

commentary

from other pens...

Of ghosts, lace curtains and a would be spy

By Lawrence L. Knutson

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Harry Truman heard rustlings of White House ghosts. Mary Lincoln went on a shopping spree. John Wayne tried to give spies the benefit of his combat experience on the big screen.

That unlikely trio of lives and events gets a documentary moment in papers gleaned recently from the stacks of the National Archives. They're on display in the Archives rotunda, just feet from the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence.

The latest edition of "American Originals, Treasures from the National Archives," also includes documents linked to George Washington, Ronald Reagan, Thomas Edison, the astronauts who walked on the moon, suffragist Susan B. Anthony and Martin Luther King Jr.

Starting in October, when a renovation begins in the public areas of the Archives, museum-goers in seven states will get a look at a collection of American history on paper hard to match for sheer variety.

Start with Truman and his ghosts:

The National Archives has pulled a Truman letter, written from the White House to first lady Bess Truman on June 12, 1945, just two months after the 33rd president took office.

"I sit here in this old house and work on foreign affairs all the while listening to the ghosts walk up and down the hallway and even right here in the study. The floors pop and the drapes move back and forth. I can just imagine old Andy (Jackson) and Teddy (Roosevelt) having an argument over Franklin (Roosevelt)."

Within five years, at Truman's order, bulldozers moved in to gut the creaky, floor-popping interior of the White House and rebuild it for the ages. Truman's ghosts were exorcised forever.

The Mary Lincoln document is an invoice for the furniture she purchased on Chestnut Street in Philadelphia in May 1861 to equip a White House bedroom. The list includes silk damask curtain cornices, lace curtains, a rosewood bedstead, arm chairs, a rosewood center table, a wash stand, tasseled bed curtains and much more. The cost: \$7,503.

In applying for a wartime assignment in 1943, John Wayne informed the Office of Strategic Services —the predecessor of the CIA — that his birth name was Marion Robert Morrison, that he was 38, lived in Los Angeles and that his telephone number was York 5515.

Wayne described himself as athletic, a horseback rider and "a good field shot. Have done falls and posse riding in pictures, not as easy as it sounds," the movie star wrote.

According to the Archives, his application was not accepted.

A few display cases away is the original, scrawled text of the famous telegram Union Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman sent to President Lincoln on Dec. 22, 1864: "I beg to present to you as a Christmas gift the City of Savannah"

Nearby is the official report of Lt. Col. George Armistead on the successful defense of Fort Mc Henry in Baltimore from a 25-hour British rocket attack in September 1814. Francis Scott Key, inspired by "the rocket's red glare, the bomb's bursting in air," wrote the verses that became "The Star-Spangled Banner."

The most chilling piece of paper on display is one that was never needed, and therefore never used.

It is a draft statement written in 1969 by White House speech writer William Safire, now a New York Times columnist. It was intended to be read by President Nixon in case Apollo 11 astronauts Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin were unable to return from the surface of the moon.

The opening words read:

"Fate has ordained that the men who went to the moon to explore in peace will stay on the moon to rest in peace."

Fate ordained a happier ending.

But the Archives has the documentary record of what might have been.

EDITOR'S NOTE — Lawrence L. Knutson has covered the White House, Congress and Washington's history for more than 30 years.



Making connections: Another marketing strategy

(First of two parts)

Trade shows, conventions and business exhibitions can offer great opportunities to find new customers, meet new suppliers, locate manufacturers and distributors, and build your business. The best part is they also provide opportunities for conducting cost-effective market research, analyzing your competition, learning about merchandising, observing quality displays and making solid business connections.

There are two methods you can use to take advantage of these opportunities. First, you can be an attendee and visit a variety of shows and conventions. Second, you may become an exhibitor, set up a booth to sell your wares and promote your business.

The purpose of this two-part series is to give you some tips for using both methods to build your business. We'll begin this week with some helpful suggestions for exhibiting at trade shows and business expositions. In part two, we'll offer several tips for building your business by attending these events.

Before you sign up

There are several steps you should take before you spend the time and money to become an exhibitor at a show or convention. First, attend any show you may consider as a potential event to ensure the target customers you wish to reach are there.

Next, make a list of what you want to accomplish. This list may include making sales, getting



don taylor

- minding your own business

leads, boosting your visibility and demonstrating your product or service to a certain number of prospects.

The next step is to count the costs. Consider direct costs such as space, booth or display rental and services. You should also consider the indirect costs such as time to set up and tear down, follow up and the time away from your normal activities. Finally, start early. Plan a year or more in advance if possible. Consider your displays, product samples and handouts carefully. Get copies of the show rules and contracts to avoid surprises.

Once you commit to setting up a booth, list the supplies you'll need to take. For example, you'll want a good supply of business cards, brochures, flyers, order forms, pens and special giveaways. Also, take scissors, scotch tape, duct tape, an extension cord, markers, a knife, a hammer and other hand tools.

At the show

- **Be visual.** Have something unusual to catch the attention of those passing by. Working models, product displays or photographs may do the trick.

- **Have a single, central theme.** What you offer in your booth or exhibit should be obvious.

- **Keep your booth open and uncluttered.**

Stand up, make eye contact and greet everyone you can. Make it easy for attendees to interact with you.

- **Wear comfortable shoes.** Take two pairs and change during the day.

- **Be certain that the name of your business or product is easy to see and read.** Most passersby will only glance at your booth for a second or two. Make the most of it.

- **Never leave your booth unattended.** You might just miss the most important contact of the whole show. Have relief help to cover the booth when you have to be away.

- **Create some "special show offers."** If your intent is to generate orders, show specials will add incentive for immediate purchase.

- **Look your image.** Neat displays and well-groomed appearances are always in style.

- **Don't eat or drink in the booth.** If you can't leave the booth for a few minutes to grab a bite to eat, you don't have enough help. The one exception to this rule is if you are offering edible samples.

In summary, plan well in advance, promote early, work hard and follow-up. Have a great show.

Don Taylor is the co-author of "Up Against the Wal-Mart's." You may write to him in care of "Minding Your Own Business," PO Box 67, Amarillo, TX 79105. Column sponsored by Goodland Area Chamber of Commerce Business Development Committee.

Trying to explain the drainage district laws

Sometimes a legislator is asked to explain legislation to the Senate in an area of law that rarely is reviewed and last week was such an occasion for me.

There is a fascinating, arcane and obscure body of law in the Kansas Statutes relating to Drainage Districts enacted between 1905 and 1911 in response to a devastating flood in the Kansas River Valley in 1903. There are over 200 statutes that apply to a variety of drainage districts, very few have ever been amended and less than 10 percent of the original statutes have been repealed. There are many interesting provisions in some of these districts:

All meetings shall be open to the public and the board shall not at any time go into executive session. (State law 24-416)

Each acre of land in the district shall represent one vote. (State law 24-605). Many times, I wish this was the case when voting in the Senate.

No discrimination shall be made on account of sex (State law 24-507). Remember, these statutes were written before women got the vote.

An engineer shall prepare plans (State law 24-513) and submit them to the school of engineering of the state university or state agricultural university for correction and approval, and all work done by the engineering school shall be free of cost. (State law 24-515)

Each member of the board shall be paid \$3 for each day's service (State law 24-648).

The board shall make an order requiring a railroad or street-railroad company to raise or elevate



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- newsletter

its tracks, specifying the height and fixing a reasonable time when it shall be completed. Upon failure of such company to perform, the board shall be entitled to a writ of mandamus to compel performance and the court shall award to the board a reasonable attorney's fees. (State law 24-437).

Subject to the superior jurisdiction of the United States over navigable waters, the governing body shall have the power to widen, deepen, establish, regulate and maintain the channels of all natural watercourses. Construct and maintain levees, detention dams and reservoirs. (State law 24-407(4))

Mr. Chairman, turning to the House Bill 2246. In Finney County, west of Garden City, there is a low-lying area and over 50 years ago a drainage district was formed. The district, because it was farmland, was formed and the landowners were assessed taxes based on the benefits they received on a per acre basis. The area today is almost entirely industrial and because the area has changed from cropland to cement, asphalt and steel buildings, the runoff has increased and in some areas, after a good thunderstorm, water backs up into some of the businesses. Additionally, other prop-

erty owners that want to be included in the drainage district.

Section 1 of the bill allows the board of supervisors to determine what land they want to annex to the drainage district and submit a petition to the county commissioners. A hearing will be held and the County Commission, by a 75 percent vote, can vote to allow the annexation.

Section 2 details the powers of the board of supervisors. The key point is that taxes of up to 5 mills will be allowed on the assessed value of all tangible taxable property. The House amendment requires the approval of the chief engineer of the Division of Water Resources before starting construction of levees, dams and other water obstructions.

Section 3 basically allows the board to enter into agreements and assess fees with owners of land outside of the district allowing water to be drained into the drainage system of the district.

Mr. Chairman, I will stand for questions.

Please feel free to contact me on any issue. I can be reached by writing to Senator Stan Clark, 205 U.S. 83, Oakley, Kan. 67748; by calling 785-672-4280; by FAX at 801-457-9064; or by e-mail at sclark@ink.org.

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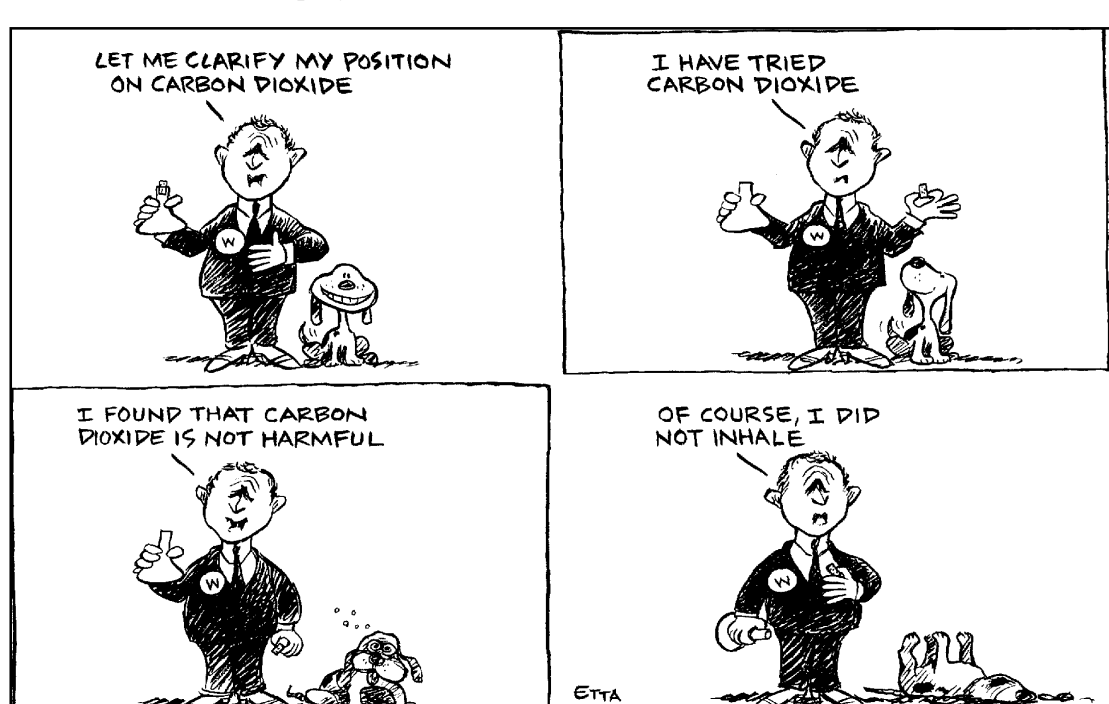
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