

MEDIATE THIS !

A WEDDING GIFT FROM A TEENAGE NEPHEW PHOTOGRAPHER

BY STEVEN P. DINKIN

Dear Mediator:

My younger sister is getting married next spring. My older sister announced at a family dinner that her 16-year-old son's wedding gift to his aunt will be to serve as the official event photographer. Dad jumped in to support the idea, saying his grandson is talented and needs professional experience. The bride-to-be does NOT want a teenager to be her wedding photographer. But she's too overwhelmed to resist, and she's starting to freak out. Mom wants me to intervene. Any advice?

In The Middle in Rolando

Dear In The Middle:

Welcome to the mediation funhouse! Since the family matriarch has chosen you to mediate, you have the standing to broker a truce. Now all you need, along with a reservoir of patience, is a game plan.

Our introductory mediation course for professionals lays out a multistep process to settle disputes without going to court. The most critical step is called "The Exchange," and it can be used by non-professionals to guide relatives and friends from conflict to consensus.

"The Exchange" operates on the premise that everyone has the same primal need to be treated with respect. When that doesn't happen, people remain locked in combat because, at a deep emotional level, they are fighting to preserve their dignity.

To lower the personal stakes by offering respect, you first need to listen carefully. That's why the mediator (you) begins "The Exchange" by giving each party undivided attention and hearing out her or his concerns.

Arrange to meet separately with each of your sisters and your father. Designate your mother as your deputy, and ask her to attend.

Emphasize that the family needs to work together amicably in the coming months. While weddings are inherently stressful, you and your mother are confident everyone is up to the task.

In these private meetings, invite each person to lay out her or his issues. Your older sister may reveal that your nephew is looking for a way to contribute to his aunt's big day. Your younger sister may want the same thing as long as her nephew isn't pressured into a risky assignment.

From this initial exchange of information, you move to an



GETTY IMAGES

Today's question comes from a reader whose nephew, an amateur photographer, wants to shoot her sister's wedding as a gift.

exchange of ideas in a meeting with the whole family. Open by summarizing what you heard from each party. Then review a menu of options that could serve all interests.

Successful mediations rarely meet anyone's starting demand. But they do give everyone a satisfying outcome that each person helped construct.

Your sister can hire an experienced photographer to capture pivotal wedding moments. Your nephew can circulate with his camera for whimsical candid shots: famished guests loading up buffet plates, exuberant dancers in the conga line, the flower girls gleefully poking their fingers in the wedding cake.

Now that you have a game

plan, let's go back to the reservoir of patience.

A mediator's toughest job is staying centered when emotions run wild, especially during a meeting with all parties. When that happens, we use the Aikido approach based on a martial arts philosophy of disarming combatants through careful response.

Acknowledgment is a powerful Aikido tool. If someone lashes out in frustration, express empathy for what is genuine distress, and ask for further clarification. A little more venting will usually calm these emotional squalls.

To sustain your own morale in the months ahead, fix an image in your mind of the happy event — the radiant bride, the proud father, the satisfied older sister, and the serene mother who is grateful to her middle child for bringing her family over the finish line.

Steven P. Dinkin is a professional mediator who has served as president of the San-Diego based National Conflict Resolution Center since 2003. **Do you have a conflict that needs a resolution?** Share your story with The Mediator via email at mediatethis@ncrconline.com or as an online submission by visiting www.ncrconline.com/MediateThis. All submissions will be kept anonymous.

NOTEBOOKS

From Union-Tribune reporting staff

PUBLIC SAFETY: LYNDSEY WINKLEY

Scootering drunk — yeah, it's a crime

If you've ever considered trying to save a bit of cash after imbibing with friends by passing on a ride-share service and taking an electric scooter instead — think again.

That could be a DUI waiting to happen. "Uber and Lyft are still cheaper than going to jail and being the laughing stock of the cell because you got a DUI-scooter," said San Diego police Officer Mark McCullough.

Motorists and motorcyclists aren't the only ones who can get slapped with drunken driving charges in California. Basically, if you're inebriated and you're driving or riding on a "vehicle" of any kind, you could be arrested for DUI, police said.

That includes bicycles and scooters — which can now be picked up and rented in cities nationwide.

On Monday, a 41-year-old man was cited for allegedly driving under the influence of alcohol after he rode a rented scooter into the path of a car and was struck in University Heights. He wasn't wearing a helmet and suffered serious injuries.

A motorized scooter doesn't even have

to be on for the rider to get a DUI. In 1977, a state appellate court judge ruled that "if a vehicle, equipped with a motor, is being steered or controlled by an intoxicated person, and the vehicle is in motion, the driver is subject to prosecution even if the engine is not running at that time."

State law says it is illegal for a person 21 or over to operate a vehicle if the person has a blood-alcohol level of .08 percent or higher.

However, there's no minimum blood-alcohol level at which a scooter rider is considered to be intoxicated. In those cases, officers — who must have probable cause to make the stop — determine whether riders are impaired.

When a driver or a motorcyclist is arrested on DUI charges, officers seize his or her license and hand it over to the DMV, McCullough said. Drivers have 10 days to contact the state agency to determine what's next, which includes the possibility the license will be suspended.

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THEATER: JAMES HEBERT

Playhouse's new resident company

La Jolla Playhouse's latest resident theater company is a troupe whose work on small stages around San Diego has had some outsize impact over the past three years.

The Playhouse has announced that Backyard Renaissance has been awarded the La Jolla institution's residency for 2018-19. The program provides performance space, production support and marketing/development help to companies that don't have their own permanent homes.

Backyard Renaissance was founded in 2015 by the married actors Francis Gercke and Jessica John Gercke (joined later by Anthony Methvin). The name pays tribute both to Backyard Productions, a former San Diego company Jessica John Gercke co-founded, and Renaissance Theatre, a now-defunct troupe led by the late George Flint, an influential theater artist here.

Among the company's most notable shows was last year's world-premiere production of Adam Wachter's "Tarrytown," which was named outstanding new musical

of 2017 by the San Diego Theatre Critics Circle.

Noah Haidle's play "Smokefall" will see its San Diego premiere during Backyard Renaissance's residency. The company will stage that piece Aug. 23 to Sept. 16 in the Playhouse's Theodore and Adele Shank Theatre. (Tickets and more details are available at backyardrenaissance.com.)

"San Diego is such a thriving theater town, and we are honored to be in a position to offer a yearlong residency for one of its many burgeoning companies without a permanent home," Playhouse artistic director Christopher Ashley said in the residency announcement.

"Backyard Renaissance more than lives up to its 'art to the gut' mission. Their work during just the three short years since their founding has been extraordinary, and we couldn't be more pleased to host them as our 2018-2019 resident theater company."

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OUTDOORS: ERNIE COWAN

Wonders of the White Mountains

The icy fingers of winter are pulling away from the towering range known as the White Mountains that form the eastern rim of the Owens Valley.

Summer visitors to the Eastern High Sierra may notice this remote mountain range, but only a handful of visitors go there compared with the hordes that fish, hike or simply relax in the more verdant Sierra Nevada range to the west.

This is a remote corner of California, but the White Mountains offer visitors a look at some unique features.

In addition to the highest elevation road in California, the Whites are home to the oldest living things on the planet, a rare species of trout, as well as wild mustangs that connect to pioneer ranching more than a century ago.

The biggest draw to the elevations of the White Mountains are the ancient Bristlecone Pines. These gnarled and weathered pines have been dated at nearly 5,000 years old.

As summer warms the mountain range and allows access, the Schulman Grove Visitor Center is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. The center is scheduled to open June 26 for the season.

But it was not the Bristlecone Pines that drew me to the mountains this trip.

I was hoping that I might be able to see some of the wild horses that call this vast and open place home.

Access to the White Mountain Wilderness begins where Highway 168 turns east from U.S. 395 at the north end of Big Pine. The road climbs steeply to the east from the floor of Owens Valley, following an old wagon route to Cedar Flats, where White Mountain Road turns off to the left. It's 23 miles from Big Pine to the Schulman Grove Visitor Center at an elevation of 10,000 feet.

Most visitors go only this far, but the road turns to dirt and continues to climb into the White Mountains.

White Mountain Peak is the high point of the range, topping at 14,246 feet, just a few hundred feet lower than Mount Whitney, the highest peak in the continental United States at 14,505.

Along the road you will pass other groves of Bristlecone Pines, and with an off-road vehicle you can find small creeks where the rare and protected Paiute trout survive in this harsh environment.

On this trip the thunder clouds of summer were starting to blossom, and the dis-



ERNIE COWAN

A wild horse is finally spotted in the White Mountains.

tant booms of rolling thunder could be heard as we bumped slowly along looking for wild horses.

To protect these relics of history, more than 200,000 acres have been set aside as the White Mountain Wild Horse Territory, administered by the U.S. Forest Service.

Here the mustangs are free to run in a wilderness that has not changed since their ancestors arrived. Within this protected area, the herd of wild horses is managed for a population of 75.

When and where these horses originated is unknown, but they are thought to date to ranching in nearby Fish Lake Valley in Nevada in the 1870s.

I've made many trips to the White Mountains to photograph the Bristlecone Pines. I look for horses but had spotted only two on an earlier visit. This time luck was with me.

As lightning began to dance on a nearby peak, I spotted something dark in the distance. With binoculars I could see it was a horse, and nearby was another.

With camera and telephoto lens, I approached slowly. It's barren here, with no cover that would allow me to approach without being seen.

It probably didn't matter. This beautiful animal with the white blaze on its forehead knew I was there.

I recorded a few images with a spectacular backdrop of thunder clouds and the jagged Sierra Nevada range in the distance.

Big rain drops started to fall. It was time to leave, but I was filled with wonder at what I had been lucky enough to witness.

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FROM THE ARCHIVES | LOOKING BACK OVER 150 YEARS

FIRST WOMAN IN SPACE

The San Diego Union-Tribune will mark its 150th anniversary in 2018 by presenting a significant front page from the archives each day throughout the year.

Monday, June 17, 1963

In June 1963, 26-year-old Valentina Tereshkova of Russia became the first woman in space. Tereshkova was launched into orbit by the Soviet Union on a solo mission aboard Vostok 6. She spent 71 hours in flight, orbiting the Earth 48 times before returning safely.

Women pilots said the United States had missed its chance to achieve the space milestone.

In the early 1960s, 13 women passed the same medical and stress tests as the Mercury astronauts, but NASA required all astronaut candidates to have military jet test pilot experience. Congress shut down the U.S. Women-in-Space program in 1962.

American women would face a long wait. It would be two decades before NASA astronaut Sally Ride became the first American woman to travel in space when she flew on the space shuttle Challenger on June 18, 1983.

After she left NASA, Ride joined the physics faculty at UC San Diego in 1989, and started Sally Ride Science to encourage children to explore careers in science and technology. The La Jolla physicist died of pancreatic cancer in 2012 at age 61.

Here are the first few paragraphs of the story:

RUSSIA ORBITS WOMAN; SPACE LINK-UP SEEN

PILOTS' REACTION

U.S. Muffed Its Chance, Women Say

Aileen Saunders of San Diego, one of America's best known women fliers, said yesterday she felt sure the United States could have put a woman into orbit ahead of the Soviet Union.

She admitted, however, that she wouldn't have wanted the job.

"When I take off in an airplane I like to know I'm coming back to this good old earth," said the two-time winner of the transcontinental Powder Puff Derby.

ADVANTAGES SEEN

Mrs. Saunders, 36, said she thought the



United States could have snared a "first" by launching a woman astronaut "and I think this would have boosted U.S. prestige."

"I feel women physically can take out space better than men," she said. "I've talked to some doctors and they said we can take changes better because of our physical makeup. Also, we're smaller and would take up less room in a spaceship."

PILOT OF YEAR

Mrs. Saunders, who in 1960 was voted "pilot of the year" by the National Pilots Association, lives at 1303 W. Lewis St.

Mrs. Saunders predicted that the United States eventually will put a woman into space, "otherwise why would they have put Jerrie Cobb through all that training?" She

referred to a Ponca City, Okla., aviatrix who passed some of the same tests taken by several astronauts in the Project Mercury program.

Reached by a news service reporter in Oklahoma City yesterday, Miss Cobb said she prayed for the safe return of Russian cosmonaut Valentina Tereshkova, the 26-year-old parachute enthusiast now in orbit.

However, said Miss Cobb, the United States could have scored "one of the remaining space firsts" if it had launched a woman ahead of the Russians.

The Oklahoma aviatrix said she fought for three years to make an American woman the first in space and still felt the feat could be achieved "within a few months."

REACTIONS VARY

San Diego County woman pilots interviewed on the idea of a woman in space had varied reactions.

Mrs. Marian Jepsen of 460 Grand Ave., Del Mar, said she wished she were younger "so I could qualify for a space trip. I'm 42 and no American woman over 39 ever was considered. I'd sure love to make a space flight. I wouldn't be afraid."

Mrs. Jepsen has competed in seven Powder Puff Derbies and finished third in 1956.

FEELS NO ENVY

Mrs. Carolyn Huntington of 875 Adele St., veteran of four transcontinental air races, said she'd be "scared to death" to venture into space. "I don't envy her (the Russian woman cosmonaut) one bit.

ONLINE: View this and other anniversary front pages online at sandiegouniontribune.com/150-years.