

5/18/05

The Crow that Roger Chatterton recently earned by comparing his wife's IQ to her pulse rate has been bird-napped! Sue Chatterton returned from a Red Hat trip to Sacramento to find the crow missing and a ransom note supposedly from the "Husbands for Justice" that read: INFIDEL WIVES. WE HAVE CROW. BOW DOWN TO YOUR OMNISCIENT HUSBANDS OR CROW DIES. WE ARE SERIOUS – THIS IS NO CAMEL S(Bleep)T. And signed, AL QCROWDA

Please understand I am a "cub reporter"... a novice at my job, and I have recently learned some hard lessons on what and how to report news in my column. I do know that a reporter must be unbiased, and report on just the facts, and be able to back up those facts. Being a reporter and also one of the accused "INFIDEL WIVES, makes it very hard to remain unbiased. Especially since the "crow" spent some time perched in his cage on top of our television set as a result of Dick Eyman's unfortunate act of disrespect aimed at his new bride. (That would be me) Though I was glad to see Crow move on to the next husband whose mouth worked before his brain kicked in, I developed a certain attachment to Crow and I feel dreadful I called him "mangy".

The facts in this case are as follows: The crow is missing from the Chatterton home while in the sole care of Roger Chatterton. The envelope holding the ransom note mailed to Sue was taken from Sue's desk, without her knowing, as was the stamp. The typed address is identical to the addresses Roger types on his computer. The ransom note appeared to be created by cutting out capital letters from a newspaper. While this reporter was personally interviewing Roger concerning the bird-napped crow, (getting just the facts) a person visiting the Chatterton's remarked that he was in the Chatterton home around the time Crow came up missing, and remembers seeing cut up shreds of newspaper.

Enclosed in the envelope along with the ransom note was a black and white photo showing two figures, shrouded in Middle Eastern type robes and head coverings, allowing only one eye to be exposed, and holding a butcher knife, a pistol and a rifle to poor Crow's cage, which had been partially covered with a cloak. That suggests that at least three bird-nappers participated in the bird-napping. The two cloaked figures holding the weapons to Crow's cage, while the third participant possibly took the picture.

While DNA and forensic testing has not been done on the crime scene, one of the men's eye in the photo looked remarkably like the left eye of Roger Chatterton's friend and fellow retired police detective, Jim Meckel, who was visiting at the time of the bird-napping. The rifle in the photo has not yet been identified; however, it is suspected Roger has one just like it. The butcher knife matches one from Bob and Ann Bryant's kitchen, and the pistol matches one owned by Bob, who is also a retired police detective.

No one has been arrested in this dastardly bird-napping yet. All of the past recipients of the Eat Crow Award are being investigated for possible connection, but, at this point Roger Chatterton, Bob Bryant, and Jim Meckel are the only ones being considered "person's of interest". The North Forty area is in a state of shock. Bob and Roger are considered to have the BEST of character, and are generally well thought of.

The fear that Crow will be severely traumatized by this ordeal has prompted Linda Cunningham to offer free psychological counseling for the bird if he is returned alive. Both Sue Chatterton and Ann Bryant, convinced their husbands are prominently involved with this bird-napping, have commented that they are glad their husbands were better police detectives than they are bird-nappers.

This crime has polarized the North Forty community, pitting enraged maligned wives against the "Husbands for Justice" or "Al Qcrowda". The group of enraged wives quoted parts of one of President Bush's speeches they modified to establish their resolve: ...Tonight, we are a community awakened to danger and called to defend the freedom of Crow. Our grief has turned to anger and anger to resolution. Whether we bring the bird-nappers to justice or bring justice to the bird-nappers, justice will be done...We will direct every resource at our command, every means of diplomacy, every tool of

intelligence, and every necessary weapon of domestic war--to the return of Crow... We will starve these bird-nappers of our delicious hot home cooked meals, turn them one against another,. ...But our resolve must not pass. Each of us will remember what happened that day and to whom it happened. We will remember the moment the news came, where we were and what we were doing....

The wives have put the bird-nappers on notice: The bird nappers have two weeks from the publication of the May 18th Trinity Journal to return Crow unharmed or a new "Eat Crow Award" will be created. Bob Cunningham, a past "Eat Crow Award" recipient, suggested it should be something the men would wear around their necks. He quickly denied he said that as soon as he realized he is a potential repeat recipient of the "Eat Crow Award".

The "Birthday" of Trinity Center came and went on May 10 with very little fan fare, much to the disappointment of Perry Dove, who started out to be a one man band as he took two metal garbage can lids and clanged them together as he marched to the Yellow Jacket. Perry put a shame trip on Mike, the husband of the Yellow Jacket's owner, for not knowing the birth date of the town he is doing business in, Mike grabbed an American flag and fell in behind Perry forming a two man parade as they marched to Loren Teitzel's home, clanging the garbage can lids all the way. Perry figured that as the "Unofficial Town Mayor" of Trinity Center, Loren should have been on top of this birthday thing. Loren took the racket as long as he could and then threatened to call 911 if they did not leave.

As I was trying to verify the birth date of Trinity Center, I found the internet was no help, but a book titled "Trinity 1957" written by the Trinity County Historical Society, on Page 35 under the heading "Trinity Center" offered this: "This, one of the most populous and thriving mining camps in the country, was first settled by Moses Chadbourne in 1851, but was of little note until 1853, when the accumulation of people first warranted the establishment of a trading post and tavern." But it did not specify the month or day.

Perry Dove has put the challenge out to have a big blow out parade next year to celebrate our town's birthday. I told him I thought that would be a great idea, and thought he should be chairman/organizer. He responded by saying, "I still have the garbage can lids". My challenge to you is to help me validate the birth of Trinity Center.

The merry ladies in red and purple from the Robin Renton Chapter of Red Hatters will be greeting the beginning of "planting time" with a tour of a few of the best nurseries in Redding, including a discount on any spring plants bought, (arranged my Mary Hamilton), and lunch on the river at the Hatch Cover set up by none other than our Queen Mum, Pat Banducci.

The Chapter's Royal Scribe, Sue Chatterton, said, "We would all like to go in together to purchase a wonderful living plant or tree that we could plant in memory of Robin as a living memorial to her". She added, "Nancy Reed has volunteered her husband to follow the group with his truck to bring back all the plants bought by the ladies. What a guy"!!

Registration for The Trinity Lake Lions Club 33rd annual Fish Derby Sat. May 21, at the Carrville Dredger Pond five miles north of Trinity Center will be from 8:00 to 9:00 A.M. at the pond. Fishing will be from 9:00 to noon. The Lions Club will be supplying free tackle, hot dogs and soda. You must supply your own fishing pole. This is a bait fishing only event. There will be lots of prizes including fishing boat trip. Children from 4 to 15 may participate. The Lions Club thanks the Jaktri Market, Paul Jackson Wholesale Co. Earth Grain, Associated Construction and Plumbing, Fish Central and Longs Drug store for donations of food, drinks and prizes. For information call (530-286-2604).

Don't forget the TCVFD Auxiliary May 21 Fish Fry at the IOOF Hall. There are still tickets available, and will be available at the door. What a great way to spend the day. Take your children, grandchildren to the Fish Derby and then out to a fish dinner at the end of the day. Tickets can be picked up at the Country Store in Coffee Creek, The Jaktri Market, and the Yellow Jacket, or at the door..