

Columns

Make an authentic Hawaiian fruit salad

I have been writing and talking a lot lately about the good, bad and ugly of dropping my TV service and going to a Roku streaming device but I have to admit that I do really enjoy binge watching TV series from the past.

My current addiction is the series "Lost" which we watched in real time from 2004-2010. Hubby actually tricked me into watching this series by not telling me that it was science fiction. I immediately liked the show and the characters; did research on the actors and wrote a few articles on the show through the six years it aired. One has to remember that I am not a deep thinker and nuances do escape me so it was pretty far into the first season before I caught on to the unbelievable; but I so liked the characters I decided to continue to watch and even though I did not understand some of what I saw I still enjoyed most of it.

Hubby was so engrossed in the show that he would quote catch phrases and recite dialogue of his favorite characters. He thought the writing was superior to any TV show at the time and by the fourth season he decided we would vacation in Hawaii, which really surprised me because we had never entertained the thought of Hawaii. He wanted to see where the show was filmed and hike in the forests and see a real Banyan tree. We also ate a lot of Hawaiian recipes while watching the show, which was a fun experience. One of the major story lines was about an organization called the "Dharma Initiative" (which I won't try to explain here) and as an artist Hubby by really liked the logo of the

Memories and Musings

By Cheri Sims



project so one Christmas I gave him a Dharma logo Tee shirt which he wore all the time. It was probably one of the best gifts he ever received, he said and almost every time he wore it someone would comment on it to him. If that person was a fan of the show they and Hubby would stand and discuss it as I shopped.

I have also been watching the Canadian TV series "Republic of Doyle". It is a fun "romcom" private detective show filmed in St John's, Newfoundland the characters take trips to Montreal and Nova Scotia. It is a quirky little series which we also watched in USA rerun around 2012. It aired in Canada in real time from 2010-2014. The star, Alan Hawko, also starred in the Canadian series "Frontier" which starred Jason Mamoia of "Game of Thrones" fame. "Frontier" was also filmed in Newfoundland, and Nova Scotia and we were familiar with the Nova Scotia filming locations from the couple times we had vacationed there and had planned a trip to Newfoundland to see where those two shows had been filmed. Sadly the Newfoundland and Hawaii vacations were not to be realized.

It is odd how we got into buying logo labeled clothing; at first Hubby did not like to wear anything that advertised a company, he was in adver-

tising for forty years so you would have thought that he would have approved of loyalty wear but he did not care for the idea. When we first started taking trips there was no money for souvenirs; we were usually on a very strict budget and did not want to buy junk, as he called it. On one particularly special trip we were visiting a railroad museum (Hubby loved train museums) and in their gift shop they featured a sweatshirt with the "Chessy" cat logo of the old Chesapeake and Ohio railroad. I really wanted that "Chessy" sweatshirt because I had admired many train cars, as a child, which displayed the "Chessy" cat on their cars. I devised a plan to convince Hubby to buy the sweatshirt; I told him that I would like to buy it as a piece of my winter clothing, not a souvenir and while it took him a bit of time to ponder the subject he finally agreed and went into the shop and bought it himself.

Thus began our passion for buying logo tee shirts and sweatshirts on vacation. I would opt for something which depicted a scene and a name or a town or place but Hubby usually purchased famous quote shirts like one from his favorite American poet Henry David Thoreau. He bought the shirt when we were visiting the Henry David

Thoreau farm and museum in Concord, Mass. You can visit the web site at: <https://thoreaufarm.org/visit/>. His shirt stated "Thoreau Sauntering Society" and was a source of many fun encounters for the almost twenty years that he wore it. We have never thrown away a single tee shirt or sweatshirt purchased on vacation. I did have three which I had completely worn out so when they were too shabby to wear I cut out the logo images and have saved them in our vacation box.

As we grew older somehow we must have changed our minds about loyalty logo clothing because we now have a few pieces with the names of our favorite designers on them. Hubby was partial to tennis and music or band logo clothing. I tend to stick with

clothing designers I like or wish I could afford. I still prefer the vacation emblem clothing because every time I wear one I am reminded of a wonderful trip we took so it is like taking another vacation. As I am sitting here typing, on Valentine's Day, I am also watching "Lost" and wearing Hubby's "Dharma" tee shirt both of which gave me the idea for this week's column.

Enjoy some good TV before gardening season.

Authentic Hawaiian fruit salad

Pineapple Chunks
Strawberries
Cantaloupe
Kiwis
Mandarin Oranges
Limes
Lemons
Honey

How to make Tropical Fruit Salad:

Clean and wash the fruit. Then chop up each fruit individually into bite size pieces into large bowl.

Combine the fruit in a large mixing bowl and set aside.

Pour honey into a small bowl. Squeeze the two limes and lemons into the bowl and mix well.

Pour the honey lime glaze over the fresh fruit and toss to coat.

Place in the fridge before serving.

The lime dressing is amazing with this tropical fruit! The lime juice is delicious with the honey and really makes the fruit salad so good.

Recipe from "Eating on a Dime"; <https://www.eatingonadime.com/tropical-fruit-salad-recipe/>.

Look for Jupiter and Mars tonight

Hopefully you have been keeping an eye on the planets Venus and Jupiter in the western evening sky, just after the Sun sets. Venus is the lower of the two bright star-like objects.

Look tonight and check out the crescent Moon next to Jupiter. Maybe use some binoculars. Note how you can see the full circle of the Moon - this is called "earthshine." Sunlight is reflecting off the Earth, then bouncing off the Moon, and coming back to Earth so you can see it.

Take a glance in that direction each clear evening and watch as the Moon moves higher in the sky each night as the separation between the planets decreases.

In the night sky

By David Leake



Next Monday, the Moon may be seen high in the evening sky, just to the right of Mars. The two will be closest around midnight.

Moving forward to a week from tonight (March 1) and Venus will have risen up to within a half degree of Jupiter. After the Sun and Moon, Venus and Jupiter are the next two brightest objects

in our sky. Why not make a point to check it out. Then keep watching as Venus will get higher in the sky while Jupiter descends further each evening. Jupiter will pass behind the Sun on April 11.

David Leake is retired Planetarium Director of Staerke Planetarium at Parkland College and co-founder of the Champaign-Urbana Astronomical Society, Inc.

Artificial intelligence turns out to be a smart aleck

I had procrastinated enough. I needed to start on this week's drivel but was having trouble coming up with something. That never stopped me before but there's nothing quite as motivating as a deadline.

I read an article this evening about how artificial intelligence is changing journalism. It's been used for years to generate news stories using public records, and now it's even being used to generate artwork.

I decided to give it a try. While I don't have high expectations for fake intelligence, Ramblin' Man sets a low bar.

Being new to this methodology, it took a few tries to generate anything. I plugged in

the terms "Ramblin' Man" and "artificial intelligence." After a few seconds, the computer responded: Ramblin' Man not compatible with intelligence.

I decided to try the humor route. I told the computer to write something humorous in the style of Ramblin' Man. It replied: No humor found. Upload example of humor.

I uploaded last week's column and tried again. And again it said: No humor found. Upload example of humor.

I uploaded a year's worth of columns. Still nothing. I uploaded the whole Ramblin' Man catalog. The computer replied: No humor found. Please stop.

I told the system to search the catalog for self-depreca-

Ramblin' Man

By David Porter



tion. It replied: Did you mean self-defecation?

I was really getting tired of this crap.

Frustrated, I decided to try a different approach. I told the computer to show me a joke. It generated an image of a mirror.

Undeterred, I moved on to puns. I like puns and have

written a lot of them. I told the computer to search the catalog for puns. It replied: 12,456,982 Ramblin' Man puns found. Please narrow search.

I refined the request to "good" puns. It replied: There are no good puns.

I thought for a bit. There are 1,500 Ramblin' Man columns in the catalog. The av-

erage word count is 500 per column. That's 750,000 words. Of course, a lot of words are duplicated, but there are still a lot of unique words.

I told the system to take all the words in the catalog and come up with something meaningful, kind and worthwhile for the human race.

It deleted the entire catalog.

So, I was back at square one. I said out loud: that's punny; I'm a square one at square one. My computer burst into flames.

Off topic, I noticed yesterday that my office is dimmer and not just because I'm in it. It's illuminated with four can lights recessed into the ceiling, but two of the bulbs are burned out. So, two can lights

and two cannot lights.

That's funny right there. I don't care what anyone else says.

Anyway, I had no luck with the artificial intelligence and didn't do any better with actual intelligence. It smarts to be so dumb.

So, I had to go back to the old-fashioned method of placing words on the page one at a time. I guess it's true what they say: If you want something done "write," you have to do it yourself.

© Copyright 2023 by David Porter who can be reached at porter@ramblin-man.us. This week hit 515 words. That's above average (in the only way fathomable).

Time marches on whether we like it or not

A long time ago, in a 1975 El Camino, far far away, usually while I was assisting him on his job as a pest control guy, my dad would give me little philosophical nuggets.

Being a prepubescent knotty head, most of them bounced right off, of course, but a few morsels somehow managed to soak into my thick brain box.

One such gem, that I've retained and referred to often since becoming whatever semblance of a man that I've become, is that "Days and weeks move slowly, but years pass at the speed of light." At the time, focused solely on the present, I didn't really understand what he meant.

Now, however, I totally get

it. A hot minute ago, we were scheduled for an appointment at Provena or Mercy, or Covenant (I think this is the right name!) or whatever it was called at the time so that Mrs. HLS could be induced and our third child could enter the world. He, however, had other plans and she went into labor before we ever made it to the appointment. Now, seemingly seconds later, that same sweet boy and his lovely wife are anxiously awaiting the arrival of their first child, our first grandson.

It's crazy to me that I can remember little snippets of his, and all my kids' lives as if they were only yesterday, when in reality some of those

Hook, Line and Sinker

By Tony Hooker



memories are from a decade or two ago. I see posts on the book of faces from our younger friends and family members about how hectic their schedules are and I just smile. We had days like those, and at times we resented them. Now, I occasionally wish that I could revisit them and soak in every

second. Every school concert, every pine wood derby, every little league game and dance competition and Hwa Rang Do tournament. For those who are wondering, Hwa Rang Do is a Korean Martial Art, known as "The Way of the Flowering Knights" that our entire family once participated in. It was an

awesome workout and family activity, even though I have a sneaking suspicion that Mrs. HLS took a bit too much pleasure in pummeling me when we sparred.

At any rate, I know that phase of our lives has passed, and it's our children's time to shine, and I'm ok with that. There's a reason why so many poets and song writers have chosen to write and sing about the passage of time. From Pink Floyd's eerie lamentations about wasting time to Jim Croce's hope that he could catch "Time in a Bottle" just to spend eternity with his loved one, singers have always been fascinated by time and it's passage. Even the Bard him-

self weighed in on the subject, countless times, with my personal favorite being "Time's the king of men; he's both their parent, and he is their grave, and gives them what he will, not what they crave."

It's true. We can't control the ravages of time. Like Tracy Lawrence said "Time Marches On," and there's nothing we can do about it, which is OK.

Truthfully, I'm in a pretty good place with where I'm at in life, and my longings for times gone by are usually brief. Besides, I'm too old to get thumped on by Mrs. HLS any more, so no more martial arts for this guy.