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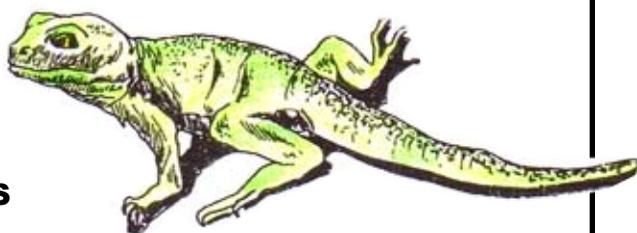
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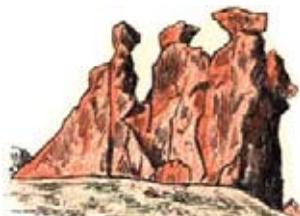
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ALSO JOINING THE BACKBONE...
Barbara Brown...Idaho Falls, ID
Douglas Bruha...Lamoille, NV
Steve Coffel...Florence, MT
Dennis Demots...Oakdale, CT



AND THANKS TO THESE CONTRIBUTORS...
Ruth Frear Beach Park, IL, the finger
Randall Lompe Casper, WY, the finger
Lewis Downey Salt Lake City, UT, the finger
AW Scott Prescott AZ, finger
Barbara Dale Eureka, NV funnybone



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within you- guide your way on.
Sat Nam
(old sikh hymn)



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POINT BLANK

WHY I STOPPED READING THE NEWSPAPERS (including The Zephyr)

K Hancock

EDITOR'S NOTE: A few months ago, I sent out an email appeal to my readers, not just for more financial support, but for more readers. I had become frustrated by the number of my "old" readers who missed the print version of The Zephyr so much, they had quit reading it altogether. I received this thought-provoking reply from one of our (once) most loyal readers. I thought it was worth sharing...JS

In response to your lament about how "things" are, I agree, and it TRULY makes me sad. In this context, "things" includes almost everything we hold dear--from Abalone to Zeitgeist. So that you know I AM one of the guilty---who has just about ceased to follow Zephyr events---and my reason is (like some of your other fans) partially because I HATE having to do so on-line. I am not sure whether to chalk it up to aging eyes---or something more sinister---but after reading a page of that shimmering computer text, I have to take a break to relieve the ocular stress. I often just go outdoors to feel some space, OR, by having another beer---or two!

Even those of us at the very perimeter of the "lunatic fringe" have about concluded that the wind has gone out of the sails of the "Environmental Movement"

But, as you may have heard from others who have "abandoned" you, the format problem is only one of our rationalizations for NOT reading the Zephyr. The other major one---is that even those of us at the very perimeter of the "lunatic fringe" have about concluded that the wind has gone out of the sails of the "Environmental Movement"---except those portions of it that offer a business opportunity. Thus, the love we have for the Movement seems unlikely to find an inheritance.

That is not to say that our passion is gone, but it has become obvious that it serves a diminishing purpose. In idiom from the King James Edition, we seem to increasingly be "spilling our seed on the ground." In other words, with the bottom line having increasingly become the Holy Grail of the 21st Century, there seems little likelihood that either Government or Big Business has ANY intention of allowing a bunch of dummies who almost always CHOOSE the option which offers NO bankable payoff to help guide "policy."

As a related aside; it was a fateful day indeed---April 22, 1970---when that hippy holiday they referred to as Earth Day, arrived. Less than a year earlier, I had decided that continuing my National Park Service career was not "the perfect fit" which the agency's (stated philosophy) and my reason for being there promised it would be. I felt I had to do something which MIGHT free me to be (or become) more informed and honest in expressing my opinions of what I saw going on in the world around me. Early on, I had the feeling that any "movement" which might emerge following Earth Day euphoria was bound to be an "iconoclastic swim." However, even in my mid-western pessimism, I NEVER thought I would live to see the degree to which ego and greed have now come to dominate our lives. "Save the planet" was once a catchy slogan, and some had hopes---an achievable goal. Its meaning has now become a need SO pressing, and one so unlikely to be served, that most of us---if we care to look---can clearly see the writing on the wall. Of course, it is easy for me to say---as a geologist---that the Earth will outlast ALL our basest motives and most shameful behavior, but to those of us who remain "profit-motive-challenged," that is cold comfort, indeed.

As Earth Day approached, and I learned that Abby has been invited to speak at USU, I thought that rather odd---since all I knew of him from our previous

encounter (1964) at Grand Canyon NP and Glen Canyon NRA---[when he came from GCNP to GCNRA seeking seasonal employment] was the introduction which preceded him. I.E.---"Seasonal employee and outdoor writer." At that time, none of us had read his work, and had no idea WHAT he wrote ABOUT.

Thus, in 1970, I made a point of looking him up before his Earth Day talk, as he sat on the stairs waiting for his turn, outside the Student Union Auditorium. The next time I saw him was a year or so after my 1973 move to Moab. After that, we exchanged occasional sarcasms, off and on, for most of two decades. I regret to say---at the time of his Memorial Service---I was preoccupied with personal matters, and was elsewhere, both in thought and location.

As you MUST know, those of us you refer to as "rebellious against the (computer) format" are not rebelling against you or the loyalties I hope we still share. Many, if not most of us, have been at it---in one way or another, since R. Carson's startling revelations came to our attention in 1962. We are not about to change our spots at this late date. BUT, even though we know where our loyalties lie, they become more and more difficult to maintain---especially as activists---after most of a lifetime of being swept BACKWARD toward, and frequently, over the falls. Even Pavlov found---that if he decreased the reward ENOUGH, even dogs finally learn, it is a waste of spit to continue to anticipate the possibility of a favorable outcome.

**I believe it was Chief Joseph, of the Nez Perce', who said---
"I am sick to death of talk
that comes to nothing."**

And, just for the sake of a comparative analogy---and/or, so that you will know your efforts remain highly regarded, and that you and The Zephyr REALLY ARE in good company---even though I continue to pay for and receive my (PRINT) copies of High Country News, I read it as seldom as I do The Zephyr. The problems the HCN research staff bring to our attention cry out for solutions. The articles not only describe the problems, they go on to specify the almost impossible odds AGAINST coming up with any. Considering my age and the mileage, I

don't need reminders---that there are TWO "hair shirts" waiting---to be read.

I believe it was Chief Joseph, of the Nez Perce', who said---"I am sick to death of talk that comes to nothing." Not surprisingly, his remark was in response to ATTEMPTING to deal with the "normal" human behavior of the WASPs he came to abhor. For their part, they were anxious to talk, since that is all they intended to give him for the taking and/or ruining of everything dear to him. They had no intention of leaving him anything beautiful, useful or sacred! The only difference in this century?---the taking and ruining are of things WE were once told belong to US, and the mechanisms of that taking are now SO MUCH more efficiently managed.

And NOW---what LOOKED like a small "win", after years of effort, is gone in a twinkling---they have delisted the wolf! Unfair? Not at all---we ALWAYS play by their rules---which are subject to change without notice!

Collectively, the tree-huggers have always resembled the Tenderfoot, sitting down to the poker game. When he innocently asked---"Is this a game of chance?"---the dealer (W.C. Fields) replies---"Not the way I play it."

K Hancock lives in Grand Junction, Colorado

