

## **HORSE AND BUGGY**

I recently took an Amtrak train trip back East for a big Mayburritoville family reunion and a wedding. Driving my rental car on the backroads of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania on the way to our event, I encountered several Amish horse-and-buggy conveyances, including one that had two propane tanks strapped to the rear of the carriage, which looked like it was gas-powered. But of course it was alfalfa-powered. Neigh!

## **RAILROAD HUMOR**

On the train, my sleeping-car attendant was a real character, full of funny stories about passengers she has served over the years. Her best story was about a quite large woman who flushed the toilet while seated on it, and thus became stuck. It took a burly brakeman and my diminutive but strong attendant to “break the seal” and free the stuck woman. My attendant said she was collecting stories for the book she is writing when she retires. I suggested she call this story “It Ain’t Over Till the Fat Lady Pops.”

## **AULT! WHO GOES THERE?**

As my train rolled through the small town of Ault, Colorado, I saw a sign near the tracks that said “Welcome to AULT: A Unique Little Town.”

## **SAD SCENES**

Train travel can be a real eye-opener. You pass by the backyards and junkyards of urban/suburban America, where homeless camps and dumped trash line the tracks until you get far out of town, into the wide open spaces. It makes you think about how our society dumps people and property over the back fence when they are no longer needed or wanted. These negative thoughts finally cleared from my brain after the train left Sacramento and began to climb up toward Donner Pass, where the air was clean and the right-of-way was free of lost people and tossed materials.

## **GLUTEN-FREE WHATEVER**

Scott McKellar wonders if it’s safe to read gluten-free email.

## **WHERE’S THE BEEF?**

Not at McDonald’s in India. The American hamburger chain sells only veggie burgers in India, where the Hindu faith prohibits eating beef.

## **PLASTIC IN YOUR TUMMY**

Tiny plastic particles have been found in seafood, sea salt, and beer, among other human consumables, according to a SUNY Fredonia research study. (Source: earthweek.com, September 2017)

### **SILVER LINING**

S.F. Chronicle outdoors editor Tom Stienstra says the only good thing about the Wine Country wildfires is that they burned up a lot of poison oak.

### **GRAMMAR JAMMER**

A pregnant woman went into labor and started shouting, "Couldn't! Wouldn't! Shouldn't! Didn't! Can't!" She was having contractions. (Tatiana Ayazo)

### **SWAMI SEZ**

"Q. You've been acting for six decades. How do you stay motivated? A. I really love doing it. I've been married for a long time, nearly 50 years. But we never had children. And I'd never had hobbies. I don't play tennis. I can't swim. I don't leave the house much. I like to go to work." (Interview with actor Christopher Walken in Men's Journal, October 2017)

### **MAYBURRITOVILLE**

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