

PETALUMA PETE

Return to Jarna

by Richard Somers



The phone rang. It was Bob the Swede reminding Pete that he had promised to visit Jarna this summer to “do what we do” as the Swede would say.

“Doing what we do” means sitting on the Swede’s back porch while the sun is up for 22 hours telling lies and sipping dark and light Falcon beers. It is playing golf at Kallfors (Bob’s golf club); walking a half mile to the water’s edge of Lake Jarna and dropping a line into the cool water to catch the elusive Pike. “Doing what we do” means meeting again with Swedish friends that Pete has made over the years: John Rooney, Ian, Per the Farmer, Tommy the Roof, Long-Haired Mike (known now as short-haired Mike), Charlie (the guy who will see that one always gets home after a night at the pub), Sweet Melina, Dani the Chef, Johan the Pro, the Syrian Mafia families whose names are protected by Pete, and all the other folks who make a trip to Jarna so much fun.

To “do what we do” means going out back of the Swede’s two-story cabin where he has a makeshift chipping green to practice chipping golf balls before the next round. It means watching hours of action movies that Pete only watches when he visits the land of perpetual daylight.

Doing “what we do” means trying to see the Golden Pheasant that sometimes comes to the Swede’s yard when Pete is there. It means hanging clothes on a

rope line like one did back in the ‘30s and ‘40s before dryers came into style.

To “do what we do” means just enjoying each other’s company, thankful that King George is no longer in power. It means being proud that America is trying to build relationships with the world’s communities, rather than giving them the finger when they disagree with our point of view.

Doing “what we do” means Pete and Dani the Chef making food for the Wolf Pack (Dani, the Swede, and Pete), or for 30 friends and family who join to celebrate being alive again this year. Chef Dani also has the ability to learn almost any language in minutes. He speaks five languages fluently. However, he can learn Estonian, for example, within a few minutes – enough to get us food and drink, and anything else we may want or need in Estonia, or wherever else in the world that the Wolf Pack has traveled together.

To “do what we do” means visiting Viking ruins from the 1100s to see where Vikings threw hot oil on attackers who would dare to climb the 150-foot walls. It means taking the just-departed Ernst’s launch into the Archipelago and finding a four star Michelin restaurant in the middle of nowhere. You’re with Him now, Ernst.

Doing “what we do” means so much more. Thank you, Nurse Patt, for encouraging Pete to visit his brother once again.



THE DEVIL’S ADVOCATE

A FRESH WATER LAGOON FROM FRESH WATER GOONS

by Joe Tinney

I was very glad to see that the Petaluma City Council has passed an ordinance to ban outdoor smoking in City Parks, both downtown and elsewhere. The reasons cited are “fire hazards and secondary smoke.”

When I think of the dozens of City sidewalks and lawns that have been burned in the last ten years because of cigarettes, I shudder. Now we will be safe from that danger - and the secondary smoke from cigarettes being lit outdoors? I’ll bet almost as many Petalumans have died from this as the thousands who will be killed if the Dutra Asphalt Plant is allowed to be built.

Have you ever wondered what happens to the dummies that can’t pass the high school exit exam, even after three tries? I’ll tell you. They are gathered into a group called the National Marine Fisheries Service and given the job of making policy for the Russian River.

For example, for thousands of years steelhead have been migrating down the river to get to the sea. This is what they want to do. This is what they must do to survive. So

the National Marine Fisheries Service wants to stop them. What they want to do is block the mouth of the Russian River, trapping the fish there where they can’t get out and where there are hundreds of hungry seals whose sole diet consists of - you guessed it - fish.

These experts call it a fresh water lagoon. The seals that live there call it a smorgasbord.

“They need time to adapt to the salt water,” says one of the fresh water goons from the Sonoma County Water Agency. Since the fish have been rushing into salt water just fine for centuries, how do the goons know this? Well, they got an email that read as follows: “Please block the mouth of the River, because we need a freshwater lagoon. Sined, The Fish.”

They got the e-mail all right, but one thing is certain. It was not sent by the fish because there was a misspelling, and fish are too smart for that - well, smarter than the fresh water goons anyway. As soon as the goons announced their plans, they got another email: “Thanks, dummies. The Seals.”

The goons’ next plan: A billion dollar pipeline from Dry Creek to keep water OUT of the Russian River. I am not making this up.

If we want to save the steelhead, there is one plan that might work: Open a season on the goons. It may be the only way to save the fish in the river.

Finally, I note that county administrator Bob Deis has resigned because he couldn’t get along with the supervisors (who can?) - and he is receiving a resignation package of \$331,000.

I’d like to apply for the position. I’ll guarantee that I can’t get along with the supes - and I’ll resign a whole lot faster and for only half the price. Who could turn that down?

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