

"Every new year is the direct descendant, isn't it, of a long line of proven, criminals?"
~ Ogden Nash

HAWAII BOUND

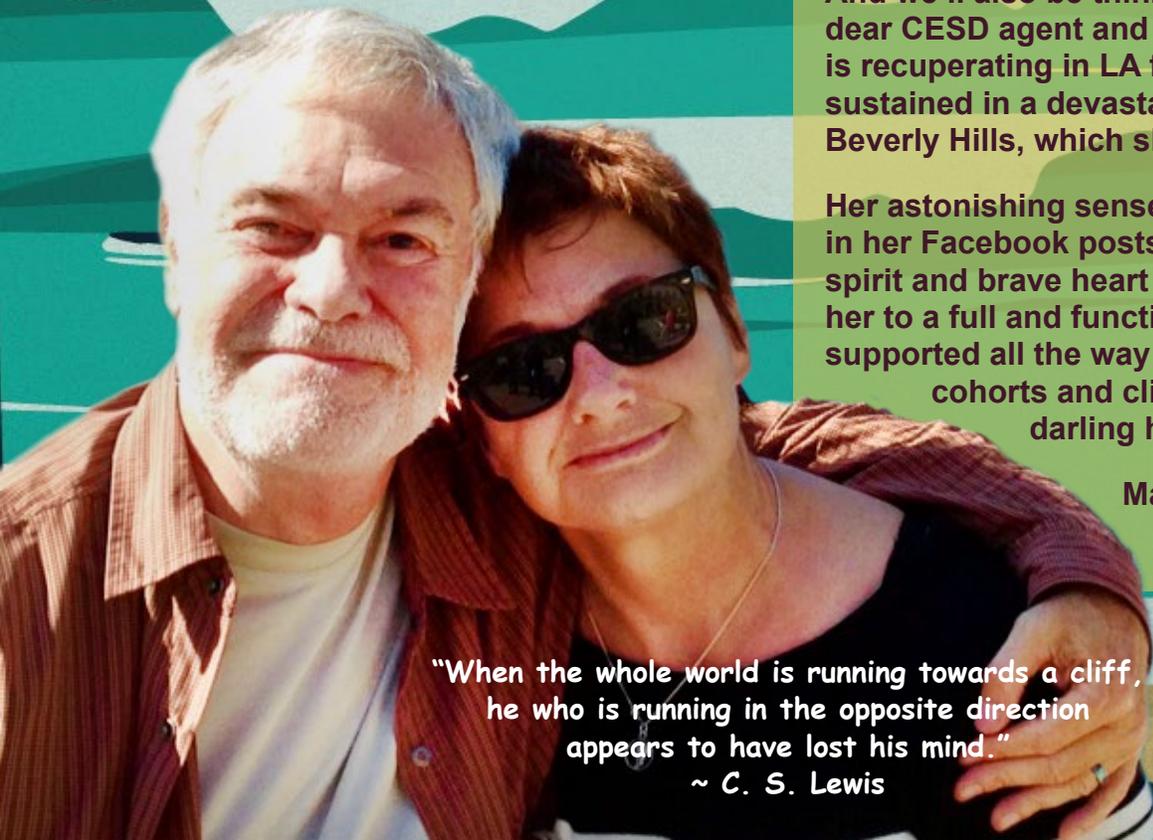


As you read this, we'll hopefully be bobbing in the waves at our timeshare on Maui enjoying some well-deserved R&R, or Rest and Re-anklification! Friends and relatives will be joining us along the way as we will be there and also on Kaua'i for the whole month of February. And I'll be taking along a copy of *Where's My Fortune Cookie?*, which I'm told is a very entertaining read – available on line at Amazon and Barnes & Noble.

And we'll also be thinking this trip of our dear CESD agent and friend, **Pat Brady**, who is recuperating in LA from multiple injuries sustained in a devastating head-on collision in Beverly Hills, which she miraculously survived.

Her astonishing sense of humor is evident in her Facebook posts, and Pat's feisty Irish spirit and brave heart will doubtless carry her to a full and functional recovery as she is supported all the way by her legion of friends, cohorts and clients – and, of course, her darling husband, **Bob Joles**.

May we all heal well!



"When the whole world is running towards a cliff,
he who is running in the opposite direction
appears to have lost his mind."

~ C. S. Lewis

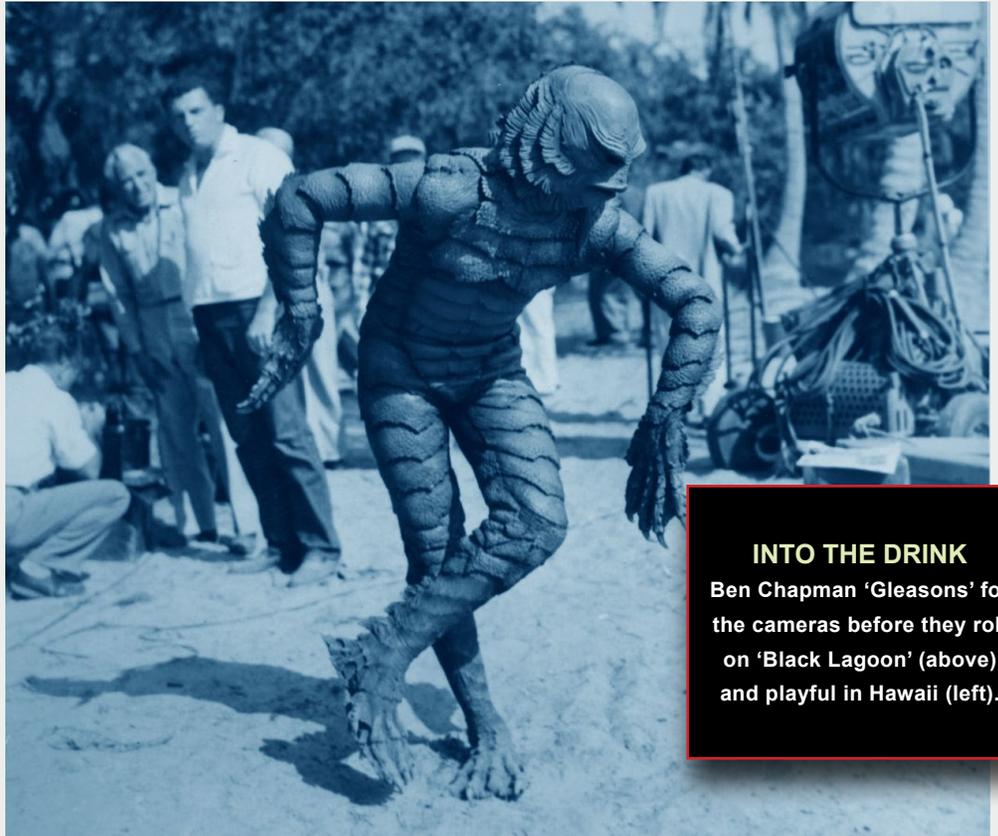
THE SHAPE OF LIQUOR

Our friend M.C. Gwynne writes:

“THAT GUY FROM THE Black Lagoon was actually from Honolulu!! **Ben**

Chapman was his name and I met him in Baltimore some years ago at a Monster Convention. He invited me to his house next time I came to Hawaii, and so I did, some years later. ...

“He invited me to dinner with him and his wife at some swank Waikiki hotel where their son was the bartender so we got a great table overlooking the lighted beach. Well, Bennie got pretty schnockered with his scotch-and-sodas over steaks and sauteed asparagus with Hollandaise, while I had a few glasses of a superb red Bordeaux with my fabulous steak. Bennie kept knockin’ ‘em back like fruit juice and



INTO THE DRINK

Ben Chapman ‘Gleasons’ for the cameras before they roll on ‘Black Lagoon’ (above) and playful in Hawaii (left).



I could see his wife was getting concerned. She drank nothing.

“The place got crowded and noisy so we decided to leave. Fortunately, neither of us was driving and they lived on Seaside

just above Kalakaua so we walked Benny out of the noisy bar and under a full moon headed home. That big fat moon was mocking us. It didn’t bode well I thought.

“Passing another semi-swank and smaller hotel on the beachside, Bennie insisted we have a nightcap before going home so we went in. Small crowd, very intimate, very quiet with an elegant bar area. Bennie was getting very loud now and being a large man in stature as well as voice, it wasn’t long before we realized our drinks were not coming. Eventually a well-dressed Maitre d’ kind of guy sauntered over and asked us very quietly to leave.

“Bennie stood his full height, towering over this guy, but being speechless-drunk and grinning like a hyena, he just stood there, so I gently took him by the arm, and his wife and I wheeled him towards the door.

“As a parting shot at this little weasel I said to him, ‘Sir, do you know who this man is?’ He stopped and stared at

the big man, now bigger than ever and weaving slightly. I continued, ‘In fact sir you are unceremoniously ejecting from your place of business none other than the Creature from the Black Lagoon.’

“Bennie turned around and smiled as if receiving an award, and the ferret-eyed weasel looked at us both, took a breath and then replied indignantly, ‘I don’t care where he’s from – you gotta leave.’

“We laughed into the street and all the way home, where we poured Bennie into the elevator and I kissed his wife, **Merrilee**, g’night. The door closed and I almost peed my pants with laughter...”

“This is a country that I don’t want looking foolish, and it’s not going to look foolish as long as I’m here.”

~ Donald J Trump

GOING POSTAL

THERE WAS A MAN WORKING FOR THE POST Office whose job was to process all the mail that had illegible addresses. One day, a letter came addressed “To God” in a shaky handwriting. He thought he should open it to see what it was about. The letter read:

Dear God, I am an 83-year-old widow, living on a very small pension. Yesterday someone stole my purse. It had \$100 in it, which was all the money I had until my

■ **CONTINUED**

next pension payment. Next Sunday is Christmas, and I had invited two of my friends over for dinner. Without that money, I have nothing to buy food with, have no family to turn to, and you are my only hope...Can you please help me? Sincerely, Edna

He was touched and showed the letter to his fellow workers. Each one dug into his or her wallet and came up with a few dollars; and by the time he made the rounds, he had collected \$96, which they put into an envelope and sent it to the woman.

The rest of the day, all the workers felt a warm glow thinking of Edna and the dinner she'd be able to share with her friends. Christmas came and went, but a few days later, another letter came from the same old lady, and all the workers gathered around while the letter was opened. It read:

Dear God, How can I ever thank you enough for what you did for me? Because of your gift of Love I was able to fix a glorious dinner for my friends. We had a very nice day, and I told them all of your wonderful gift, but, by the way, there was \$4 missing.

I think it might have been those bastards at the Post Office!

"We all do no end of feeling, and we mistake it for thinking." ~ Mark Twain

IT'S JUST BUNK

HUNTER WAS FOUR YEARS OLD AND WAS staying with his grandfather for a few days. He'd been playing outside with the other kids when he came into the house and asked, "Grandpa, what's that called when two people sleep in the same bedroom, and one is on top of the other?" His grandpa was a little taken aback, but he decided to tell him the truth:

"Well, Hunter," he said, "It's called sexual intercourse." Little Hunter said "Oh, okay," and went back outside to play with the other kids.

But a few minutes later he came back in and said angrily, "Grandpa, it isn't called sexual intercourse, it's called bunk beds; and Jimmy's mom wants to talk to you."

*"And then you have the rich, and nothing was ever the same again."
~ Ernest Hemmingway*

HOW?

“MMIGRATION IS OUT OF CONTROL. VAST hordes of illegal immigrants are overwhelming our nation. They do not speak our language, they degrade our culture. They drain our resources; immigrants are murderers and rapists and thieves. Illegal



SAY WHAT?
Geronimo's futuristic immigration stance.

immigrants murdered my mother, wife, and children.

"We can make our nation great again, but we must solve the immigrant problem or we will surely lose control..."

NOTE: This a translation of the original oral Apache interview with Geronimo, spokesman for the Apache Nation in 1874. It has been edited for content and clarity; for example, "immigrant" was substituted for the original "murdering paleface buffalo fuckers."

*"When the debate is lost, slander becomes the tool of the loser."
~ Socrates*

GETTING OFF

CUBS BASEBALL ANNOUNCER HARRY Caray got pulled over for speeding. An officer approached the car and asked for the registration. Harry tells him he can't give it to the officer because the car is stolen and then proceeds to explain that there's a loaded gun in the glove box and a dead body in the trunk.

Harry is asked to get out of the car and the officer explains things to his partner. The partner checks out the

■ CONTINUED

car, and then goes over to talk to Harry. "My partner said the car was stolen but we ran the plates and it's registered to you. He said you had a gun in the glove box but all that was in there was the registration and insurance papers. He said you had a body in the trunk, but it was empty."

And Harry responded: "And I bet that son-of-a-bitch said I was speeding too!"

"The American Dream is just that - a dream. Because you have to be asleep to believe it." ~ *George Carlin*

AN AGE-OLD QUESTION

I AM OFTEN ASKED IF I LIKE getting older. Well, let's see; as I've aged, I've become kinder to myself, and less critical of myself; I've become my own friend. I have seen too many dear friends leave this world too soon, before they understood the great freedom that comes with age. Whose business is it if I choose to read, or play on the computer until 4 a.m., or sleep til noon? I will dance with myself to those wonderful tunes of the '50s, '60s and '70s; and if I wish to weep over a lost love, I will. I will walk the beach in a swimsuit that is stretched over a bulging body and dive into the waves with abandon if I choose to, despite the pitying glances from the Millennials. They, too, will get old.

Sure, over the years, my heart has been broken. How can your heart not break, when you lose a loved one, or when a child suffers, or even when somebody's beloved pet passes? But, broken hearts are what give us strength and understanding and compassion. A heart never broken is pristine and sterile, and will never know the joy of being imperfect. I know I am sometimes forgetful; but there again, some of life is just as well forgotten, and I eventually remember the important things.

I am blessed to have lived long enough to have my hair turn grey and to have the laughs of my youth forever etched into grooves on my face; so many have never laughed, and so many have died before their hair could turn silver.

As you get older, it is easier to be positive; you care less about what other people think, so I don't question myself

PLANETCLICK

CLICK WORDS TO OPEN

YELPERS

KANE

KAGAN

FRIED

X MARKS THE SPOT

GOP

IT'S HARD

ORION

THE TABLE

DOG DREAMS

THE DOOR

LET'S EAT

anymore. I've earned the right to be wrong. I'm not going to live forever, but while I'm still here, I will not waste time lamenting about what could have been or worrying about what will be – and I shall eat dessert every single day, if I feel like it!

So, to answer your question, I like the person I have become; I like being old. It has set me free.

"Despotism is the enemy of the people.
The free press is the despot's enemy."
~ *Sen. Jeff Flake*

PLANET HELPERS

Thanks to **Allen Newcomb**, **Victor Kopcewich**, **Dean Siewert**, **Kent McCaman**, **Joan Allemand**, **John Davidson**, **Nick Oliva**, **Frazer Smith**, **George Riddle**, **Oona Austin**, **Melinda Peterson**, and **John Densmore** – and thanks to *The Golden Age of Pulp Fiction and Adventures in Odyssey* for my recent top-flight audio adventures; and

to restaurant-rater and classmate **Timothy Zagat** for underwriting a recording of Riverdale Country School songs. With **Ted Bonnitt** producing at the **Marty Rifkin Studio** (formerly The Beachboys') in Santa Monica, I sang and then overdubbed them all with different harmonies and personalities, accompanied by a track created by jazz pianist **David Lahm** back in New York. Only bad thing is, even though I first sang them 60 years ago – I now can't get these songs out of my head!

And finally, a Hale and Happy Birthday to my fellow Boomer on a Benchmate, **Jamie Alcroft** (above), who just turned 69 – or is it 47? – the age of his donor's organs – or maybe – ONE?! Boom on, Tinman!



"There is one path in the world that none can walk but you. Where does it lead? Don't ask, walk!"
~ *Friedrich Nietzsche*

"The stupid person thinks that he is as smart, or smarter than, a smart person. And therein lies his stupidity." ~ *Chris Langan*

FIRESIGN • BOOMERS

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