

## WHAT'S ALL THE FUSS ABOUT?

Today is Thursday, grocery and hardware load days at the store. And a few other major deliveries come today, also: Hi Desert Distributing (Miller/Coors beer and many other brands), three bread companies, Pepsi, Frito Lay, and who knows how many other things that arrive by UPS or Amazon mail.

I just went through the grocery invoice. The main part of the load had 4% pages of out-of-stocks, and 8 pages of items shipped. That's an out-of-stock percentage of about 33%! Wow! In the past, that would NEVER happen. We would argue over whether the out-of-stock rate was 2% or 5% or in a terrible time, 10%. The executives of the wholesaler would be falling all over themselves explaining why things were so terrible. And now, it's about 1/3!!

The hardware wholesaler Do it Best isn't any better, either. They are running 30-40% outs. And the beer company that just delivered was out of 41 out of 109 items, or 37.6% out.

Fortunately, the milk, bread, and egg suppliers are doing much better, bringing near-normal deliveries as the little critters that lay eggs and produce milk don't stop laying and producing. Prices are fluctuating more than we'd like, especially in the fluid milks. Is this supply and demand? Are Americans actually drinking more milk now than they were back in, say, January, just before this virus mess began?

These days much of my time is taken up chasing down these very annoying situations. When will we ever get any rubbing alcohol or hand sanitizer gel? Why are there huge holes in the paper aisle: toilet paper, paper towels, and paper plates? Canned dog food is turning into a major issue as there is a meat shortage, so some of the suppliers have quit making it for now. Soon there will be no Alpo canned dog food. All we will have left of the medium priced dog foods is Pedigree, Essential Everyday, and Purina. Aaargh. What will our customers do if we cannot get those, either? How to fill the empty shelves?

I fuss because what used to be so routine is now such a challenge. We used to walk the store twice a week, and once a week for hard-

ware, then scan the items with our little computers, and voila! The truck full of that stuff would show up two days later. Yes, there were issues to follow up, but nothing like it is now. Now we take the shotgun approach: order everything that's out there in a certain category, and hope that we get SOMETHING to put in that aisle. We never know from one week to the next what brand/pack/size of toilet paper or paper towels we will have.

I get frustrated with all of this, but I avoid some of the additional frustrations some of you encounter as you go to town, only to get pushed, shoved, and ordered around so that you behave just so and do as you're told. Wow, how life has changed, hasn't it? Ain't it amazing? But then, as I fuss another image overwhelms and shames me. Are you aware of the world situation enough to know what happened in Lebanon on Tuesday (Aug. 4)? Did you know that a huge warehouse located at the waterfront and containing 2700 tons of ammonium nitrate exploded, creating a huge blast, fire, and poisonous smoke? A large area of Beirut was destroyed, likened by some to Hiroshima after the atomic bomb at the end of the Second World War. The explosion was so huge that some say it set up shock waves equivalent to a 3.5 earthquake, and was heard and felt all the way west to the island of Cyprus in the Mediterranean!

Please look at



the images nearby. It's horrifying. I cannot begin to imagine the suffering of the locals in Beirut. Lebanon was on the brink of bankruptcy and collapse before this happened. The Lebanese government is riddled with corruption and dominated by the terrorist group Hezbollah, whose army fights as proxies for Iran, whom we know to be purely evil in its intent toward Israel and the U.S.

What are these poor people to do? One figure I heard was that maybe 300,000 people are suddenly homeless, in a country where there is no government help available. Hospitals are overwhelmed. The port that was destroyed is Lebanon's principle point of entry for all of the supplies and food needed. Grain silos containing over 80% of their grain were destroyed. Please pray for these people!

As I look at this, I feel so small as I fuss that our beer company didn't bring Green Apple Ice or Modelo Mango (beer?). Or that Unicorn Magic Snack Pack Pudding was out of stock at UNFI. Or that I have to take Rocky my dog to the vet for a small (I hope) surgery tomorrow, and I don't want him to be upset or anxious.

Really, Linda???? Yes, our lives are not the same as they were 5 months ago! Yes, bringing a decent store with full shelves to our customers is much harder work than it was 5 months ago! Yes, you whiner, but think about what the Lebanese face right now. Or the Nigerian Christians being slaughtered daily by the Boko Haram terrorists. Or the Iranians who are turning to Jesus Christ by the dozens but must sneak around and meet in homes, risking imprisonment or death if caught.

Wow! We've been unbelievably blessed in this country. And yet how do we show our appreciation? We kill babies, burn courthouses, tear down statues and flags, burn Bibles, and issue tyrannical orders that threaten

the very foundations that made us so blessed.

In answer to the question whether things will get better, one pastor I listened to said he believes that we are under God's judgment, with those who have given themselves over to immorality and violence in danger of passing the spiritual point of no return. I agree.

The world is erupting into violence, murder, hate, destruction, confusion, and death. Will we keep our heads down and pretend it isn't there? Or will we turn to God and seek His protection in return for our lives committed to Him? And will we THANK HIM for our blessings??

*Linda Gimmel*

### SERVICES AT CROSSROADS CENTER

**LUCERNE VALLEY MARKET & HARDWARE** 248-7311

**WASH N SHOP COIN LAUNDRY** 248-7311

**FIRST FOUNDATION BANK** 248-2717

**DR. ASHOK MELVANI M.D.** 248-1070

**ECHO RECYCLING** 760-220-4232

**AT THE SERVICE COUNTER** In the store

• COPIES • FAX SERVICE  
• PACKAGE EXPRESS -- UPS only  
• PAYMENT STATION SCE, Frontier & Verizon

**PRESCRIPTION DELIVERY** 242-4900

Rancho Drugs - Tues. 11AM, Wed. & Fri. 2PM

**ST. MARY HEALTH VAN** 760-946-4240

Will not come out until further notice.

### 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).

**ECHO RECYCLING**  
760-220-4232

On the Northeast side of the parking lot.  
**Open Mon. - Sat. 9AM - 4PM**  
Closed for Lunch Noon to 1PM.  
Closed Sunday

**Aluminum CRV ..... \$1.64/lb**

**#1 Plastic CRV ..... \$1.28/lb**

Pricing good thru August 19, 2020