

Grandpa's House

Last time I checked, I found that we Desert Rats are a proud sort – proud to live in a place so many people disdain; proud to be free to be slobs if we want; proud that we aren't as totally regimented as those city-slicker urban dwellers are. Well, at least we like to think so.

Oh yeah? How far would we get if we didn't pay our taxes? How many of us quietly acquiesced and wore those stinkin' masks for almost two years?? How many of us let ourselves be talked into being "vaccinated" without seeing unqualified good without potentially deadly consequences? Where is our desert-ratness? Our independence? Our resistance to the increasing pressure of bee ess coming from our glorious political leaders??

Oops, I didn't mean to go in that direction. The words just came out of the keyboard by themselves! I had nothing to do with it.

So lately this Desert Rat has had to venture "down the hill" many more times than I like. I HATE driving the freeways of Southern California! And why do I have to go down there so much? Because my hearing has utterly failed in one ear and is on a fast slide into oblivion in the other. And you thought I just wasn't listening!

So modern technology strikes again. As much as I disdain modernism, the urban way of life, and the crumbling of American society's morals and standards, I myself don't resist the lure of technological progress when it affects how well I can live my life. It's not that technological progress is bad in and of itself. No one can deny that smart phones, modern automobiles, capabilities in manufacturing, mining, agriculture and more have made life livable for a huge and growing population on this planet.

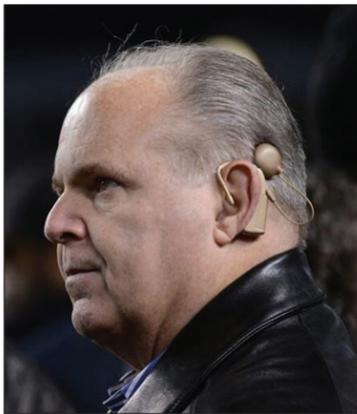
But the elephant in this room (there are MANY elephants and many rooms) is the downside of technology – the price to all that convenience and wonderfulness, like access to pornography; addiction to cell phones; and access to control by tyrants and others who think they should be in charge of each and every one of us. (That is a huge threat coming fast!)

Oops, I didn't mean to go in that direction, either. What's wrong with me?? (Don't answer that!) That darned keyboard!

I was going to tell you why I must venture out of the security of our desert home so much lately – my failing hearing.

Those of you who listened to Rush Limbaugh (one of my heroes of heroes) know that many years ago, his hearing shut down suddenly, forcing him to acquire cochlear implants that allowed him to "hear" after a period of learning how to interpret sounds received through these implants.

To Rush's great credit, his hearing loss became only a blip in his radio broadcasting life. Those who hated him and rejoiced that maybe he was silenced once and for all (and there were/are many of those haters) were greatly dismayed as he courageously sought a solution and made it work. As a confirmed Dittohead (Rush fan), I followed his "hearing journey" over the many years. Somewhere in that time I learned that he went to the House Clinic in the LA area, which knowing Rush, means that it is a leader, if not THE leader in the field of cochlear implants and helping deaf people, or people who cannot hear well enough to function among other people, to be able to



hear again.

The most wonderful thing about House Clinic is that it's available to us peons also, not just mega-rich celebrities like Rush. As my hearing declined and hearing aids seemed less capable of helping me to hear, I mentioned House Clinic to Dr. Melvani, and he was able to refer me there.

About 10 years ago, I went to House, and the doctor, Dr. Luxford, discouraged me from taking that step yet. He told me that as long as I could, I should put off doing the implants, since once they are in, natural hearing has been disconnected permanently. This time, he took one look at my hearing test and told me I was a candidate in my right ear, and so the trips down below are relating to the implant surgery, scheduled for April 26, with multiple trips to follow to "install" the hearing device and then to learn the basics of teaching my brain to learn to interpret the sounds, from scratch.

But wait! There's a catch! When they did a brain MRI, they couldn't find any brain, so rather than admit it was hopeless, they filled my cranial cavity with that foam sealer stuff that comes in a spray can. I think it's called "Great Stuff". Now people think I have a brain. Heh, heh, heh...

There is an upside to all bouncing up and down the hill between Lucerne Valley and House Clinic (now renamed PIH Health). While House is headquartered in Los Angeles (ewwwwwwwww!!!), they have a branch in the City of Orange, which to my mind is a million percent preferable to anything in L.A.

What do I care? It's all "down below", after all. Well, no. Orange is where my grandparents lived from about 1920 to 1991, in a country house in the middle of Orange groves that got swallowed up by the growing city. Orange is where my dad (Gommel) grew up until he flew the coop and went to college at Cal Berkeley. (Ewwwwwwwwwwwwwwww, but it wasn't wacko lefty back then!) Orange is where I have fond memories of climbing my Grandpa's giant avocado tree; playing on his adding machine in his contractor's office; playing catch with my Grandma.

No matter that the City of Orange removed their house a few years ago, out of the commercially zoned downtown area, and into a residential neighborhood. The city decided that it had a special heritage to cherish and protect, which included preserving its historic houses by moving them instead of demolishing them.

There is a special feel to Orange, which is the same now as it was when I was a kid. The air has a fragrance that I don't notice anywhere else, even with so few orange trees left. The town has a charm, not uppity and snooty, but Grandma-and-Grandpa-humble-hardworking-solid citizen charm. I am proud that they play a significant role in making Orange what it is, both as Grandpa built and remodeled all over the city, and as they were active, relatively well-known citizens.

Recently a lady at the city's library located my grandparents' house, which I hope to visit soon. Why? Why do I care about a house like that? Because I am a sentimental slob, for one. But more importantly, because I view that as my personal lodestar. Because my grandpa's spirit of the intense desire for right, truth, justice, and personal integrity lived in that house and birthed that same spirit in my dad, who passed it on to me. Because that spirit in my dad opened him

up to receive the ultimate Spirit of Right, Truth, and Justice, God's Holy Spirit, which again he passed on to me, even as I feel like a pale reflection of that intense Light.

And why you might care, if only just a little, because the spirit in that house led to the birth of this store in 1975, 1983, and 1992, the years of its main events of acquisition and expansion. Believe it or not, this enterprise called Lucerne Valley Market and Hardware is an expression of God's Spirit and leading of Gommel and the others of us who follow God together, to create this mission of service to Lucerne Valley and whoever else wants to take advantage of it.

And it all began in Orange, where I now experience the miracle of the cochlear implant only a few blocks from where I climbed that avocado tree over 60 years ago.

Thank You, Father! Wow. What a heritage. What a blessing.

Linda Gommel



Grandpa's house in its new location.

P.S. This was supposed to be focused on Mother's Day. Oh, well, the keyboard must have done it.



Did you see the huge crane in our parking lot a few days ago? When I drove up that morning, I wondered where I was. What's that huge crane doing there? And then I remembered that we were replacing an old air conditioning unit that hasn't



worked for 21 years. The Deli gals made their point: please let's cook the food and not the staffers! So now there is a working A/C there! Yay! -- LG

On The Lighter Side . . . Contributed from the Web

I just got a full tank of gas for \$22. Granted it was for my lawn mower but I am trying to stay positive.

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