

especially at the elite levels, that these kids feel such intense performance pressure."

Harvard's women's varsity basketball coach worries about this from another perspective.

"I find less and less correlation between success in youth sports and success at the high school level, and even less correlation with success in sports in college. In fact, when I talk with my colleagues, we see quite the opposite. We more often see burn-out in these kids, an inability to handle the other parts of being a Division I athlete, parts such as enthusiasm, handling adversity and diversity, getting along with teammates. Many of these kids seem to have little idea how to do these things because they have been pushed too hard too young into being the best, into becoming stars."

BUDGET

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The Bunnies of Ultima Thule

A long time ago (circa 310 B.C.) in a place far, far away, the Green navigator Pytheas discovered an island he called Thule. He believed Thule was the most northerly land of Europe. Confused geographers have since identified this discovery with Iceland, Norway, or perhaps the Shetland Islands. The phrase "Ultima Thule" has subsequently been used figuratively from ancient times to denote the most distant goal of human endeavor or a land remote beyond all reckoning. I am pleased to report that at least one member of the Literary Club has located this Thule, and beyond. To Ultima Thule, across frozen wine-dark seas I flew in an Air Force transport with a hundred charges, in my first and only command experience as an Army captain. The fact that they were all rabbits is something I don't share very often. Those bunnies, and their cousins, the allegedly savage and ferocious Arctic attack here had kept me running, and would continue to occupy my waking hours, and my nightmares, for much longer than I knew then.

The time was mid-Cold War. As a Vietnam-era volunteer in the Army Medical Corps, I was allowed to complete my training, and then, by an extraordinary stroke of good luck, found myself at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. Life was exciting in the D.C. area, but a feeling of impending anguish crept over me after the Gulf of Tonkin "incident". Eventually a number of my medical colleagues were sent to Viet Nam, where a fine surgeon and friend, Cincinnati Dr. Tom Fox, tragically died.

So when my commanding officer called me in and told me to sit down to receive the news he had for me, more than a few internal organs were twitching. TDY (temporary duty) to Thule Air-Force Base, Greenland for two months as medical office for several research and support groups was such a relief I could have hugged him. Denmark and Norway had argued over this largest island in the world from 1814 to 1917, when Denmark cleverly sold the Virgin Islands to the United States, in exchange for our recognizing Greenland as a state of

Denmark. When Germany invaded Denmark in 1940, the U.S. expansively invoked the Monroe Doctrine and took responsibility for Greenland's defense.

Why did the U.S. stay interested in Thule? What was the U.S. doing in this God-forsaken corner of northwest Greenland? the answer is easy. This Arctic land mass lying between North America and the Soviet Union's northern frontiers represents the shortest air route between the two countries.

Thule Air Base, about 800 miles from the North Pole, was built near Dundas, a site first established by the great Danish explorer and ethnologist Knud Ramussen in 1910. It was begun in 1949 and completed over the summers of 1951 and 1952. This gigantic construction project, with the scope of the Panama Canal in terms of volume of earth (actually permafrost) removed, required 4000 men. This task was complicated by the fact that permafrost is a permanently frozen mass of earth, ice and rock. After removing the surface, a vast rock pad was layered over the exposed permafrost, covered with more layers of compacted material and then paved with asphalt. Here long-range bombers were to refuel on their way to the Soviet Union. In the 1950's that sounded sane.

Living at Thule promised to be a challenging experience, but dealing with my 100 rabbits (obtained for cold weather blood flow experiments) was worse, and provided comic relief for the military personnel at McGuire Air Force Base, New Jersey as we waited for a week of Thule fog to lift. A late spring heat wave, which I was to look back on fondly from the perspective of Greenland, was stifling, and there were no buildings available to house the rabbits. Since bunny care was in no self-respecting military man's job description, the crew I would travel with to Thule could safely look the other way as I frantically trundled my caged bunnies from one disappearing shady site to another, while the sun's heat dissolved and evaporated my patience. One hundred rabbits, it seemed, consume vast amounts of fluid. Hence a half-crazed Medical Corps captain could be seen running about the Air Base from dawn to dusk, carrying buckets of water or armfuls of rabbit cages, trying to keep my draftees alive. I

tried putting them in my room in the officer's quarters but, their scent redefined "malodorous", and even I, the most dedicated bunny advocate at the Base, had to expel them. I only lost one patient - or rabbit - during this time, and it was kind enough to leave me a note stating, "I'll be stewed sooner or later, so I choose sooner". Army food can do that to you.

At the end of a week 99 rabbits were fat, happy and well hydrated. I had lost 5 pounds serving my country.

The fog lifted, and we were all lead into huge, minimally heated transport planes where it suddenly occurred to me that the rabbits were going to freeze to death. I again became a major source of entertainment, shuttling cages of rabbits to every relatively warm site in the cargo plane, covering them with tarpaulins, hoping they didn't suffocate.

We flew in to Thule with the Arctic sun shining brightly at one a.m. My first view was magnificent: the ice in Baffin Bay seemed as thin as delicate porcelain and a lacework of cracks in the ice the color of celadon was traced over the Bay as far as the eye could see. Snow still covered the landscape, but blue-green melt streams were rushing down from the polar ice cap which rose some 800 feet above the ocean, just 15 miles inland. Alongside the vast ice cap was evidence of the D.E.W., or distant early warning line of radar outposts built in the 1950's. The Cold War had become more menacing with John Foster Dulles' enunciation of the apt acronym MAD, mutually assured destruction, and the shooting down of Francis Gary Powers' U2 plane by a Soviet missile on May 1, 1960.

One American response to the Soviet threat was readily visible. There were, a few miles from the ice cap, four huge rectangular white radar antennae, each of the size of a football field, arranged in an arc of 160 degrees, and, naturally, pointing north. Volunteer civilians had well paid 510 day rotations here, learning to distinguish flights of geese from Soviet bombers. That wasn't always easy! Five billion dollars can get you a fairly fancy radar system however!

The bunnies and I were trucked past the squat orange Arctic huts of Thule out onto the tundra where pseudo-roads were cut in snow that must have been piled twelve feet high on each side. In an hour we reached Camp Tuto, an acronym for "Thule Take-Off", although widely rumored to really be an Eskimo expletive.

There were indeed Eskimos nearby, but the village of Qaanaaq, near Thule, had been moved 100 km north to avoid the predicted corrupting American influence.

One of my roles, besides professional bunny tamer, was to provide medical care to the Eskimo population here, with helicopter igloo calls. That sounded colorful, until I was directed toward my first chopper and ran by a flag pole holding a bronze plaque inscribed "In memoriam to the valiant helicopter pilots who have died braving Arctic skies". The crew kept yellowing for me to hurry up, and "keep your head down, Doc". Good advice! Eskimo medicine might be the topic of a future paper; I was impressed that I never saw a single cold, but plenty of heat rash. Go figure!

My bunny travels were not over. The experiments I had planned on blood flow, using a microscope that could see individual red cell flow and shape, were to take place in the "lab"! Where was that? "Oh, just about an hour from here, Doc. They call it Camp Century". I had just learned that I was to provide medical care to this camp too. Here outstanding research was being done on the contents of ice cores. Why ice cores? A wide range of environmental and physical measurements could be made on this ice obtained at depths down to 1500 feet and dated as far back as 110,000 years, based on annual layer counting, volcanic markers, and the deep-sea sediment record. Important paleoclimatic and geomagnetic data came from these ice cores. But where was this place? "One hundred miles out on the ice cap, Doc. What did you think the 'Century' part meant", smirked the rotund sergeant in charge of my mini-hospital.

A camp on the ice cap, I wondered? No, in the ice cap. The Army had wanted to build sites for man's survival in case of nuclear holocaust, according to my commanding officer, or maybe someone had a little extra

money at the end of a fiscal year. The challenge to power this Camp was met by prefabricating a nuclear reactor in the U.s., breaking it down into numbered pieces, and reassembling it in huge trenches. These were dug in the ice cap by Swiss road clearing equipment and covered by long metal arches, which were topped with ice particles spewed out by the Swiss equipment. This ice hardened into the consistency of concrete when it hit the metal roofs. In a single Arctic summer the digging and roofing took place, and the world's first portable nuclear reactor was hauled 100 miles out to the site and tested. Electricity, steam heat, and fresh water were produced constantly from 1960 until about 1968, when Pentagon dollars were shifted to Viet Nam.

My rabbits thrived and multiplied at Camp Century, clearly stimulated by the excitement of nuclear power. Their survival was actually due to the Army's Arctic expedition food policy, which was basically to double the food ration, including a great deal of steak, available to each man. Next to tenderloin, rabbit stew was, fortunately, less appetizing. Just when I buoyantly believed my bunny bunking bungling was behind me, I learned that I had a new duty as medical officer, that of hardy hare hunter and harrower. It was widely rumored that the Arctic hare carried rabies, and it fell to me to render the local population extinct. How to do this? "Doc, this is called a rifle", chuckled my amused NCO, whose pupil I reluctantly became, since the Army had forgotten to give me basic training before sending me to D.C. When I was pretty sure I could hit the side of a barn, if there were any, we took off in a clunking, careening jeep, where I struggled just to avoid being tossed out or shooting myself in the foot. Meanwhile the sun circled higher and higher in the sky, never setting, and creating a constant state of personal hypomania. The snow melted with astonishing rapidity, and the Arctic hare promptly and cleverly unzipped their white coats to reveal a fashionable spring brown. Their camouflage was spectacular, and I never knew if I was shooting at a snow covered rock, tundra pushed up by a melt stream, or the possibly rabid rabbits. I am rather certain I never hit a hare, though I did swear that a few of them rolled over,

convulsed with laughter, before gleefully scampering off. They were awfully small targets.

Those riotous rides over the emerging tundra, the ultimate off-road experience, were full of exceptional beauty. The omnipresent Arctic light was always shifting and reflecting off swirling, cloud formations, pink and gray rock, and the green porcelain Bay. Tiny purple and yellow flowers heroically emerged from hiding and painted the tundra. Miniature deciduous trees grew leaves before my eyes.

Such weather was punctuated once or twice by a Phase 3 storm, with 100 mph wind and a total "white out", where the world quickly and terrifyingly disappeared, and you'd better not lose your grip on the guide ropes between buildings.

The most scenic spot to take in the view was the top of Mt. Dundas, a 900 foot mini-mountain jutting out into Baffin Bay. Climbing it with the delightful Protestant and Catholic chaplains of the Camp was a memorable experience. This also provided my greatest Greenland medical challenge, when Father Divine (truly his name) suddenly discovered his acrophobia at the top and had to slide down on his backside. This led not only to his inability to sit for a week but also created the extraordinary Father Divine modified genuflect.

After my two months of TDY had sped by, the bunnies and I returned to the States, where they received a hero's welcome from their penmates. But I was less than amused when my 20-month-old son, intensely coached by his mother, greeted me with a well rehearsed smacking of his lips followed by, "What's up, Doc?" Th-th-th-that's all folks!

Edward B. Silberstein

Elevator

It was one of those longer winter three day weekends that no one really wanted. His secretary wanted Friday off so that it would be a four day deal and he agreed to it. As a result he came in about noon on Friday, deciding to work to exhaustion and maybe work on Saturday and perhaps on Sunday. Located in the basement of an old building that most people didn't know about, any interruptions would be unlikely. It was snowing intermittently off and on.

So until about ten o'clock that night he slogged away creating lots of paper and an irritable outlook. He had brought a couple of sandwiches, tuna fish and mayonnaise with a touch of lettuce but the rye bread had become a bit dehydrated and stiff and some of the filling fell out. Reasons for scooping up as he might have done at home were forsworn. There was a sizeable thermos about three quarters full of stale coffee. He decided to hell with it and got ready to leave.

This was getting along toward a six decade stay in the basement of a very old hospital, one that had been added to and remodeled many times but he was never included. At lunch with the fellows he was regarded as an anachronism but always treated with humor and warmly. His office was spacious, obviously because no one else wanted it. There were certain unique features including a complete bath with shower. The shower was useful since according to one of the plumbers its drain provided a ready access to some of the finest cockroaches in his experience. When they died they did so in the corridor avoiding the carpeted areas. Some of them died belly up as if they had to surrender to higher authority; others died in a more prosaic pose. He never found out the reason for this different. They were of nice size ranging from one to three inches. In years past there was a man who sprayed for them.

So late that Friday night, he packed his bag with some work in case he decided not to come in for the remainder of the week end. Also the thermos and half a sandwich were added. After the usual pit stop in his

private facility he turned to the elevator. If a person is not familiar with the old pavilions, in each of the four story buildings there is an elevator run by electricity that makes five stops, basement and floors one to four. There is an inner gate and a heavy outer door, electric lights and emergency signals and an emergency phone. There are appropriate interlocks. To his recollection these elevators have been in place ever since the early 1900s and had not required replacement.

Thus at that late hour and a bit drowsy he opened the heavy outer door and the inner gate, put in his heavy bag and overcoat. The doors closed with all of the usual clicks and after pressing the button for the first floor the cab began its usual ascent. He noted with some curiosity that the cab failed to stop at the first floor. He thought he had pressed the wrong button and so he pushed the button for the second floor. Once again no response. Again pressing the emergency stop button yielded nothing. The elevator passed the third floor and arrived at the top. Instead of stopping it reversed itself and began the trip down with no stops in spite of his efforts to open the inner door, a method that had always worked in the past. Now with a sense of beginning panic he tried the emergency telephone. Of course there was no dial tone even after jiggling.

What was even more alarming was that the elevator did not stop after it reached the basement. Its direction was simply reversed and it ascended to the fourth floor and, of course, reversed itself. Obviously this pattern seemed to be fixed. There seemed to be some higher authority taking command. It appeared to be important to marshall his thoughts; it would not do to become unstrung. But what to do first? He decided to measure the length of time that each full trip would take. Having only an old Timex he did the best that he could and found that the trip up required 40 seconds whereas the downward trip needed only 36 to 38 seconds. He rationalized that this difference was due to gravitational pull on the down trip and decided to forget about the difference. From that point on he used 40 seconds one way or 80 seconds per round trip in estimating his travel time.

His next step was to get organized. Help for that night was not likely. He put on a heavy coat and cap since the elevator shaft was not heated. There was a little bit of food and some fluid - cold coffee for sips only. He thought of his mother preparing him for a Boy Scout outing when he was twelve. She would not have let him go on an overnight without proper provender and would have packed a clean set of jammies. Wait a minute, he thought. Am I letting this stupid situation get away from me?

By then, 2 hours had passed. He guessed that at 80 seconds per round trip that he already had made about 90 trips and he had to pee.

Bu where to put it. It would not do to be indiscriminate, it would be like behaving like his wife's dog, a slobbering Bassett hound that he hated and who hated him. Being a physiologist when you, he recalled that with dehydration, urine becomes very concentrated. Hence the salt (electrolyte) content gets to be quite high. Therefore if he urinated on the electrical connections in the cab or outside as they passed by, he might produce a short circuit and somehow get the cab to stop. (For the scientifically inept, the situation could be equaled at home by anointing the bath with a heavy dose of highly perfumed bath salts, helping the lady in and then throwing in an operating hair drier). He prepared himself by speaking kindly to his organ that was of good size and opened fire. What resulted was a rather thin trickle collecting on the floor too near his coat. What he had forgotten was the effect of his age and the explanation of his luncheon companion, a kindly urologist. In other words the fire was in his head, not in the furnace. There was plenty of time for the puddle to dry without freezing.

It was cold. It seemed to become colder at night than during the day. He wrapped himself as best he could in his coat. It had been designed for temperatures in the 40s and 50s. He fell into a fitful doze. He opened one eye to participate in an important administrative medical conference between Chief Medical Resident, Dr. Richard Vilter and Dr. Marion Blankenhorn, Chairman of the Department of Internal Medicine. The subject dealt with the nutritional needs

of the patients. It revolved about the addition of crushed peanuts as a constituent in the weekly ration of peanut butter. Dr. Vilter contended that such an addition would result in fewer calories per unit volume (less energy per spoonful) whereas Blankenhorn, whose family owned several peanut plantations, unknown to Vilter, took an opposing view. Vilter, a very quiet person, became hot under his collar. Suddenly they both got off the elevator.

He didn't know how this happened. He was not invited to come along even though he could call Dr. Vilter by his first name. He had been at this institution for a long time. Coming as an assistant professor in Pharmacology he managed to get out of that rut and into a tenured track in Medicine chiefly because he knew a lot about psychosomatic relations between feet and sex during the time when that seemed to be a pregnant issue in that holiest of venues. He remembered a kindly physician who gave him a leg up to associate rank at a time when he really needed the money and the position. He thought that the reason for the help was because of his admiration for his friend's wife whose calves, buttocks and breasts he lusted for. The elevator kept on going up and down and again he seemed to doze off.

On the next day, his second, he awoke with abdominal rumbles and a vision of a wonderful breakfast buffet. He had recalled a cupboard full of delicacies. There was fresh coffee, warm buttery croissants, Damson plum confiture and country butter. But suddenly the repast was gone leaving only the aroma of stale coffee and old tuna.

Once more in a trance he recreated yet another repast based on a trip he made with his parents to a small town in South Dakota. Foolishly he ordered vichyssoise, oysters Rockefeller, a pomegranate sorbet, stone crabs and a croquembouche. Never had such a repast been ordered in that part of the world. His mother ordered red beans and rice for the family.

Then he woke up. Little was remembered of that day. He thought that he slept. It was warmer because the sun was out. No one came by.

He was always pretty good at fast calculation. He guessed that the distance from bottom to top of the elevator shaft was about 100 feet. At a rate of 1.33 minutes per round trip (80 sec/60) the 200 ft. trip requires $200/1.33$ or 150 ft. per minute. In one day the cab would travel $150 \times 24 \times 60/5280$ equaling about 41 miles per day. As the day wore on he noticed that it became pleasantly warm. Also noted was an increase in the jerks and moans of the shafts on both sides of the cab. These observations by a trained scientist such as he was could be ascribed to nervous tension. It could also be attributed to a loss of lubricant on the shafts since travel was greater than anything experienced in the history of this elevator, or any other.

So he entered the third day. No one seemed to be looking for him. No one cared about the elevator. The entire building would be wasted in the next 2 to 4 months. He began to consider whether he, too, would be wasted. He knew or thought that he knew that it was not University policy to waste faculty members even though there were occasional suits for sexual harassment. He wondered how he could make such a claim since there was no sex in the empty cab but perhaps he could represent harassment. So the day passed slowly, a little very stale coffee, tuna sandwiches a bit riper. No visitors, no hospital security folks. He tried to weep a little bit but there was no one to observe him. He suddenly remembered the head of maintenance. Mr. Weisbrod, slightly elderly, always wore blue suits and black shoes and rimless glasses. He was unfailingly polite, never seemed to mind who or how much hell was directed toward him. He called Mr. Weisbrod, Mr. Weisbrod, but no one came. It was very much like freshmen at the Harvard Yard calling for Reinhard because of loneliness. It was still getting warmer. He thought that the rails looked a little pinker.

He had not eaten, being slightly nauseated. He had not urinated because he had no place to put it. He essentially passed out. He didn't have the energy to dream. But once more a beautiful scene came before his eyes. When or whether it occurred was vague. But it seemed real. He was seated at an elegant table,

exquisite napery and silver Baccarat goblets even his colleagues' wife with her fine furnishings. Before him was a large mound of caviar, not osetra, not sevruga but the large golden eggs of beluga, really the only kind to be considered for the assembly wherein he found himself. The beluga was served as a large mound on a simple Wedgewood plate kept only for caviar according to his host. A small spoon, made of horn was on the plate. When he asked being familiar only with silver or stainless, the icy retort came: They interfere with the flavor of the eggs.

The next day as dawn broke he began to hope that he would make it and not die. He began to think that he would begin to be nice to his long suffering wife. He might even try to kiss the dog by wiping up his slobber, first. He would be nice to his children. But a strange thing began to happen - someone or some thing was pulling on his bare ankle. He began to think of sex - in an empty elevator cab?

But it was only his wife in a wrinkled dressing gown yelling at him. "Listen you old fool - Hollering all night, keeping me awake. You always do that when you drink too much".

Eugene L. Saenger

Toot Suite

"Stadium Cost May Jump \$45m" screamed the Monday, February 14, 2000 Cincinnati Post front page headline. The top story went on: "Lack of oversight of construction costs for the Cincinnati Bengals' new riverfront stadium could push the final price tag up by as much as \$45 million, top Hamilton County officials learned today. And auditors said inadequate monitoring means they have no idea if Paul Brown Stadium is behind schedule - a \$4 million penalty for tax payers. The

county owes the team \$4 million per home game if the new stadium isn't ready for football Aug. 19.

"Reading the news that the \$407 million project could jump more than 10 percent, Commissioner Bob Beddinghouse this morning declined to rule out the possibility the Bengals will face the Chicago Bears, Aug. 19, not in the new stadium, but in Cinergy Field."

The following morning, readers of the Cincinnati Enquirer found "Stadium Cost Soaring" as the headline with "\$35 million to \$45 million more" and "Auditor: Lack of oversight, rush job part of problem" headlining their morning edition with a chart detailing change orders of \$24.9 million, 72 percent of which was due to architect and engineers design omissions, design changes, and design delays leading to change orders.

The foregoing was big news in Hamilton County as tax payers had voted for an increase in the sales tax to fund two stadiums, one under construction and another yet to be designed, with tearing down what appears to most, to be a perfectly good stadium with decades of useful life left, just adding insult to injury. A paragraph in the Enquirer article hit the nail on the head: "The idea was the taxpayers would be responsible only for the \$287 million guaranteed maximum price, and the contractor would pick up any cost overruns. The actual cost of building the stadium, buying the land and paying fees is more than \$400 million. . . [With this bon mot at the end of the article standing as an understatement of shocking proportion:] The guaranteed maximum price appears to have been poorly developed."

Inside the Cincinnati Post, another headline indicates "Stadium's Maximum Price Already Maxed" and then, "Voters have 'stadium fatigue'." The articles detail that "Hamilton County Commissioner Bob Beddinghouse has been the very public point man for the Reds and Bengals stadium and the sales tax increase that is paying for them." The article concludes that the \$287 million maximum price the Hamilton County voters thought they were approving, had already been increased by a request of the contractors for \$35.9 million, although several officials were then trying to

say that only a \$2 million present increase had been sought to date, while Hamilton County Administrator, David Krings was quoted as saying that the best estimate for additional cost was \$45 million. Further officials were quoted as indicating the guaranteed maximum price, was not really a guaranteed maximum price, and was being missed any way as a result of insufficient drawings and insufficient planning.

In general, widespread finger pointing had already commenced. The next morning, the Enquirer and the evening Post devoted not only front page coverage, but many full pages inside to the cost overruns. Clearly this was a highly newsworthy event, of great and general interest to the public and hot-off-the-press-first-edition-late-breaking news, unless of course you were among those politically incorrect cognoscenti of the Greater Cincinnati area who happen to subscribe to "The Whistleblower". Actually, subscribe isn't exactly correct either, but then again neither is anything about "The Whistleblower". Now, as one of those people in the know, you had waiting on your desk Monday morning when you arrived at work or if you were truly in the know, the preceding Friday, or if a workaholic and you went to your office, or your office was your home, you received over the weekend a single page fax-delivered newsletter for that Saturday known as "The Whistleblower" wherein you were teased with this statement: "When you see the latest stadium costs, you'll know why the Commissioners hired us for damage control - [signed] Dan Pinger & Associates." For those who do not know Dan Pinger & Associates, it is a public relations firm hired by the Hamilton County Commissioners to help with, well, public relations. The Monday morning edition of "The Whistleblower", was sent out Sunday and features a line drawing of the three member Board of Commissioners depicted under the banner headline "Hamilton County Commissioners Overseeing Stadium Construction." The drawing is of three unbelievably flexible men in a row with their backsides prominently toward the reader, their legs widespread, their arms wrapped around their legs and their heads wedged firmly between them, with their ties hanging down being all that you could see from the neck up.

This publication was received a full two days before what others might call the "legitimate press", and which The Whistleblower defines as "publications you have to pay for". The article stated: "The fat's in the fire. The chickens have come home to roost. The gold rush is over, and the bums rush is on.

"We told you so. Our worst fears have come true. The County Commissioners have been forced to admit they don't know squat about building a football stadium. The cost of their ignorance will be well over \$50 million.

"And the cost overruns, with what they'll pay "Millionaire Mike" per game when his stadium isn't finished on time, we'll be stuck for me than \$100 million extra thanks to our tax-and-spend GOP commissioners. Even Dan Pinger and his team of bad news spinners can't save their asses now, but what's \$100 million between friends?

"WeaselBoy's monument is going down as one of the most monumental boondoggles in history. Little Tommy Neyer says this is not the time for finger-pointing. Right, and, can't we all just get along!"

What in the world is "The Whistleblower", and how in the world did the Whistleblower report what was going on before the "legitimate press"? Where do you get it? Why do you get it? These are all excellent questions and are meant to bring The Literary Club a combination of a little high tech, and a lot of low brow. In its present form, "The Whistleblower" is delivered daily by fax to several thousand subscribers in the Greater Cincinnati area. Most of whom in turn re-resent it or share it with friends, and some even, re-fax is to their own subscription list. It is published as they say, by the pseudonymous Charles Foster Kane who appears complete with a by line and an Orsen Wells 1940's look-alike drawing in wide brimmed hat.

Adding to its mystery is the lack of an address, other than the "Talking-Whistleblower" web page [www.address](#), or the indication that e-mail be directed to Whistle@pol.com with the notation at the bottom of alternating editions: "To be considered for a fax

subscription to The Whistleblower newswire, persons of consequence, in the greater Cincinnati area may apply by faxing a request on their office letterhead." The intervening daily tagline states: "Want revenge? Fax your snitch or bitch to The Whistleblower." or "Got a dirty little secret that will ruin someone's life? Fax your snitches and bitches to The Whistleblower."

This publication has become pervasive among those politically interested in Hamilton County. One famous picture in the Enquirer shows councilman Todd Portune known in the Whistleblower as Odd Todd Opportune at a Cincinnati Council meeting discussing a tax issue then before council. On the left is council member Charles Winburn known as "The Windbag", in Whistleblower-esse, and to Mr. Opportune's right is council member Tyrone Yates known as "Tirade" Yates to Whistleblower subscribers. The Windbag and Tirade are mostly concentrating on the copy of "The Whistleblower" that Mr. Winburn is getting from Mr. Yates behind Mr. Portune's back. The picture is captioned "During the debate [on the admissions tax], Council Member Tyrone Yates passed to Council Member Charlie Winburn a copy of "The Whistleblower", a daily page of gossip, satire and amusement, that circulates widely in local political circles."

How in the world did the facsimile newsheet described above come to occupy Cincinnati City Council members' attention to the extent that it is photographed during council votes on taxes, and then published in the Enquirer? It doesn't stop there. Numerous judges and other public officials are frequently seen with copies of The Whistleblower on their desks in their offices as well as for some, on the bench during court. Whatever "The Whistleblower" seems to be talking about, is the subject of much conversation as soon as it is published, if it wasn't already.

"The Whistleblower" is popular, due in part to its clever presentation of current events and happenings, and its own brand of "truth-telling". As one local political party head grudgingly admitted "The Whistleblower provides a valuable function. It often says what can't be said by responsible parties, and it

stirs things up." It has frequently been criticized but as its publisher proclaims, "They never complain that what we say isn't true, or that it is poorly written."

Further adding to its interest is the use of nicknames which has become its trademark of sorts. In fact, one candidate demanded that a nickname be created for him. Of course, "The Whistleblower" obliged. The former Congressman from Kentucky was, because of his professional baseball exploits given the moniker, "Beanball Jim" Bunning. When he moved to the U.S. Senate, his assistant ran for that seat on Congress. Rick Robinson became "the Batboy", thus fulfilling his request for a nickname in the Whistleblower, and "the laying on of hands" on yet another political appointee, had occurred.

The topics covered are generally relevant to current events both local and national and an occasional whimsical event. For example, someone sent "The Whistleblower" a copy of the citizenship test with the 100 questions asked of applicants for citizenship. "The Whistleblower" published all 100 and in the box, a top left headline area reserved for particularly pithy comments, the following appeared: "If you think this government test sucks, you should see the one Slick gives his interns." "Slick" of course is Whistleblower-speak for the only present who has been in office the entire time "The Whistleblower" has been published. Another box said the following: "Let's confiscate all the guns owned by guys named Buford." When commenting upon the Kosovo War, another box said "You know we're in a real war when you see the collar on Dan Rather's trend coat turned up".

To appreciate, if that's the correct word, "The Whistleblower", a key is understanding the publisher, a lifelong Anderson Township resident sometimes known as Jim Schifrin. Jim is a UC graduate and after that and four years in the Army, came back to Cincinnati to find that the family had sold its Checker Stores, where he had intended to work, out from under him. They obviously had inside information.

He then went into advertising and set up his own public relations firm. Then retired. When explaining his career, he said that he "could not work for anyone else and nobody else would have me." An English professor once told him that a book he had written was wonderful, and Edgar Allen Poe would have loved to have been able to write like that. After this compliment, the future publisher said "So you think it's good and people would like it?" The answer came back, "No." After asking why, he was told "it was commercially unviable". The foregoing goes a long way toward explaining "The Whistleblower".

Jim states he loves getting people to laugh, getting them made, getting a reaction. An example he proudly displays is a letter he received from the Cincinnati Enquirer at the time when The Whistleblower was typeset and delivered by hand prior to being sent by facsimile, which reads as follows: "Dear Mr. Schifrin: You will find enclosed the copies of The Whistleblower that were dropped off on the receptionist's desk today. Our receptionists have been told not to accept them from you anymore and we don't want them in the Enquirer anymore. I hope you will cooperate in this matter. Sincerely, The Enquirer".

In 1993, Larry Beaupre, a new publisher, arrived at the Enquirer and determined that this policy should be reviewed. He went even further and accordingly, a multi-page article devoted to The Whistleblower was printed in the Enquirer, and once again The Whistleblower was allowed at the Enquirer. "Sadam" Beaupre soon came to regret that decision. No sooner did the Enquirer article appear than the Whistleblower wrote that the Enquirer had attempted to bribe The Blower while continuing to steal its scoops. The Enquirer editorial board became "The High Five'N' White Guys" and editor Peter Bronson, became "Repeat Bronson".

As one individual said, "He's your worst nightmare, because if you say anything bad about him, you'll end up in his paper. That's not fair, he's like a bug you want to squash." Schifrin says, "This is just about the response that The Whistleblower is aiming for."

Now on to some of those who have suffered his slings, and according to Mr. Kane, perhaps gained their only notoriety by becoming nicknamed by him. The former Mayor of the city was known as "Foxy Roxy", "Our Fabulous Babe". Other council members have been "D. White" Tillery, "Schnozzy" Heimlich and "The Ghost of Sleazy Old Tom Luken", in addition to former and now returned "Charlie-My-Boy Luken". Our former police chief was "Michael Snowflake" and Hamilton County Commissioners are "Junketing John" Dowlen, Bob "WeaselBoy" Beddinghouse and "Little Tommy" Neyer. "Our Beloved Dustbuster" is the auditor. "Ben-gal Becky" replaced "Summer's Eve" Bolton as Recorder. "Semper-Si" is the Sheriff. As a result of crossing a block in the middle of the street, "Say it ain't so, Jaywalking Joe" Deters is the name of our former prosecutor and now state treasurer.

As a result of his family business and yard signs from his first run for the U.S. House of Representatives seat, "Fighting for you" Rob Portman became Rob "Fighting for Forklifts" Portman. Other state office holders have been Mike "De White" whose unfortunately unguarded comment about giving the shirt off his back to The Whistleblower for mentioning him, has continued to haunt, when the promised shirt did not arrive.

Other statewide office holders have been "Generous George Vonivich" and our own fellow Literarian, "Buckwheat" Blackwell. Current governor Bob Taft has had an extra "o" added to his first name; while an actual over night stay at the Ohio State Fair led to a totally exclusive confession to the Whistleblower appearing absolutely nowhere else, that what the governor most enjoyed about the adventure was that "The sheep can't talk."

Across the river, a Kentucky State Senator, had a first name that he pronounced "Jay" although it was confusing in print, since he spelled it G-E-X. Of course, his nickname became Gex "Rhymes with Sex" Williams, and has remained so ever since. Athletically challenged Politician Clyde Middleton became "The Glide". An imaginary Newport hooker appropriated a Hyde Park beauty salon's name to become Phyllis on

Madison. As a result of a notorious fraud upon overeager investors, many of whom were members of the Summit Hills Country Club, their establishment became "Sucker Hills" Country Club.

The Enquirer also has a columnist known as "The Little Nipper" and Sharon Malarkey is the dowager political reporter at "The Compost".

A regular commentator to The Whistleblower includes a "feminist who sometimes shaves her legs", and a young Republican organization is known as "The Conservative Suck-ups".

At Channel 19, its hour-early-evening news program is called "Not Ready for the 11:00 News" and anchored by Trish "the Dish", who the suit by a fired cameraman, alleges forced him into a "two year vile and disgusting sexual relationship", a characterization that is repeated frequently, along with commentary on the lengthy line for those applying for the job as replacement cameraman.

When John Phillips the helicopter traffic reporter was cited for shooting at groundhogs from his chopper with a revolver, he became "Punxsutawny Phillips", groundhog murderer.

The present head of The Chamber of Commerce, a member of Tiger Inn eating club when a student at Princeton University with all that then allegedly entailed (the personal embellishment of a small namesake in a posterior location, the better to remind one of his alma mater and exclusive club, for those of you not so enlightened), has become "John "Butterfly Butt" Williams. The former professional head of the Cincinnati Business Committee was known as "The Odious Ron Roberts" while Rick Greiwe with a similar position at the Downtown Council, headed Downsizing Cincinnati, Inc.

The former Cincinnati public schools head, because of his out-of-city residence was known as "Delhi Mike" and current Cincinnati public schools head, because of the vote to hire him, has become Mike "4-3" Adamowski. A former Cincinnati school board member who was forced

to retire after commenting upon the rowdiness of a certain group of attendees at a high school graduation, became ever after known as Bill "The Ethnic Cleanser" Seitz.

A few have only been identified as nicknames because of various things said about them, perhaps ascertainable from the nicknames; "The Four Flushing Philanderer", allegedly for his failing to fulfill local charity pledges and messing around with other guy's wives, and "Mr. Family values" is a public official who removes his wedding ring before hitting on young girls at bars. Another is the "Cross-Dressing Attorney" who happened to be changing into "party clothes" while driving and unfortunately failed to stop in the assured clear distance and was found 'en dishabille" as it were, if you know what we mean, and is now a regular scapegoat.

Another characteristic is that while most articles contain at least a kernel of truth, embellishment is never far away, and no one ever accuses The Whistleblower of understatement. Adding to this, and factoring in the conservative, contrary, and irascible nature of the publisher, one may begin to comprehend The Whistleblower. (Why anyone would do this, is another issue.)

An example of this Whistleblower style is presented by the recent Republican primary contest for the 37th District Ohio General Assembly seat. The Hamilton County Republican party realized it was facing a problem and appointed a committee to interview and recommend candidates for various empty seats resulting from term limits. The Whistleblower published the recommendations of the committee three full days before the final vote was taken, and then harangued everyone for weeks. When party chairman H.C. Buck Neihoff, known in the Whistleblower as "Buck Passer" reigned, admittedly in part, over the conflict, the Whistleblower claimed full credit. When the Republicans attempted to smooth over the issue and select State Treasurer Joe Deters and U.S. Representative Rob Portman as Co-Chairmen, the Whistleblower promptly named them Temporary Co-Chairmen

for Life, "Jay Walking Joe" Deters and Rob "Fighting for Fixes" Portman.

This campaign for the Republican primary to select a representative for the 37th Ohio House District, an area which includes Anderson Township, involved a rather parochial contest, to say the least, except that Charles Foster Kane lives in Anderson Township. "Hell To Pay" is not just the title of a book on Hilary Clinton.

Candidate Tom Brinkman, because of his opposition to many local taxes over the past several years became "Tax Killer Tom" and Steve Adams, a lawyer who had worked as an assistant prosecutor under Joe Deters when he was prosecutor and then as an assistant to the treasurer when Joe Deters became treasurer, became "The Butt Boy". It was not hard to distinguish which candidate the Whistleblower favored. The coverage was unrelenting. The box headline the day before the election read: "Would you ever really consider voting for someone known as "The Butt Boy?" The rest of that edition read: "Other than being handpicked by Courthouse cronies and power-mad political insiders in the GOP's blatantly unfair and predetermined selection process, here's every single valid reason Republicans should vote for the Party's endorsed state rep-tile candidates on March 7:" What follows thereafter is nothing but a blank sheet.

The Wednesday March 8, 2000 Whistleblower was actually sent and received the morning of March 7th, Election Day, as "An Official Election Results Edition". It headlined "Butt Boy Beaten: All Three GOP Hand-picked State Rep-tile Candidates Crushed". The story thereafter followed: "In the most humiliating defeat in political history, all three officially endorsed GOP State Rep-tile candidates were stinging rebuked by Republican voters. . . The Hamilton County Republican Party spent not quite \$1 million trying to keep three conservatives out of the General Assembly, and Republican voters rejected the Party's handpicked lackeys, who'd been chosen by a blatantly unfair and predetermined process.

"If only former GOP party boss "Clean Gene" Ruehlmann were alive today, this never would have happened.

"These are the official election results. Any other election results that may differ from these are surely fake."

This resignation of the local county GOP party head, and the election victory in an Ohio Republican Primary for the State General Assembly are in reverse order tallied as the greatest accomplishments of The Whistleblower, other than the recently reported reply Jaywalking Joe Deters gave to a rather unkind and insensitive questioner who inquired whether Treasurer Deters had any comment about the call in the Whistleblower for his resignation as Hamilton County Republic Party Chairman. Jaywalking Joe said "I don't read the Whistleblower anymore. And besides, that's not what Schiffrin said."

When asked what his greatest failing has been, Charles Foster Kane states "Despite all my efforts Dole didn't even win Ohio."

When asked to comment upon the characterization of his work by one person who obviously felt abused and called the publication "The sophomoric work of an eighth grader with a mac and a fax machine", Schiffrin stated "That's about right." When asked what he thought about the repeal of the 624 day ban from the Enquirer in the early 1990's Schiffrin stated, "I'm desolate, I may never write again."

That would probably be too much to hope for, but in the event that would happen, and in the event your curiosity has been piqued, you can go to the Cincinnati Historical Society which has requested and received, and for some unknown reason even retained, a complete collection of every Whistleblower published.

If you simply want to be kept up to date henceforth, the following is instructional: "To be considered for a fax subscription to The Whistleblower newswire, persons of consequence in the greater

Cincinnati area may apply by faxing a request on their office letterhead to (513) 232-1910".

Ernest A. Eynon

REINVENTIONS

April 3, 2000

Virginus C. Hall

I dare say I should have questioned the assignment when I first got it.

But being of a compliant (perhaps even acquiescent) disposition, I was not inclined to jump to my feet and make a scene. Still less to collar the secretary and yell "Hey! Wait a minute!" or "Whoa! Stop right there!" or even the more succinct "You godda be kidding!" No, I assumed everybody knew what he was doing, so I simply said, "Thank you very much," and set about preparing, as I had been instructed, a Budget program for the first Monday of April.

Now I know what you're going to say. You're going to say: But Budget programs don't take place on First Mondays. Certainly they never HAVE taken place on first Mondays, but who knows what might happen in the Club's sesquicentennial year? And when a sesquicentennial conjoins with a Millennium, as indeed it has done, might that not prompt Change, or even serious craziness? Apprehensions along that line were confirmed when I learned from reliable sources, but did not see with my own eyes, that large numbers of Women had been encouraged to prowl through our premises last October. In the light of this evidence alone, I thought it not unreasonable to suppose that winds of change were howling through 500 East Fourth Street. Besides, in all honesty, I was looking forward to doing a Budget, especially when a member of this organization