

Many good deeds help out Telluride

In November of 2008, in a letter to the *Telluride Daily Planet*, the Telluride Association of Realtors (TAR) discussed all of the volunteer work that we accomplish as an organization and as individuals. Some of these programs included Habitat for Humanity, the annual Hoot Brown High School Scholarship Award and the First Time Home Buyers Assistance Fund (FTHBAF).

In addition to these fine programs, TAR added a few more causes to its volunteer schedule. Starting in the fall of 2010, we volunteered to help the Town of Telluride keep the River Trail clean, which so many locals and tourists frequent. This weekly or bi-monthly program, based on seasonal conditions, specifies a section of the River Trail to be picked up by our members. The Town of Telluride's Parks and Recreation Department came up with a great plan of action to beautify the trail at a fraction of last year's expense. The Telluride Association of Realtors is glad to help.

Along with the programs listed above, the Telluride Association of Realtors continues to work tirelessly in ongoing volunteer projects, including but not limited to the cleanup up of the Highway 145 Spur, the Senior Luncheon Program and Angel Baskets/San Miguel County Food Bank.

We were even fortunate enough to get the opportunity to participate in the 2010 summer Adopt-A-Planter Box program along Colorado Avenue Telluride's residential "main street" by planting perennials while taking proper care, such as watering along with general upkeep throughout the entire summer season. Just in 2010 alone, TAR logged an estimated total of 191 volunteer hours along with \$23,705 in donations; 61 percent went toward FTHBAF grants and 30 percent was apportioned to four individual Hoot Brown Memorial Scholarship award recipients. The local four high school graduates chosen to receive this special award were: Mackenzie

Bronson, Hannah Smith, Marlee Mitchell and Julian Misliuc. We're extremely proud of these kinds of accomplishments that can be attained during these challenging economic times.

One final project of interest that you might not be aware of, but in fact has been in place for quite a few years is the It's Your Move Program. It's Your Move (IYM) is an educational program that is designed to teach

the many facets of renting, buying and selling real estate. The Colorado Association of Realtors provides the program to TAR, which consists of a workbook for each student and is a free public service tool. This presentation includes what to look for when shopping for a place to live, tenant rights and responsibilities, housing discrimination, landlord rights and responsibilities, property values, leases, contracts and the types of loans available for housing. IYM is presented to Telluride High School Seniors to prepare them for when they are faced with housing decisions.

Individually local Realtors assist in many more organizations. Some are more grassroots, some are hands-on, and some are at board levels. We're coaches for our community's kids; volunteer firefighters; involved with Search and Rescue; and participate on the Town of Telluride, Mountain Village, and other organizational entities (KOTO, Just For Kids Foundation, San Miguel Power Association, Telluride Adaptive Ski Program) as board members.

We would also like to acknowledge the fact that a great majority of our TAR Affiliates and even respective staff volunteer their valuable time in most all aspects of the TAR voluntary programs that we are currently involved in.

It is no secret that the local real estate economy has suffered which has affected property owners, Realtors, the building trade, and many other businesses by a trickle-down effect. Despite these difficult times, our local Realtors and affiliates are unwavering on their support for our community and the time donated to help others.

TAR
TEDDY ERRICO
PAST PRESIDENT

The muted season

"I prefer winter and fall, when you feel the bone structure of the landscape — the loneliness of it, the dead feeling of winter. Something waits beneath it, the whole story doesn't show."
—Andrew Wyeth

It snowed a foot, hushing the birds and blossoms. Even the dog — who does nothing with reservation — was reluctant to plunge into the new blanket pulled over the valley. She waits for me to venture near the wet street before putting a paw into the field timidly, as if she were stepping into black paint.

Neither the animals nor the people are prepared for the late spring blizzard. A magpie sat lonely on a branch, and robins hopped in tiny circles, tamping a spot down to rest. The geese huddled on

the valley floor, resting their plump chests on the drifts.

Snow in the spring is an unwelcome nuisance to nearly every life form. It mutes the tiny sprouts and makes food hard to find for the bears, waking from winter's long sleep. People face it with a weary determination, pulling their heavy boots from the closet, though they never actually put their boots too far away. Not in Colorado, at least.

Winter was slow to arrive and never dug in. Storms came to us for trysts, but it was largely dry. When the squalls finally did come, they were unwanted.

For all its difficulties, the spring storm's beauty is shocking. By this time, the streets have eaten their snowbanks, so every inch of snow one sees is brand new, chalk white.

It falls heavier and faster and

comes as if it knows it's fighting for a claim on the rapidly warming earth below. It drapes even the thinnest branches, and, to borrow from Joyce, falls "though the universe . . . upon all the living and the dead." Snow doesn't care where it falls.

I shovel it slowly and note an acute nostalgia for a basic chore.

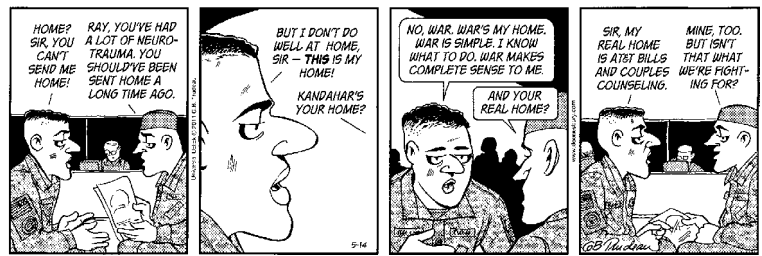
January snow turns to dust in the air with even the faintest breath, but these flakes settle heavy; every shovel full is a concrete block. The dog whines with each toss over the railings, as if she's losing something that will never return. This spring, at least, she may be right.

By the end of the evening, she remembered what it was to bound through bottomless drifts, and did so with an easy grace. And I remembered to kick off my boots on the doorframe.

Winter is always welcome. It just takes some practice.



SPARK NOTES
MATTHEW BEAUDIN



DOONESBURY GARRY TRUDEAU

Letters

Three cups of me

DEAR EDITOR,

The allegations that big chunks of the book, "Three Cups of Tea" by Greg Mortenson, are lies is disturbing since it brings to mind other authors and journalist who "exaggerated" their stories for financial or personnel gain. James Frey released "A Million Little Pieces," a memoir of drug addiction and recovery. It sold millions of copies, Oprah praised it, but it was revealed that a significant amount of the book was fabricated. Stephen Glass worked for the *New Republic* and wrote stories that were hilarious reports on everything from Young Republicans gone wild to an incredible tale about a teenage hacker hired by the U.S. government. They were great stories but none were true. Jayson Blair worked for the *New York Times* until he was found to have fabricated quotes and plagiarized from other sources. Seymour Hersh's latest rambling and conspiracy laden diatribe alleges that the U.S. military's Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) has been taken over by Christian faith-based warriors. Hersh claims that "many in the JSOC are members of, or at least supporters of, the Knights of Malta... many are members of Opus Dei." He states he can prove it, but he is saving his evidence for his forthcoming book. Is it that important to be the big shot or a

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celebrity for these people, and probably many others, to fabricate stories and to hell with credibility? A soldier of fortune/journalist who writes for another paper never seems to miss an opportunity for self-promotion and has said a few things that I find hard to believe. A recent article proclaims his lack of fear is due to a good luck charm and how wartime Iraq makes him feel right at home. Fear is always there, I don't care who you are, but I like the quote by Mark Twain, which sums it up: "Courage is resistance to fear, mastery of fear, not absence of fear." Anyone who states they have no fear I stay away from since they tend to be reckless with their own and others' lives. I have always looked up to a few journalists who have been a

friend to the common soldier and have shared their trust and their hardships, serious hardships. Ernie Pyle, Marguerite Higgins and Joe Galloway are prime examples of this type of journalist. How many journalists are buried in Arlington National Cemetery where Ms. Higgins was laid to rest? (She was first woman to receive the Pulitzer Prize.) How many journalists are buried at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific and received the Purple Heart like Ernie Pyle? How many journalists received the Bronze Star for carrying wounded soldiers to safety like Joe Galloway? They have earned the trust, friendship, and respect of countless service men and women. If a journalist student was looking for role models and a journalistic standard, I think these are classic examples that modern journalists have failed to follow.

I hope Mr. Mortenson didn't have a movie deal in mind when he decided to spice up his book with blatant lies. He has done some great things in that part of the world and they will be the losers. Unfortunately his ego, an overactive imagination, and the lack of financial responsibility seem to have gotten in the way and exaggerated a great story into controversy, which should neither be tolerated nor condoned.

ERNEIE JAUREGUI
Norwood