

October 19, 1952

As the election draws near the house of government seems to become further and further divided with a great street of mud running between; where else would all this mud come from for the “mud slinging”. I don’t think any other presidential election has ever been so well plastered.

But it will be like all good old U.S.A. elections when the last vote is cast and counted the losing side will shake hands with the winner and promise whole hearted support. Where else in the world is there such Democracy and I am glad to be living in the midst of it?

Abraham Lincoln used the expression in one of his great speeches, “A house divided cannot stand,” which is borrowed from St. Matthew in the Holy Bible. Pre-election politics seem to be divided and one does wonder if the whole structure isn’t just teetering ready to fall into the deepest abyss; but to study the speeches of both parties, one can see that actually there isn’t much difference in the platforms.

When it is all summed up a healthy democracy can have only a few essentials to make it such and these are based on the five freedoms, which, I am sure neither party is willing to sacrifice.

But I do feel it is better to change parties now and then and give the public offices to fresh teams and thus weed out much of the corruption and graft. This is true of town, city, county, state, and national public offices.

If the Republicans get the reign, there should be a real housecleaning for awhile; but they will surely have some sidewalk engineers watching every move they make and everything that goes wrong will be greeted by “I told you so.”

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October 20, 1952

The trend toward the easy relaxing life we all want to lead calls for breakfast in bed; so the experts say; and they outline menus and appliances to make this morning meal real luxury.

What I can’t understand is if we all must have breakfast in bed, who will do the serving? I know that I will never enjoy such coddled luxury unless I can’t walk or am so sick I couldn’t enjoy eating in bed anyway. So when the morning meal is served to the privileged percent of the population, it will probably be me who is doing the labor.

Some people extract much pleasure from reading abed; but I never could because when I retire I am ready for some real shut-eye and can’t read one page before I am all wound up in the arms of morpheus. Eating in bed, just for the sheer luxury and laziness would seem the same way to me and I would find it much more cozier to dine from the table.

This morning I would have had difficulties eating in bed and trying to cook for Chet and Haysel and get myself ready to do scout duty. I just couldn't be a pampered wife--my family need too much pampering themselves. I can just imagine what sort of breakfast I would be served in bed!

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This political bally-hoo is getting to be a joke and every day the papers are filled with banter about the parties. I am amused at an item in one of the B-Mike columns.

Did you know Stevenson killed his dog? He stepped on its foot and it said, "Ike, Ike, Ike."

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*Note: It does not surprise me that Marjorie wouldn't want breakfast in bed and I'm sure her days were so busy that by the time evening arrived, she was ready to sleep - unless she was ill, herself. Duty done in an organized way was like her middle name and she was happiest at the end of a day when she knew she had done all she could to realize her goals.*

*- Virginia Vandehey, Marjorie's niece*

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October 21, 1952

Dear Diary: I will be glad when the election is over because that is all we hear on the radio and read in the newspapers; so naturally I haven't much thrilling news or romantic episodes to tell you.

Everyone is riding around on the "gravy train" and afraid to get off; so today our own state senator has ditched his party to remain with the boys now in power in Washington. Of course, he is entitled to his beliefs; but I don't think this will strengthen his political career.

I feel if the Democrats are reelected, it is because of the labor unions and the weak fearing that they may not have prosperity (which now is really a false prosperity based on war and who wants to be in the money when boys are needlessly sent to the battle fields and murdered?)

Herbert Hoover was accused of having a dole system during the depression times; but it was just as good as unemployment compensation now. At least then, a man did a day's work and didn't expect to be petted and pampered by the employer.

It is called unemployment insurance yet it is paid for by the employer; when it should be like any other insurance policy and premiums met by the beneficiary. The employer certainly isn't paid when conditions leave him without employment.

Too many are riding the "gravy train"; soon there will be not one left to run the engine.

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Good hamburger is sixty-nine cents a pound and ground round eighty-nine. At this price, a little stretching is necessary to make the meat budget fit the purse. I take the bread heels and soak in milk or water and mix with the ‘burger, this makes the meat much more moist. A little ground meat will go a long ways with rice added; then dropped into boiling tomato puree or water and cooked in the pressure cooker for a half hour. In other words, meat balls; and they can be served several ways. Don’t forget the “gravy boat” after the burgers are cooked; it will help stretch the tummy, too.

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*Note: The dollar has now shrunk to such lows in value that if 69 cent top choice hamburger was advertised the line would go all the way around the block!*  
*- Virginia Vandehey, Marjorie’s niece*

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October 22, 1952

I have been reading a little booklet called the “Voter’s Pamphlet”. It seems Oregon is the only state that sends this free literature to its voters. I don’t know how much it is costing us tax payers or how many people really read it and get their money’s worth.

It is most helpful around this time of the year--of elections. I have been perusing the pages and getting more confused every day as mostly the booklet doesn’t agree with the tons of literature in the mails and the advertisements in the daily papers.

Great wonder some candidates don’t outlaw the voters guide as in some cases it is quite one sided. The secretary of state has been accused of getting free publicity from its pages because his name appears so many times.

Election time is a manna for newspapers and radio stations and they don’t have to worry about having space and air filled. It is really becoming quite a joke--many political ads, etc. The paper mills and printing plants are worked overtime, too. The advertising specialists are losing sleep and hair figuring new ways to present their political clients.

This politics is really big business. I would like to have all the money being spent on it. Hot air is costing a lot these days. The voters pamphlet is but a small cost of the campaign--and who cares how much is spent for it--the taxpayer is the goat?

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October 23, 1952

It hasn’t rained for such a long time that we old webfooters get excited over just a drop. I have never seen the rivers as dry and our usual green coastal hills looked as seared as the Eastern deserts.

Everyone says it is the worst they have ever seen; but I can recall other arid Falls. Memory, of course, gets vague as it ages and one forgets. I have memory of forest fires at Christmas time and this could easily happen this year of 1952.

The streams are really low and perhaps are about as devoid of water as anyone has ever seen them for acres of forests have been robbed from the watersheds.

The salmon are finding it hard to go upstream to spawn. At low tide one can see them floundering on the beaches and some become stranded and die. The sea gulls pick out their eyes and they are helpless. The law will let one rescue these salmon; but not those able to go up the river.

It is quite the sport these days to cast a line off the rocks to catch salmon. And another sport to look for lost spinners at low tide. This is finders-keepers business and can be quite profitable; perhaps, more so than catching fish.

The fishermen are all hoping for rain so that more fish will come into the river. I don't see how many more could find standing room to fish off the rocks. Rain or no rain the fishing business goes on and brings out an interested audience and supplies a meeting place for gossip and neighborhood news.

I don't find time to go to the fishing grounds; but all the neighbors take a run down there some time during the day. Little wonder I miss out on the "latest."

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October 24, 1952

It wasn't many years ago we heard of the Westward movement. If many more humans migrate toward the setting sun, the movement will have to reverse and return Eastward.

We are as far West as can be without living on the bouncing sea in a houseboat. There are so many new faces in town and they come and go with the change of the calendar. In the days long ago, few strangers ever poked their noses into this quiet village; and it was quite an event if a new family moved to town.

Before the highways, this was a last frontier and anyone brave enough to face the difficulties of getting here, was truly a pioneer. The first white man came by the ocean and cared not to settle. The next invasion of the paleface characters were probably on foot; then trails were hacked from the wilderness and men rode in via horseback.

With settlement came the need for roads; although most of the trade was by small ocean vessels; there was this need to trade with the inland valley folk. One wonders what incentive could induce people to homestead back in these lonely mostly unproductive coastal valleys.

A network of muddy, narrow wagon roads were built by the homesteaders and those plying up and down the coast used the ocean beach for a highway; but had to bend to the will of the tides. I recall ferrying the bays and being stuck in the soft sands entering and exiting the beaches. With the advent of cars, transportation was somewhat speeded up; but the motor vehicles often suffered from dunking in the sea, which was curtains for the auto--sensitive to sand and ocean water.

In the sands of these beaches are imbedded many an auto lost to the ravages of high tide. The early day coastal garages had special equipment to rescue the marooned car. Salt water and sand soon ate up automobile chassis and in one year a good car was a worn and sorry sight.

Then came the gravelled roads; the state owned ferries; and finally the bridges. Alas! We do not live in the last frontier; but a biway of the world.

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Note: *This entry reminds me of the book Marj would write about her family and others who pioneered in this coastal region. The Land That Kept Its Promise, her book, is still being sold today, but here, she is sharing her thoughts on this subject that may have been the premise for her book.* - Virginia Vandehey, Marjorie's niece

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October 25, 1952

The table talk at our house can be politics, the latest styles, family gossip, food fancies, or how to dissect a frog. Sometimes the subject doesn't mix with food; so it is immediately changed.

Dinner time seems to be one occasion the whole family is tied to the table long enough to have any kind of discussion. We try to avoid irritating subjects; but this is hard to do.

I have read that conversation at meal time should be very pleasant and quieting. I do believe we have run out of dull subjects of interest to the whole family. I know other people have this same trouble. I don't mean that we get into arguments where we throw food at one another; but when someone changes the conversation to criticizing the cook; then I am ready to practice a little food slinging.

At the table we parents learn about the knowledge thrown around at school. One evening between bites of liver and brussell sprouts I got an education on the fine points of embalming--through the courtesy of the biology class. When my mouth was filled with hot tea, daughter explained the sad results of eating too hot of food.

Mealtime usually is anticipated for the tasty food; but around here it has become a panel session on a variety of subjects. I have begun to worry that this is taking precedence over my reputation as a cook.

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Wintertime salads of fruits can be very tempting. I prefer to slice the fruit and make a dish of several kinds slightly tossed together such as thinly sliced oranges, bananas, chunked pineapple, peach and pear halves. Surround by wedges of avocado or calavo.

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