

Subject: Michigan Man Newsletter

Date: Friday, November 5, 2004 11:00 AM

From: Michael Ridley <mikeridley@triton.net>

MICHIGAN MAN NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 3, 2004

Well, it's been one year since I started writing this monthly missive. It's been fun and it keeps me in touch with folks I meet along the way. Please pass this along and drop a line once in a while.

Halleluia!!! The election is over so listen up!

Okay, raise your hand and repeat after me, "I promise to support the president even if I didn't vote for him and I promise to criticize him even if I did vote for him."

All right. Let's stop all this partisan divisiveness and acrimony and get back together as a country. You may have noticed I try to stay away from political proselytizing (unless it lends itself to some scathing humor) but you should know how I feel:

1. We need a third party option
2. the Supreme Court has too much power
3. I saw more grace and candor in John Kerry during his concession speech than I saw in his entire campaign
4. I saw more humility and sincerity in Gee Dub during his victory speech than during his campaign.
5. I think this rancor and bickering between Republicans and Democrats is less about policy or the direction and future of the

country and more about the need to be on the side of a winner.
6. Like you, I'm glad it's over
...but that's just me.

The Real Season

Autumn is my favorite time of year. I am a hunter. Well, let me restate that. Lately, I buy a license and once in a while take a walk in the woods. This world of work really takes it's toll on the human condition. What is in the heart is what counts. Right? Every moment I look up and away from my cursed computer I see the falling leaves and blustering winds whipping up in a harbinger of another season to come. It is then that I become CAMO-MAN!!!

THE ADVENTURES OF CAMO MAN

Like most modern day super heroes he is a walking contradiction. Hard to understand but easy to explain. He is an environmentalist and a harvester of wild game. He sees a difference between poaching and violating. He is a peaceful man and defender of the weak but would gladly give a wooden wedgie to any and all animal rights activists who stand between him and a MacKenzie target. And every autumn, similar to a modern day Phoenix, he arises from the ashes. Actually, he arises from the basement where he has just rummaged through his old hunting gear, sorting through various mismatched patterns of camouflage clothing with brand names like Realtree, Advantage and Mossy Oak. From head to toe he is adorned in the uniform of the season. A camouflage Gortex fedora. Realtree flannel shirt. Wrangler pants, Advantage pattern, and Herman Survivor boots, good to twenty five degrees below zero with authentic leather uppers and composite waterproof lowers. Mossy Oak. Over his shoulder is a camo knapsack and contained within, a Reebark jump suit and Fred Bear combination

safety harness/bar stool seat belt. He wears a fanny pack stuffed with a Bushnell 8x21 compact camouflage spotting scope, game finder, knife sharpener and whetstone, tubes of Camo face paint, extra duotherm socks and underwear with a Natural Mildew finish. In his right hand a camouflage flashlight...G.I. JOE Camo. From the belt of his fanny pack hangs a camouflage polyfil hot seat. He is prepared to sit down and hunt just about anywhere. Assorted twelve and twenty gauge shotgun shells in a camouflage shell carrier are strung over his shoulder. Realtree via WalMart.

He ascends the steps only to accidentally reveal his alter ego to his wife.

“You look like a brush pile.” his wife comments. “By the way, it’s garbage day. Take out the trash.”

He presents a business card.

She reads aloud. “Have weapons, will hunt. Camo Man.” She pronounces it Kay-Moe man.

“Er..that’s..uh..Camo. Rhymes with ammo.” His humility is lost on his life mate.

“Then why don’t you spell it right? C-A-M-M-O.”

Humility dissolves into futility. “You may call me by my native hunting name. Branches that Walk.”

“Fair enough. Walk the trash out to road.” She chortles. “But don’t hang around out there. A county truck might come by and run you through a chipper.” She laughs aloud. “Or a warren of rabbits might mistake you for a briar patch. Hey! You might grow some hare!! Get it? Hare!!” His wife roars at her own skewed sense of humor.

The life of a modern day super hero is plagued by many villains, the least of which are the taunts and jeers of an unsympathetic public. His is a life which begs understanding for he is in constant and relentless pursuit of wild game.

“Wild game animals are in constant fear of Camo Man.” he brags to his wife.

“Oh? And just how would they know about your driving record?” Her last quip sets her over the edge.

“Roadkill doesn’t count.” He is emotionally injured. One of the frailties of a super hero is a tender ego.

Dejected, he manages his tasks and takes the family refuse to the road. After a close encounter with a county truck he retreats to his lair in the lower level of his abode. Cruel giggles still echoes above. He surveys his enclosure.

Overstuffed Camo Chair. Yards and yards of rolled burlap...camo. Camo back pack and several changes of camouflage clothing. Camo tape, camo knife case. He sits in his chair and examines a camouflage golf ball resting near his reloading equipment. Considering the other eleven balls lost in the fairway somewhere on a nine hole course...not a real good marketing idea. Camouflage ink pens and pencils with matching stationery await his epistles.

Camo Man leans back and thinks of the people he has seen scurrying through town fulfilling their destinies in the day to day business of life. Youngsters wearing a camo jacket. Dogs with a cute little camo bandanas. Old men with camo hats or gloves. Mom with her camo parka and dad with camo pants and the family vehicle painted up right for a jaunt into the woods. A Camomobile. Unknown to even themselves, they are fans and supporters of Camo Man and in a small way pay homage to the man and his mission.

During the hunt there is a crude and rash saying that goes, “if it’s brown it’s down.”

Camo Man’s credo is simple and cuts to the heart of his own personal truth. “If it’s camouflage, I’m buyin’ it.” Til next time...

Giaque de Jour

(let’s forgive France ... again)

Harold had been out of school for several years. He had established a furniture store in Knoxville Tn, and was doing quite well.

He decided to expand the lines he carried by adding some expensive French furniture he knew no one else in town carried. He scheduled a buying trip to France.

Harold's first day in Paris was very successful and he found a number of pieces he thought he could profitably sell back home. After the arrangements were made to begin shipping this furniture to Tenn, he decided to celebrate with a glass of wine in a small sidewalk cafe.

The place was jammed, but he managed to find an empty table. Just about the time his wine arrived, a beautiful girl came by and motioned to the empty chair at his table with a questioning look on her face. He assumed she wanted to sit with him and nodded his head "yes". The girl sat down with him.

The girl tried to talk to him, but, alas, he understood not one word of French. He tried to talk to her, but, alas, she understood not one word of English. He had an idea. He took a napkin and drew a wine glass and a question mark. She nodded her head "yes".

They sat quietly enjoying their wine. When it was just about finished, Harold realized it was nearly time for dinner. He took another napkin and drew a picture of two people at a table eating dinner. She nodded her head "yes" and took him by the

hand. She led him down the street to a very nice restaurant. They went in. The girl spoke with the head waiter and they were seated in a quiet corner where they could hear the band playing and see the dance floor. Harold could not read the menu since it was in French, so he allowed the girl to order for him. The food was excellent and the couple thoroughly enjoyed it.

After dinner, Harold took a napkin and drew a picture of a couple dancing. She nodded her head "yes" and they danced to every song the band played, whether fast or slow. When the band quit playing and began to pack away their instruments, the couple returned to their table.

The girl took a napkin and reached for the pen. He handed it to her and she drew a picture of a four poster bed. Harold Smith is still wondering to this day how she knew he was in the furniture business.

(Blame my brother for that one. Be forewarned. The next one is a little risque)

Okay, okay!!! I apologize. Now. My Schedule.

NOVEMBER

Wednesdays

11/10 & 11/24 O'Tooles in Novi 9-1
11/17 Daily Limit in Grand Lake 9-12

Thursdays

11/4 & 11/18 The Noggin Room in the
Perry Hotel,
Petoskey 7-11
11/11 Dick O'Dow's in Birmingham 9-1

Fridays

11/5, 11/12, 11/26 Four Green Fields
Royal Oak 9-1
11/19 Noggin Room in the Perry Hotel
Petoskey. 7-11

Saturdays

11/6, 11/13, 11/27 Hoops in Auburn
Hills 9-1
11/20 TNT in Rogers City 9-1

DECEMBER

Sunday and Monday 12/26 & 12/27 Noggin Room in
The Perrry Hotel
Petoskey 7-11

Wednesdays

12/1 & 12/22 O'Toole's in Novi 9-1
12/29 Nubs Nob in Harbor Springs 3-6

Thursdays

12/2 & 12/23 DIck O'Dow's In
Birmingham 9-1
12/9 & 12/16 Noggin Room in the
Perry Hotel
Petoskey 7-11
12/30 Nubs Nob Harbor Springs 3-6

Fridays

12/3, 12/10, & 12/17 Four Green
Fields in Royal Oak
9-1

Saturdays

12/11 & 12/18 Hoops in Auburn Hills
9-1

Last joke! Remember. I warned you!

There was an attorney who got home late one evening after a very taxing day trying to get a stay of execution for a client, named William Wright, who was due to be hanged for murder at midnight. His last minute plea for clemency to the state governor had failed and he was feeling tired and depressed.

As soon as he got through the door his wife started on about, "What time

of night do you call this? Where the hell have you been?" and so on.

Too shattered to play his usual role in this familiar ritual, he went and poured himself a very large whisky and headed off to the bathroom for a long hot soak -- pursued by the predictable sarcastic remarks.

While he was in the bath the phone rang, which the wife answered to be told that her husband's client had been granted his stay of execution after all. Realizing what a day he must have had, she relented a little and went upstairs to give him the good news.

As she opened the bathroom door she was greeted by the sight of her husband's rear view as he bent naked over the bath cleaning the tub.

"They're not hanging Wright tonight," she said.

At this the attorney whirled round and screamed hysterically, "For crying out loud . . . don't you ever stop?"

Until next time.

This issue brought to you by a bunch of little turkeys.