading a Forbes magazine article

in a doctor's waiting room. The article was titled "68 Most Powerful People on Earth." President Obama finished in second place. What? An American president who is not Number One? Do you know who was Number One? Hu Jintao. Who's he, you might ask. He's the president of Communist Red China. Oh yeah, did you know that China owns around one trillion dollars in Wall Street securities? Makes you wonder who really owns Wall Street.

If you are one of the millions of unemployed or terminally underemployed, you might want to learn Chinese—Mandarin dialect to be exact—for it is China (among other countries) to which we've outsourced our manufacturing and middle-management jobs. I personally have a hard enough time with the English language, so I'm staying here to suffer through another headache.

How does your headache meter read these days?



The Editor, J.D. Rogers
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