

## GOMMEL'S DRAWING

Many moons ago, or, lest the sun feel slighted, many suns ago, Jo Richards worked here, running the Service Counter kinda like a shadow government, the unseen power behind the throne. Well, ok, Jo was not unseen, and definitely not unheard. But she was a power, as anyone who knows her might agree. And she could get her way with Gommel lots of times, although she might argue that point.

Every time I walk through the break room at the store, I think of Jo since there is a sign she placed on the wall above the window that looks down into the store: "Thou shalt not whine." Jo had no patience with whiners, and still doesn't, I'd guess, so when she decided to retire (ha!), she wanted to be sure we didn't forget. (Retirement for her means running around arranging worm races, sometimes running the Senior Center, helping organize the Halloween Tailgate for many years. . . you know, typical "retirement.")

Well, Jo, I feel a whine coming on. Maybe it's not really a whine, but it can sound like one to people who may not understand the circumstances producing the complaint. This complaint is expressed perfectly in a drawing made by my dad, Ernie Gommel, 'way back in July, 2002, and shown nearby.

Gommel, as we all called him, was trying to express the frustration and difficulty of trying to run a business like this, especially in a

state like California that is governed by politicians who for the most part have never written a payroll check or tried to keep a business alive and successful. I was astounded when I looked at this drawing again, 15 years later, because the issues are exactly the same. The biggest difference is the number of threats and the intensity of each one that has increased exponentially during that period of time.

Look at the picture in detail. Here are

# Thou Shalt Not Whine



the components.

1. The guy in the center is trying to juggle balls in his right hand and field balls with his left. With one foot he's trying to jump through the hoops mandated by government agencies and with the other, he is trying to remain standing on a platform that is unstable.

2. Why is the platform, or foundation, unstable? Four things are itemized: BROKEN JUSTICE SYSTEM, SUPPLIERS more difficult, SALES slowly declining as customers run to every kind of store to save a buck here and there, and competent and motivated STAFF harder to find. Amen to all of that, and more!

3. Moving clockwise, the next item is Gommel's pack of wolves baying at the edge of our campsite. The first wolf is COMPETITION that is exploding. That is truer than ever now, and what Gommel called the "giant sucking sound" of Victorville is sucking the life out of our community more than ever.

4. Next wolf: SYSTEMS and how we must conform to them. Mostly I think he meant electronic systems and the way technology has made so many things possible, mostly by

giving the bureaucratic dictators more ways to force us to comply with their demands. Related to that is another wolf: BUREAUCRACIES becoming more oppressive. One example many of you have had to deal with is the fire tax and the way the State has simply confiscated at least \$150/year from you for essentially no additional service, and they are dragging their feet dealing with the illegality of it all.

5. On the guy's left side are more wolves trying to get at him – wolves of increasing taxes, fees, and costs. So much of this is sheer theft by the ruling class elitists taking our money to pay themselves high salaries with gold-plated benefits. Maybe if our elected representatives at all levels would have to participate in the same health care systems that we all do, they would fix it pronto.

6. Near the poor guy's head are stones coming right at him, the stones of daily events both near and far. Whether politics or a power outage, daily events demand decision and action.

7. Close to the center are the arrows of the crumbling moral foundation of this nation and its culture. We are under attack by the Radical

Left who are deliberately destroying the structure of our society: faith in God, marriage and family, traditional roles for men and women, and on and on.

8. On the guy's left side, even though he has a ball in his mitt, more balls are coming at him, balls based on the influence lawyers have had on pushing legalities but violating the spirit of Justice, and then these legalities differing with each situation and each encounter with "the law". An innocent, well-intended person or business can easily become entangled in litigation or lawsuits based on differing interpretations by various agencies, resulting in crippling fines or even jail in some cases.

9. Notice the open hands held out to the man, pressuring him to contribute to any and everything, each one representing a worthy cause which the man would like to support, but so many that his head spins.

10. Last, in addition to all of the other burdens, our distressed man wears a backpack of COMMUNITY SERVICE, which as anyone who tries to help through service can attest, is a thankless job, left to the few who will, to deal with proliferating issues bedeviling a community like ours.

No wonder the poor guy looks so pisselsprung (a term from our first meat man in Lucerne Valley, Don Thrush, husband of Marion). His head is in a cloud of complexities, unanswered questions, dilemmas.

And no, this is not overstated. If anything it is understated.

I would add one more thing to Gommel's drawing. I would place above the whole picture dark storm clouds that could burst open and drown everything underneath in a flash. These are the clouds of the gathering storms in North Korea with its nuclear ballistic missiles; the Iranians forging ahead

developing their own nuclear capability with help from Russia and North Korea; the situation in Israel and the flashpoint of the Temple Mount that could erupt among billions of Muslims all over the world at any time; and the attack on our own country both by cells of radical Islamist terrorists and/or by the radical leftists who hate this country and want to destroy it.

It's not a pretty picture. What it is, is a call for each one of us to face God, our Maker, and turn this over to Him, while making our personal relationship with Him one of trust and obedience.

Psalm 118:5-14, excerpts, (ESV)  
*Out of my distress I called on the LORD;  
 the LORD answered me and set me free.  
 The LORD is on my side; I will not fear.  
 What can man do to me? . . .  
 It is better to take refuge in the LORD  
 than to trust in man . . .  
 I was pushed hard, so that I was falling,  
 but the LORD helped me.  
 The LORD is my strength and my song;  
 he has become my salvation.*

Linda Gommel

## SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

### L.V. School Board Meeting

Thursday, August 10, starts at 5:30PM.  
 At the Alternative Education Center,  
 8560 Aliento Rd up Highway 18.

### LIMITS & MULTIPLE PRICING

Please, unless otherwise indicated, ON AD ITEMS NO MORE THAN 6 TOTAL (including all flavors or varieties) OF ANY ITEM, PER FAMILY, DURING THE AD PERIOD, AT THE SALE PRICE, except in produce and meat, which are limited to normal retail quantities, or which carry limits specifically stated. Sorry, we must reserve the right to further limit or refuse sales.

ON MULTIPLE PRICING, when purchasing items in quantities more or less than the multiple stated, the register is built automatically to charge the "each" price times the quantity. (Example: Price of item is 3/\$1. The price of: one = 34¢, two = 68¢, three = \$1, four = \$1.34, five = \$1.68, six = \$2.00).

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