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QUOTES FOR THE DAY

“If I had a world of my own, everything would be nonsense. Nothing would be what it is because everything would be what it isn’t.”

“I can’t go back to yesterday because I was a different person then.” “Alice in Wonderland”- Lewis Carrol.

JOURNEY WITH YOUR SCRIBE DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE OF 2021 WHERE UP WAS DOWN AND DOWN WAS UP:

Oh, you politicians, Democrats and Republicans alike – how you see the world through your own tinted glasses – the mirror opposite of what the other side sees.

Mr. Trump is no longer in the cat bird's seat, but his opponents are still trying to get him lest, like Phoenix Raised, he might reemerge in 2024. In a recent U. Mass. Poll, 71% of Republicans doubt Biden's electoral victory was legitimate. Only 6% of Republicans say Biden was definitely the winner. Needless to say the Democratic view is the polar opposite.

While Mr. Trump continues to fend off investigations into various aspects of his life, most particularly, his involvement in the January 6, 2021 riot at the Capitol, no conclusions or final decisions have been rendered.

Mr. Trump's nemesis, president Biden, is now the one in the cat bird's seat and while he touts the wonderful job he has done with his administration and what great shape the country is in, his opponents beg to differ, citing immigration, inflation, crime, the withdrawal from Afghanistan and the pandemic to name a few topics.

A prime difficulty facing all politicians these days is that, unlike the old days, when voters

didn't have long memories about what was said last month or the previous year, today, Google gives us all perfect recall. So, when Mr. Biden says on 12/27/21 regarding the pandemic, "Look, there is no Federal solution. This gets solved at a state level", he can only cringe when Google dredges up his statement of 10/22/20, "Anyone who is responsible for that many (Covid) deaths should not remain as president." You see, the pandemic is now no longer an issue for the Commander in Chief.

Other ventures into the realm of the upside down, incredulous, world include: Chicago Mayor, Lori Lightfoot, saying on 7/25/21, "We're actually seeing a decline in homicides and shootings." When Lightfoot made that statement the more than 300 murders in Chicago YTD were already higher than they had been in a decade. In the year just ended, with more than 800 murders, Chicago has had its worst year in more than a quarter century.

Reverting back to obfuscation skills, we marvel at New York Times science reporter, Apoova Mandavilli who writes with regard to Covid 19 origins, "Someday we will stop

talking about the lab leak theory and maybe even admit its racist roots. But alas that day is not here yet.” Say wha?

Join me on a cross- country visit to the Washington State legislature where law makers are in the process of eliminating Drive By Shootings as a basis for elevating first degree murder charges to Aggravated Murder charges, which carry a mandatory life in prison sentence. Reason for the change – to “promote racial equity”, the implication being that minorities make up the greatest percentage of drive by shooters and when they kill that four year old girl, instead of the gang member they were trying to hit, it’s just so unfair to sentence them to life in prison.

In terms of the inane, let’s visit the headquarters of the IRS. We’ve all been reading about the spate of Smash and Grab burglaries where, in one film clip, a looter can be seen grabbing five or six Gucci (or similar) pocket books – retail value \$50,000 +. So, the perpetrator thinks he’s going to put all the money from reselling the bags in his pocket, right? Wrong, according to the IRS. The IRS tax code says, “If you steal property you must

report its fair market value in the year you steal it unless you return it to its rightful owner in the same year.” Folks, you just can’t make this stuff up.

A PERFECT FOOL- THAT’S

Bette Midler. Well, ok, no one’s perfect. In her zeal to castigate Senator Manchin for his holding up the passage of Build Back Better (BBB), she branded the citizens of West Virginia as, “poor, illiterate and strung-out.” You know, these actors and other high profile people have every right to express their views, but they so often do so at peril to their careers and to the detriment of the cause they are trying to help. Ms. Midler tried to walk back her comments with an apology the following day, but it’s like the judge telling the jury to forget the comment they just heard- it’s out there and it ain’t going away.

REALLY IT’S JUST A SMALL AMOUNT OF CHANGE

That \$1.9 billion in BBB that’s earmarked for payroll tax credits for rural newspapers. Let’s think about that for a moment. The Democrats

are going to subsidize the pay of small town papers, areas where Republicans have long held sway. Perhaps the Democratic National Party will sublet space for what is likely to be formed, The Rural Newspaper Advisory Council (RNAC) R-NAC- I like the sound. So the council members will be wanting to stay in touch with those who they have helped. A follow up letter to the editor of a small town paper might read, "So, John, how's that extra \$25 K working for ya? Thinking maybe you oughta read the attached materials to clarify your editorial opinions. Big Brother is, er, your friends at R-NAC are here to help."

THE WHEEL THAT SQUEAKS GETS THE OIL

I don't have any daughters, and therefore no swimmers or other female athletes. If I did, I would be really upset. The latest cause celebre on this issue is created by Lia Thomas who, before her gender transition had been on the male swimming team at the University of Pennsylvania as, Will Thomas, where he was just an OK performer. Since going transgender, Ms Thomas has shattered women's records at U. Penn, swimming times that are

close to Olympic qualifying times. The NCAA has been badgered by the small trans gender community into accepting an “appropriate” testosterone level as the determining factor as to whether trans gender women are qualified to compete against other biological women. Anyone raising an objection to this qualifying metric is branded as “transphobe”, and for God’s sake the NCAA can’t permit that.

I refer our readers back to HH issue 114 in May of 2021. Women’s issues writer Abigail Shrier points out, “In contests of strength and speed, the athletic chasm between the sexes, which opens at puberty, is both permanent and unbridgeable. Once male puberty is complete, testosterone suppression doesn’t undo the biological advantages men possess: larger hearts, lungs and greater bone density as well as more oxygenated blood, more fast twitch muscle fiber and vastly greater muscle mass.”

Under the threat of being labeled, “Transphobe” the press along with the NCAA have been cowed into silence. The most famous transgender woman in the world, former decathlon champion, Bruce Jenner,

now, Caitlyn Jenner, said, “It’s a question of fairness, that’s why I oppose biological boys who are trans competing in girl’s sports. It just isn’t fair, and we have to protect girl’s sports in our schools.” Oh, and, yes, Ms. Jenner has been labeled a “transphobe” even though she is transgender.

Look, the Lia Thomas case is exceptional in that she, after her gender change, is such an exceptional athlete, but across the spectrum of all high school and college sports, how many young women are having to compete with transgender women who have a genetic/biological advantage? As I said when I first wrote that piece, I will be happy to change my views when someone can approach this topic from a non- political, scientific/biological perspective and refute the substantial advantages genetic males have over females, as articulated by Ms. Shrier.

LET’S LIGHTEN UP A LITTLE

You know the term, “Happy New Year” is a wish, not a fact. I’ve always loved the phrase of Nixon’s disgraced, fired, convicted felon, Vice

President, Spiro Agnew, “You’re a nattering nabob of negativism.” Well, I’m just a little bit of that mind as we enter 2022, but sometimes if you enter a situation, not expecting good things, you can be pleasantly surprised. I’m hoping for all of us that will be the case.

In any event, I’ve come upon a number of interesting tid bits to ponder as we begin the journey of the next 365 days.

Before the pandemic, the net worth of a typical black family in America was one tenth that of a white family.

One maple sugaring tap produces about one gallon of sap, and then 40 gallons of sap reduces down to one gallon of syrup.

Nearly a third of all birds- three billion creatures have vanished from North America in the past thirty years.

The U.N. estimates that there were about 95,000 centenarians in 1990 and more than 450,000 in 2015. By 2100, there will be 25 million.

In 1954, the British magician, David Berglas made a grand piano vanish in a London hotel banquet room filled with guests.

Remember the early 1960s and how inept the outfield of the new Mets baseball team was? The riddle was: "What does Michael Jackson have in common with the Mets outfielders?" Answer, "They all wear gloves on their left hands for no apparent reason."

Metal detecting has been used since 1881 when Alexander Graham Bell invented a device to find the bullet lodged in president James Garfield.

President, Emmanuel Macron of France had never won an election of any kind when he embarked on his run for the presidency in 2016.

The shoemaker Cos Kyriacou made more than 3,000 custom pairs of heels for the singer, Prince.

In the ice cream industry, the fees that a retailer must pay to get shelf placement (called slotting) can run as high as \$40,000 per flavor.

Mary Todd Linclon, Abe's wife, was a compulsive shopper, ran up huge debts that she tried to hide by falsifying bills and misappropriating federal funds.

In 1970, NFL kickers made 59% of their field goal attempts. Last season they made 85%.

An estimated 94% of TV-owning Americans watched Neil Armstrong set foot on the moon, including my one and two year olds, Carter & Graham.

The United States is home to 161 active or potentially active volcanos, approximately 10% of the world's total.

One industry group estimates that as much as \$68.9 Billion was stolen from retailers in 2019. Wonder how many thieves paid the IRS the tax due on the fair market value of stolen goods?

WORD WEALTH

Three words most of us don't know, but which everyone should have in their vocabulary- true power words for small talk at cocktail parties:

Dyne: the force created against a flat surface by a fly taking flight.

Femtosecond: one-millionth of one-billionth of a second – useful in measuring the attention span for such drivel.

Panpsychism: the philosophical idea that consciousness might be a fundamental ingredient of all matter, right down to the atomic level

Our readers are probably unaware and could care less, but Bugs Bunny and your scribe landed on the earth the same year. I've always had a great affinity. "That's all folks."

Happy New Year,

Your faithful scribe,

PB

