

SOME THINGS I SAW, HEARD, LIKED, LAUGHED AT AND THOUGHT ABOUT IN 1987



Most unexpected P.S. to a letter written for fun
After this year's speech at Montreux's direct marketing symposium, a tongue-in-check note of "compliment" to impresario Walter Schmidt then landed in the local Swiss newspaper (in French) followed by a personal note from the Mayor of Montreux to 3,000 Symposium attendees!

Never underestimate the power of the imprimatur note.

Biggest joke of the year
The photo-finish, multiple second-place tie-fetters between "oh gosh" Ollie North, (as played by Jimmy Stewart), peerless pipe-puffing Poindexter, Super-slick Second, Ernie Elliot Abrams, ("I was only one digit off"), and that cash-casual Swiss businessman who didn't notice a mere ten million of extra deposit in his account.

And the clear Winner was—the innocent, uninformed, nobody-told-me, I-was-taking-a-snap guy.
Try telling that script to the movies—or Saturday Night Live.
Forget it.

Most encouraging-by-product of the hearings
A more public emergence of the Christie Institute, devoted to the long-range unwrapping of the Whole Story of CIA airlines, drug-financed diversionary funds, secret armies the Pentagon finds hard to disband etc., etc., etc.

Supermarket News' compliments on our "Dictionary" ad series for Crown.
The closeness of my client-friends.
Bill and Ada Cove getting married at 75 and 67 (why wait?).

Truth
You can't get better unless you do some different.

George Ellery Hale (Caltech)
Make no small plans.

The New
Anything bad you are carrying from your past exists only in your mind. You are keeping it alive. It does not exist—except in your mind.

Confidence
Debbie Thomas, champion ice skater and premed student, on her Olympic application was asked to describe herself.
Her answer: Invincible.

License plate frame on a brand new Coupe de Ville Cadillac:
Nothing the Kid can't do.

Most pride-filled personal moments were
At the Hill Company Spring sales meeting when sen Chris billeted the audience with his hilarious, multi-media luncheon slide show teeming with sand dunes, racing cars, charging horse-men, and instant images of awards made just 25 minutes before!

When daughter Lisa announced grandparenthood would arrive next August.
Yes!

Some other '87 favorites...
The Eastern philosophy buried in the mtnja sequences of MIKO.
John Barbour's TV special on the genius of Ernie Kovacs.
Frank Collett's in-person piano.

Finland and Jarmo Kuusma.
Montreux in April.
Seeing Leonard Raymond's name as sponsor of the DMA Collegiate Echo Awards—in memoriam.

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Each year come September, the plugging commences: What shall be the theme for the year end craft?

How can it compete with last years? I've built a monster size-trap.

Ideas begin with tiny twittings, pokings, possibilities, darting in different directions, then withdrawing, as I wait for some miraculous inspiration. Nothing.

So I finally comb files, notes on napkins, scraps, jottings of airplane "flashes", rips and clips from newspapers and magazines, and tidbits saved in the squirrel-boxes of memory.

And this is what you get for '87.

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Patience
Things come together when they should come together. Straining make-shift attempts before that are patchwork. Maybe it's lightly glued. Un-pleasant. High probability of breakage and disappointment.
While waiting...be busy.

One of the better social openings of '87. Head on America West flight to Phoenix. He turns to his new female seatmate and says, "I've just had an acute attack of friendliness. Hello there!"

Single Best put-down of any year
Some: United Airlines Red Carpet Club, Chicago. She is the professionally packaged lady traveler—tailored brows suit, silk blouse, floppy bow tie, slim leather brief case. He is a big mouth salesman. He puts his hands on the arms of her chair, leans over, mutters something as he cocks an eye over her shoulder. She stands up right in his face, starts unbuttoning her blouse and says, "Right here? Right now?"

He flees. The guys laugh a few applaud. She nods ever so nonchalantly, sits down, crosses her fine legs and rebeigns reading as the lounge returns to its wall-watching.

One of the best new slogans invented in '87:
FIND THE RULE BREAKER. Somewhere in all the layers of the bungling, maddening rule-bound bureaucracies we battle daily, there is Someone with the power to waive the rule, grant the request, approve the exception, pass you through—effortlessly, swiftly, with a smile.

Finding that Rule Breaker may depend on your attitude.
Nothing more.

There are three things never to break
Toys, promises and hearts.

One of the better thoughts of '87:
Never refuse a friendship.

If someone, anyone, wants to be associated with you, wants to be closer to you, sends signals, persistent intent to be your friend, why would you not accept that compliment?
Are you retreating such signals?
Check your universal answering machine for messages.

An Ought-to-do idea...
Early on, from the beginning of school up through say, age 90, I think these items should be on the curriculum:
1. Never be embarrassed. Do the best you can do, or say, "I don't know how to do that—show me, please."
2. Make a move. Do not stay in a traffic jam, a long line, a dead-end job or a poor relationship.
3. Never take advantage of anyone lighter than you—in any sense.

My favorite new words: chinchangines.
Has all the lilt-ing float-ing melody of win-dow-sill, feather-, lol-ly, breath-less, lil-ly...plus a long line of vowel substitution.
Interesting thought when ancient mugglers reached the edge of their knowledge, they wrote:
BEYOND HERE ARE DRAGONS.

Is that anything like "Tomorrow"?
Something Duchene said 20 years ago:
"While you're here, you're gonna learn there are some things that don't deserve a second chance. Question: are you making that first time decision fast enough?"
How to beat the cost of answering machines when calling long distance:
Call collect. Ah!

Quote of the year from the Northwest hearings
"I didn't withhold anything from them that they didn't want withheld from them."
Courtesy of Mr. Memory, Admini Poindexter. Unbelievable.

Edward Wilson IVth of Uganda.
"There are so few great leaders I decided to follow myself."

A gem to remember
The super-nervous car driver was snarling at traffic, cursing commuters, desperately lunging, braking, dodging dangerously into lanes—all to no avail. His bemused passenger watched wistfully for a few moments, turned and asked softly: "How do you handle big problems?"

Telephone Killer
"I guess I got cut off..."
"No you didn't."

One to get fat
Actual slogan in office of BFL, the giant trash collecting conglomerate
Your garbage is our bread—and butter
Tasty, huh?

One to consider
What would happen if by agreement we excused the need for excuses in our language?
Instead...tell the truth, say, "I made a mistake" and still not lose a job, a client, a wife, a friend, a lover, or a relationship.
Thoughtfulness

When the great Shake It! California in October, solicited "Are you OK?" phone calls came from John Fabery, Kathi Mash, Howard Fishman of the Virgin Islands, Pat Stern, Ray Kool, and cousin Jerry Sekoloff.
I even kept the pink phone slips for a while. Little did they know I had carefully planned to be on the east coast at that time.

One of the slickest merchandising ideas of the year
When the Pope visited Carmel, California, or Civitavecchia-by-the-sea, a T shirt shop made a most righteous offering to welcome His Holiness: THOU HAST MADE MY DAY.
Amen.

Things I never knew
In jazz jargon, a brass inventive spirit is "Dy."

One of the toughest acts of the year
"I didn't withhold anything from them that they didn't want withheld from them."
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To which we add:
...or your wife, partner, employee, or your dog.

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A Delicate Thought
Be aware of Face—the Eastern philosophy. Leave a conquered opponent dignity, a way out, graceful withdrawal. It is not necessary to bury an enemy after a small battle...you may have to deal with him again—and perhaps on a different plane.

Something I really into
The World is divided into two kinds of people: those with a sense of urgency—and those who do not understand the word.
Phrases I don't care if I ever hear again
"to speak."
"Pis..."
"Let's table this for now..."
"Let me check out my schedule!"
"Off the top of my head..."
"Kind of..."
"I'll get back to you..."
"Your waiter, (driver, bus, cab, dinner check) will be right here..."
"Right."

Things I Hate: Wires
A spaghetti of tangles, cords, long extensions, attachments, multiple plugs—a warehouse of wires trailing from my tv, vcr, cd player, answering machine, the electric blanket...

This year they all get spooled, cut, clipped, snipped and snugged up. So help me, General Electric.
Most impressive re-run of the year
The American Film Institute's goose, push of plaquid piled on a patient, smiling, tolerant John Huston, receded by the shimmering prose and magnificent oratorical tones of Orson Welles. (Get the tape, Elton!)

How many of the Great Ones are leaving us...
Most un-awarded film
RUNAWAY TRAIN with John Voight's primitive, frenzied, startling portrayal of a ruthless, vengeful escaping convict.

Awesome. Should have been Oscar'd.
The "winner" movie debacle
FATAL ATTRACTION

Of which a friend remarked, "Between that kind of lady and the AIDS scare, Montreux has made a giant leap forward."

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