THE WORLD'S MOST DISRESPECTED INVENTOR

HOW CORPORATE XENOPHOBIA (AKA THE NIH SYNDROME) QUASHES AMERICAN INNOVATION



BY
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The following eBook text is a truncated adaptation from a memoir-in-progress to be completed and published sometime in 2027:

"INNER SIGNALS

from the
CycleClimber Dude at the Green Satori Inn
a red county"

This story is rooted, condensed and adapted from the Inventor portion of the memoir, with little or minimal emphasis on the Innkeeper portion of the memoir.

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Intro: Literary preamble to a memoir-in-progress

The gleeful tenacity of the true inventor soul of the inner-child

Fulfillment of purpose should be life's greatest joyride. I've believed my own words most of my life, but I never really lived those words for myself, for real, until recently. One thing I've always been good at, and I'm getting increasingly better at day-by-day, is that throughout most of my 68 years on the planet, I am damn near unfazed by major personal adversity. I usually just laugh it off, let it go, then just gleefully move along on my way. It's weird, if anything, most of my life, I auto-reacted over those ever-so annoying everyday banalities that we occasionally encounter. i.e., "Agh another red stoplight?!? That's four in a row! Holy shit!"

It comes natural to me to continue to laugh away major life disappointments, as if I've inwardly known all along that many of my personal setbacks and heartbreaks were always destined to be felt and experienced wholly and deeply — thus warranting inclusion in some kind of future anthology of fact-based business short stories or something incidentally useful that others could surely laugh at and possibly learn from. Even if in what NOT to do, esp., when signing licensing agreements with behemoth corporations.

My inventor's journey could serve as a useful case study on what happens when a hyper-manic, green-minded, plant-based bohemian businessman tries to do everything solo, with no money and no credentials. No degree in kinesiology or biomechanics or exercise science or personal training or industrial design. Not even a gym membership. It certainly does not help to not be able to find and afford a publicist or an editor, or crowd-funding specialist, or social media advisor. I am sure that PR folks and film industry professionals alike, would surely exhibit a marginalizing under-their-breath snarl & snicker upon assessing my 33 years of poor man's blood, sweat and & tears. I prefer calling my last third of a century, "over three decades of poor man's R&D."

At the time, my many mistakes stung and made me wince with despair and anguish and inward self-ridicule. But now? Many years later, in retrospect? I think that my fun mistakes can be insightfully entrancing for others to laugh at and learn from and perhaps in some circles, maybe even entertaining enough for the big screen.

With great lucidity, I still recall the exact and funny way that former Bowflex CEO, Brian Cook looked when he made a cheesy or nerdy remark. Evidently, he amused himself as he replied to questions (even if trite) with what he probably inwardly thought of as witty retorts or a clever high-brow quip as he'd pat his flaccid belly, while feigning animated self-satisfaction and childlike delight. Much like the *Pillsbury doughboy*. Heh heh.

Years later, when I was still watching mainstream corporate TV news (pre-Sept., 2023) I looked at MSNBC's Chris Hayes on the TV and I burst out in loud obnoxious laughter. At that moment, a potential film scene screened (streamed) direct into my imagination retention center, only to be capped by yet another fun detour into my mind. Ha. Yes. There are several more (scenes made for the big screen) too, esp., ***the Ladies of Bowflex*** and ***Finding the CycleClimber postcard models.***

So this is around the same time the thought occurred to me, "whoa what if they aged MSNBC's Chris Matthews about ten years and added ten more centimeters to his pompadour? Ha ha. Yes, he'd resemble ex-Bowflex CEO Brian Cook! Ha ha. Seriously. I mean what if they made his high hair even higher, like Kramer on Seinfeld, or better yet, like Kenny 'Sky' Walker, the ex-Knick NBA slam-dunk champion from the mid-80s? Hee hee. I can see it."

Even though he is not an actor, I think Chris Hayes could pull off playing the former Bowflex CEO on the big screen, with the right make-up staff of course, to get the CEO Cook look down to a tee. Ha.

Yeah yeah, I get it. To an objective invidious humorless outsider, the audacity of me, a non-engineer, non-marketeer, to wholly believe that my half-life plight trying to get what I know and feel is the most efficient and must-experience total-body cardio

machine on planet earth, straight into the fitness marketplace, front and center, by way of a streaming movie premiere probably sounds both bodacious and delusional.

Luckily I'm fortunate to have learned how to auto-process and deflect negativity from others and handle my occasional bouts of adversity and testing my patience with focussed intensity. I think of adversity like a springboard that you must jump on hard right away, then bounce off and away, as if leaving adversity behind me. It is my way to reboot, turbocharge my energy and come back stronger. Like a humbled yet still hungry resilient champ that got knocked down hard on his borderline-cruiserweight ass to the canvas of life at a young enough age to eagerly jump right back up with a smile.

Selling books door-to-door for 80 hours a week for three summers on straight commission over 45 some years ago, prepared me well for busting through rejection and adversity like a hyped-up middle linebacker with a serious motor. Life is comprised of peaks and valleys. I have always loved the full-on exploration of every second of life way more than anyone I know. Why not amuse myself with incessant hyperconsciousness? Discover the why of the moment, then throw it away. Let it be. Ah, to merrily move on and simply avow and commit to *never allow* corporate news media blowhards to rattle and displace the innate calm that resides in the deepest recesses of my being with divisive fear-based, imaginary what-ifs and other paranoia-rooted bullshit that maybe hasn't even affected any humans personally.

Cutting out toxic blowhards and invidious cult-of-personality disinformation dispensers really is as easy and final as hitting the mute button on the remote. But it is okay to leave the video on with no sound. Heh. That is when my mind briefly starts playing the audio of a German Shepherd barking at the mailman everyday. Bark bark.

The mute feature on a remote has become a most important button to push when coming across the demonic, humorless glaze of negative regressive goons like Tucker Carlson, who *once defended their MAGA cult* against truth, fairness and the herd, with whatever means he has at his disposal. Harmony and equality for all are non-factors in his irrational, ratings-driven, self-serving corporate-first world. The hell with the greater good of the planet. Even in the short time that has passed, ***things are changing. 2026!***

The sheer inertia of one's daily positive energy (which should always be gaining momentum) never ceases to just bust through and barrel over those marginalizing, needlessly-cold, passive-aggressive, gaslighting, frowning eye rolls of the bully trolls of society, like a new bowling ball on beer night, obliterating those hard-headed bowling pins. Strike. Boom! The stoic, humorless pins (pinheads?) in the peanut gallery of life are knocked everywhere and into the gutter. Repeat, if necessary. Heh-heh. Metaphorically speaking, of course!

I am the kind of exceedingly enthusiastic, hyperactive, high-spirited dude that effortlessly irks the serious, bland, cynical ilk just by being too annoyingly hyper, energized, upbeat and happy all the time. Energy, energy, energy. When you add the ADHD and ENFP and Abstract-Random (all three are pre-hard-wired into my socio-cerebral and emotional assemblage) you end up with an organically gleeful, green-minded hyper Hispanic hippie manic maniac with an artist soul that no one really understands, and the accompanying unadulterated full-on-ness is often off-putting to others, esp., older, "slow-tawkin' slow-thinkin' conservative carnivores" who've never had a hobby or travelled to a big city, even if for a day. Yet, I know not why as I am sincerely kind to them. Of course, we should all be our true selves, yes?

"People who operate from outer signals will never understand those people who operate from ***inner signals.****"*
- Wayne Dyer

No surprise that *that* powerful Wayne Dyer quote I heard in in the late 1970s on some audiocassettes still abounds in me with mindful credence and eventually somehow morphed into my lifelong silent warrior battle cry. **INNER SIGNALS!** Yes, but even then, I knew to add the caveat, *"yes, obey one's inner signals – always – but only if the mission-of-the-moment and eventual end-game is noble or serves the greater good of the planet or humanity somehow and does not do any harm to others."*
They both go well together; to be green-minded, and to be acutely aware to try and not disrupt the natural order of things. Kind of like as a kid, I'd walk over an ant on a sidewalk, now I step over the ant, if possible. They are usually working hard, who am I to end them on the spot?

This partly explains why I've been paying on the dot com domain for "inner signals" for over a dozen years. In hopes that the timing for the someday I've long dreamed of will just unfold and reveal itself in my mind, as if to signal to my consciousness: My time is now. The day I openly avowed that I was really going to give my best, to pause, mellow out, and possibly sit still long enough to pen my memoirs. Ha. I said that? Sit down and pen my memoirs? Ha ha. What about my neurodivergent thought-processing affliction I call *multi-choice madness*? Too many things to put down on paper. It can be overwhelming at times.

Hmmm. To write about about a hyper lunatic dude that lives his life based solely on intuition, strong vibes, always accompanied by an eager expectation of love, laughter and serendipity every time he left the house? Or a disrespected inventor laughing at the behemoth in-house engineers that are irrationally consumed and creativity-challenged from a quarter century of subservient adherence to the same ol' same ol' focus group dictated mindset ? Or… maybe an absent-minded yet hyperconscious green-minded innkeeper living in a deep red MAGA county? Ha!

It feels natural, if not effortless to always be hyper and talkative and comfortable in my own skin even when around all extremes of humanity. It takes many years of living and being around all mixes of people to understand that one day you discover, ***"WOW! A single splash of instant-mindfulness can diffuse and disable those needlessly reactive hot-button conflicts from escalating."***

Presto. Like magic. Just one quick jolt of instant mindfulness will usually diffuse any potential ego-outbreaks or auto-reacting upon coming across nonsensical shit that has no effect on our day-to-day lives. In other words, No Fox News ruse for this hyper mindful ZonaCat!

It amazes me how certain news stations can just spew blatant disinformation and some folks just lap all the propaganda up, like misinformed rubes, as if gospel. Man. Do they not know or care that their news source had already been ordered to pay ¾ of a billion dollars for telling flat-out lies? No big deal. This is when cognitive dissonance kicks in, and in some cases always remains esp., if their incessant news searching consists mostly

of confirmation bias, designed solely to mirror their own bullshit.

After I took my 13-month-break from Facebook a few years ago, all kinds of positive and magical shit began transpiring and idea sprouts began germinating like wildfire. I even wrote down my "7 C's for Sustainable Happiness" and I made a Facebook reel soon after.

It blows my mind sometimes (only if I think about it) that I have 34 years out of my 68 year life fully invested in bringing a total body cardio fitness machine to market, that seemingly no one has even heard of or even knows or cares anything about in mid-2026. Even 1% of 1% of America (34,200?) is still about 20-30 times more people than there are folks that are estimated to have even heard of "CycleClimber." Sad. Surreal. But it just means there's work to be done. I have unfinished business. All I need to do is find THE ONE. This is the true fun. ***The road to disruption of an entire industry.*** The ultimate game-changing, home fitness breakthrough.

If I could hand all 34 years of my hard work that I've compiled for this cardio-machine start-up dream chase to any two people?! Lucas Bean and/or Guy Kawasaki! They are both entrepreneurial brainiacs, with an endless abundance of eclectic acumen, as well as a built-in, creative, outside-the-box, start-up mindset. I consider these two high-functioning executives, among the best start-up geniuses on the planet for any kind of business or media advice. They are both a rare breed indeed. Sadly, the start-up status quo in in the USA in 2026, is comprised of AI driven data, with template thinking, and an overemphasis on focus group data . But when you have a product or idea that must be experienced (hands on) to fully understand? Focus group obsession is not nearly all-encompassing enough to make an educated assessment on a potential disruptor to the home fitness industry. But I do respect the AI data. Wow! The A+ praise I got from a recent AI analysis on a single still picture was beyond any praise I could have fathomed.

Imagine for the past one third of a century, you've had with you, a dual-flywheel home fitness climbing machine, that you truly wholly believe with every cell in your being, is the most efficient total body cardio machine on the planet? Imagine giving your absolute best at contacting all the major players in the fitness industry going back to

1993, and now, in 2026, with a new twist (since Jan. 1, 2021) to the invention, yet not one person in the field of fitness has even given a single hands on minute, and in most cases, not even a half-minute video view. The view numbers on the CycleClimbing You Tube channel have not moved in months. Over a dozen years on You Tube and still single digit followers! HA! What other inventor has over 29 years between issued utility patents on something that most folks don't know about, and the ones that do, probably see as the same shit? Even when people type "cycleclimber" correctly on Google, they still get asked, "Did you mean "cycle climber?" No respect from Google, even when spelled correctly. Over twenty years of Google trying to dissuade folks from finding me.

Being the *Rodney Dangerfield of Fitness* is not so bad, because there is nowhere to go but up, thus motivating me to never quit and to always work harder. BUT! If someone were to call me a "Rodney who cried wolf?" Yes, then I would take offense. But I am sure after about a half-nanosecond, I'd surely dismiss it as wholly absurd, unjustified and clearly not true. If only people knew what my little proprietary tweak in the methodology can do, they'd be blown away too. It is truly a game-changer! That slight bounce from back side of the machine, coupled with the exact forward angle of the machine's frame. The general feel and the synchronized yet independent motion of the lower and the upper bounce are slightly different from one another. Recently, it took a few more years of trial and error experimentation to understand something.

When I used moderate 8" springs (so there is more bounce) the arms and upper body worked harder. When I used slightly stiffer 4" springs (equates to a quicker shorter bounce) the quads felt it more, because of the faster cadence. The lactic acid burn, as some people say. Both were okay, but for me, but I knew there had to be the perfect in-between. Yes. The 5½ inch springs! My wife and I both agreed and loved this last incarnation or most recent tweak the most.

I do not take the word, "disrespect" lightly. I know it is ugly. Like MAGA behavior. Abhorrent. Many of my all-time favorite creators and performers never got the respect that I feel they deserved. I mean, come on, Richard Burton and Peter O'Toole, a combined 0 for 15 in the Oscars? I am aware the latter was eventually awarded an

honorary Oscar. Also, no Rock and Roll Hall of Fame (or Super Bowl halftime invites) for Jethro Tull? Are they kidding?

For sure, the one metaphor that in my view best explains and illustrates the same roots of disrespect that I've received from a few fitness industry corporate behemoths is Capote and Kerouac.

It took Jack Kerouac just three weeks to write his classic best seller, "On the Road." He tapped into his stream-of-consciousness as he typed out the entire 155,000 word manuscript on one continuous roll of teletype paper in just three weeks.

Truman Capote famously quipped, "that not writing. That's typing."

It took Truman Capote several years to write his iconic best seller, "In Cold Blood." Of course, it stands to reason if someone does something in three weeks (i.e., write a best-seller with a 3-word title) that took you several years, there's bound to be some resentment. Capote was part of the high brow literary circles and the stuffy elitist society that comes along with such prestige and privilege. Conversely, Jack was the Beat Generation nomad. The outsider that showed up drunk on William F. Buckley's Firing Line Show. Maybe Jack was nervous to meet an oxymoron (conservative intellectual) like Buckley? Ha.

With me, it is the in-house fitness engineers who's creative freedom are often limited by the assignments they're given (i.e., build a rugged, non-mechanized treadmill — they're trending this year) in large part because of industry trends, focus groups, and flavor of the month thinking.

If Truman Capote was an in-house fitness engineer, maybe he would have said to me, "that's not inventing. That's experimenting." Ha. Apples and oranges? Maybe. But the roots of the disrespect? Yeah, same shit. The subtext is still rooted from the covert envy, or morbid desire to marginalize someone else's style, which may or may not differ from their own.

Hermann Hesse was right: *"If you hate a person, you hate something in him that is part of yourself. What isn't part of ourselves doesn't disturb us."*

I am not knocking what engineers (usually with an engineering degree) choose to do with their time and energy do to pay their mortgage or feed their families. Hell no. These are tough times. I am saying that their otherwise infinite inherent inventor's freedom and creativity (esp., the true creator's soul that embraces and feels the gist: *necessity is the mother of invention*) that resides within them, are often severely stifled by using their talents and energy on specific assignments which are often intellectually constraining and which may not be necessarily what drives them day-by-day to create what they're creating with unbridled euphoria-inducing passion!

I know I have two qualities that are stronger than most humans in these areas. My biggest strength, aside from tenacity, is curiosity hunger! The obsessive need to never ever stop a project until the EXACT FEEL AND VISION of what was crystalizing in my head, for weeks and months, matches the proof-of-concept EXACTLY. Not close. But spot-on. That is the big rush that electrifies my mind, and lights up my creator's soul.

A true 'EUREKA' or the 'Great AHA' are both attained by thinking, seeing (in one's mind's eye) and feeling a specific vision. The conceptual process escalates in energy, and yes, it also generates an ample and desirable euphoria.

Like ART! Art is the isolated image projection of one's own individual perception, yes?

So is inventing. When mass-minded folks have asked me if CycleClimber can go under the bed, I am quick to reply, "No, this is ART," however, in this particular context, I equate CycleClimber with my fitness acronym, for ART; Aerobic Resistance Trainer.

My seemingly endless manic highs, often bursting at the seams with an overflow of raw inspiration makes me feel like having to go to sleep is a lame, subpar option. When the adrenaline and nervous energy grows and grows, and the creativity feels like a whooshing whirlpool that does not stop, yeah, hitting the sack for some needed shut-eye feels like a necessary nuisance. After finally napping for a few hours, and

remembering that familiar exciting feeling of jumping out of bed like a kid on Christmas morning, to sketch a variation of a new design or a sexier incarnation of previous prototypes, are all back in my life. I feel beyond blessed when I feel this creativity-induced euphoria, return full-throttle.

Lucid memories of childhood creativity often abound in my thoughts. Memories from the mid-1960s, hearing my mom call my name in the back yard that it is getting late, I need to come inside soon. I'd be there out back in the storage room or tool shed, banging away on something with a hammer, or cutting up a board, etc… some kind of creative DIY project. During these years, minutes flew by like seconds. It would be 9:05 PM, then, five minutes to 10 all too quickly. It did not feel as though 50 minutes flew by. No. It felt like 7 minutes to my buzzing, hyperactive, curious, creative child mind back then. The act of conceptualizing, visualizing and building *some thing,* is a big high for a kid. I recall it was more fun than playing with my *Rock 'Em Sock 'Em Robots*. Really.

But this is what I mean by claiming that the act of creating something from scratch, conceived from an image in one's own mind, is highly enjoyable, and uplifting too. This is the creator's apex of euphoria. Manifesting the creative vision that resides in your mind, by fabricating something you feel passionate about, then building it with your own hands.

In the past two years, despite being at four big trade shows between 1997 and 2014, the quarter-century plus fitness industry adventure, that happened behind-the-scenes, is what's driving the catharsis that my wretched ENFP assemblage cannot resist sharing, if not for anything else but to set the record straight (and then some) on a machine that could save another person's life, as it saved mine. This is a story that must be told. A story that surely any inventor or creative person could learn a myriad of lessons from. Maybe even if only in what not to do, esp., when signing licensing agreements with behemoth corporations and trusting the actual spoken words of a longtime CEO of a fitness company which at the time was then becoming a two-thousand-bagger stock.

[In 1995, Bowflex shares traded for 7 cents on the Toronto Exchange. Fast-forward about a half-dozen years later, and add three successive 3/2 splits in the year between August

15, 2002 and August 14, 2003 and then factor in it trading in the mid-40s on the NYSE, or as high as $45.45 on May 1, 2003.]

It matters not that I have repeatedly challenged the corporate fitness marketplace status quo by explaining how, with the advent of strain gauges and power meters, I can prove that my dual-flywheel CycleClimber with spring-based oscillation is the most efficient total body cardio machine on the planet. Bar none. After so many years, I want and need to shout how my three-decade declaration about how two independent flywheels provide a far more efficient total body cardio fitness workout than any one-flywheel bike, is truly spot on and warranted.

I remain steadfast in my claims, not out of ego or being stubborn, but because my own machine has actually saved me from becoming just another old, overweight, aching body that I thought had lost all flexibility and elasticity. Boy was I wrong!

Of course as I calmly reflect back after so many years of encountering corporate template-thinking and seeing how certain in-house corporate fitness engineer's obsessively cling to focus group thinking, and/or what is currently trending, warrants public lambasting and/or shaming, I clearly understand now, first-hand, how the corporate NIH syndrome quashes new product innovation.

Just as the corporate news media (owned by a mere half-dozen behemoths) tell *we the people* what content they want us to buy and choose to show us, so too does the corporate fitness industry (also owned by a mere half-dozen behemoths) tell and show we the people what products and services they want to sell us and /or what's trending.

I can see obvious mistakes that I made that I can openly admit that I made. For starters, "to thine own self be true," might also be equally applicable to a machine too. Like people, machines have a specific and hopefully novel function as well. Different strokes for different folks. What is great for one person, might be an awful fit for another person. Likewise, maybe on one machine, the use of "inertia" sounds antiquated, as if used in some relic fitness bikes from the past. But this is not to say that using inertia is a bad thing, maybe just not the flavor of the month in certain mechanical engineering

and industrial design circles. This is why it is important to sometimes see the world as a child, with each moment anew.

The biggest mistake I made was that I listened to the words of too damn many of these so-called industry professionals and even my well-intentioned former co-workers from Bear Stearns LA, who I worked with for over a half-decade. This is where the real story begins. Actually, from a business school textbook standpoint, and or SBA Senior Advisor POV, I probably received safe & sound advice, which consisted mostly of, "find a big company in that industry, don't try and do it yourself, blah-blah-blah."

Over the years, upon coming across any retail fitness insiders, I'd pick their brain, asking how it all works, the bad side too. These corporate-savvy retail fitness dudes would reply to my questions with businessman jargon. Terms like "shelving" and "corporate cannibalism" and "the NIH syndrome" were Greek to me. But they warned me, they were real concerns. At the time, I chose to remain oblivious of this businessman thinking. I did not think it served me. I never really gave those words or terms any deep or mindful thought to even try and understand how and why they exist. Not until recently. Why now?

I got to thinking how many times I've read somewhere about a mega corporation screwing someone and then the person retaliates by doing something crazy, like adding to the mass-shooting statistics. Next thing you know, it is peppered all over social media and trending on newsfeeds.

Perhaps I should say even a "perceived betrayal" by a major corporation can result in triggering a toxic thought in a person who is a few beers short of a six-pack. A couple of years ago, on the news, some guy got crazy angry at Merriam-Webster for their updated definition of "girl," he said:

"The moron who created this fake definition should be hunted down and shot. I am sick and tired of these cultural Marxists denying science and destroying the English Language. Merriam-Webster headquarters should be shot up and bombed. Boys aren't girls."

That's crazy! Yes? But that's news. Reporting on the kind of glorification of the crazed and mentally-deranged types that inevitably equate to better reading fodder for the the corporate news cycle as a timely means for increasing their social media engagements, which also affects or can enable another increase in their ad revenue rates.

But when a person on the road to making their impassioned fitness machine mission come true, and they're publicly slighted by a mega corporation (thus falling flat in the eyes of a given industry) if they simply go back to the drawing board and come out of a long hibernation or creative sabbatical after building a better product, they're not even worthy of a media blurb. Why is that?

Yes, this is par for the course in 2026. I get it. I also understand thanks to a Google Ad Words salesperson I spoke to in late 2021. He actually said: "$10,000.00 will buy you 10,000 video likes." Once I told him there was no way I would commit to $700 a month, he refused to speak another minute.

The powers that be in the corporate news media publishing world are not interested in "quirky inventor yarns" or "entrepreneurial underdog stories," esp., if the story sheds a positive light on a new product that could serve as ample proof how and why two flywheels are clearly superior to any one-flywheel indoor bikes, for delivering a more efficient total body workout. Why is this so?

Because any news story about a potential breakthrough product that could possibly disparage (even if indirectly) the very companies that keep newspapers afloat by buying big ads all year long. In other words, if an offbeat or eccentric organic farmer has a breakthrough product that indirectly disparages Monsanto (a big advertiser) by what it brings to the farmer's table, then he can see his message or technology squelched or at least marginalized by the international behemoths, who might deem the new product innovation as a potential threat to their bottom line, esp., if sold to an increasingly hungry competitor that would know how to capitalize on the technology.

Just as there are only a half-dozen or so major news corporations that essentially choose to tell we the people what they want us to hear, or rather what their paid sponsors want us to hear, so too do the half-dozen behemoth fitness corporations spend big money promoting what they want and think the public needs to see.

This is partly why I quit all TV news cold turkey, back on September 19, 2023. I could no longer stomach what the corporate news was pushing. It was my 65th birthday. I had just dropped my wife and her friend off at the Binghamton bus station, where they would connect with a shuttle to fly out of NYC to spend a few months of rest & relaxation in their home province of Henan China. Upon arriving to my empty home (it was now just me and the cats for a few months) as I began feeding all the cats, I turned on the TV. Since the horrific events that took place on January 6, 2021, I'd found myself slowly getting caught up into watching this Ari Melber guy on MSNBC. His January 6th coverage of the insurrection was stellar, better than anything CNN was pedaling.

But on this day, Ari Melber was about to interview Bill Gates. I could not watch more than two minutes. He was almost pandering to Gates, as he went on and on and on, praising Bill Gates for this and that. Cringeworthy ass-kissing is what it was! BUT. He never said anything that I feel needed to be said. I was pissed. I grabbed the remote and turned the TV off. That was the last minute of TV news for me. *A defining moment!*

I already know I did not miss anything. I still look at newsfeeds though. I am sure that neither Fox nor MSNBC has done any coverage on news I want and need to read about. Like how unlabeled glyphosate is still in many General Mills foods (thanks to the FDA for allowing foods sourced from RoundUp Ready technology foods to proliferate) as reported by the Business Insider on May 14, 2019. This is serious. In 2015, the World Health Organization deemed glyphosate as "probably carcinogenic to humans." So, why is it still in many foods, with nary a label?

The act of creating what is in my head is what drives me. Hence, I gleefully continue full-on in my ongoing dream chase because the journey itself is what entrances and entertains me. This alone, is reason enough to keep me happy, fulfilled and plugging along. No one can take this unquenchable need of mine away from me, my need to tap

into my raw organic creativity daily, with child-like zeal, just for my soul's sake, and nothing more. Endless hyper-tapping into one's internal creative thought-processing, while externally streaming a creative vision of some kind or another, onto a canvas or screen or a piece of paper, is vital for a sane and mentally thriving mind. That's the pleasure deep within that drives me.

Of course, having exceptional high-grade gut bacteria helps, because I have long known I have gifted neurotransmitters as well as endless internal reservoirs of free-flowing serotonin that keeps on gushing, so when you add PRC (Pot - Rock - Cardio) to this already fully-functioning, full-throttle assemblage, heaps of unadulterated glee for most of my waking hours is the end sum. A good thing indeed. It works. The pot and cardio exercise are like the yin & yang, the former like the cool mellow moon, while the latter is hard core, in-your-face; full-on middle linebacker energy. Pleasure & pain. As for the rock, any music will do.

Despite both of my parents, my lone sibling, and my nine closest friends from junior high and high school all being part of the great beyond, the past 5 summers through 2026 in Cayuta, New York might all be among my top ten all-time best summers ever. Only the summers of 1981 (in Western NY) and 1983 (working at the Grand Canyon) warrant a higher "wow" that lives on in my mind's eye more than the past 5 summers. As I look back so fondly on that era, except for June 25, 1981 when I called my dad in Tucson, and he told me that Pete O my best friend at the time, blew his brains out with a sawed-off shotgun at the short end of Alvernon. "Huh? Dad?"

That one Saturday night phone call to my dad from a pay phone in a bar in Buffalo seemed to instantly obliterate any and all the genuine self-satisfaction I was experiencing from wrapping up having my best week of selling books door-to-door ever, at least up to that point of my third summer selling books for the Southwestern Company, now known as Southwestern Advantage.

What made these past few summers feel so special was partly because I have taken extended breaks off of Facebook, to recharge and refuel. I really believe that thanks to being such a shut-in homebody (in my favorite home ever with 10 cats and a wife) I've been engulfed in *love & family & creativity*. I got my first cat in the summer of 2005. This

is about half of what I deem a full-life. So, the first half of my life, I was a dog lover, but now that I know my childhood cat allergy is no more, I spend quality one-on-one time with each of them. All 10 of them, incl., 9 indoor and one outdoor. Three-legged, recovering diabetic Dempsey, with an overactive thyroid just turned 20, then sadly, Dempsey passed close to St. Paddy's Day 2026, with my wife in China. Yeah Dempsey, was named after the New Orleans kicker who kicked a then record 63-yard field goal that stood for 43 years, until 2013. But recently, I saw Dallas beat NY with a 64 yard FG. Times change. We are an ever-evolving species. I pay heed to the daily work (always an in-progress process) of my gut microbiome. Why? It has a huge influence on our moods.

The weed and cardio exercise helped me maintain the happiest 'round-the-clock mind-state, and thanks to *YouTube Premium* (I had for a brief time) and a Bluetooth boombox, I was rocking all around the house, abound with old happy hippy music memories. Jethro Tull, Wishbone Ash, CCR, the Doors, Jimi Hendrix, Lou Reed, David Bowie, Mott the Hoople, the Animals, Alice Cooper, Neil Young, Tom Petty, Pink Floyd, the Beatles, Kansas, Thin Lizzy. Traffic, Savoy Brown, Bob Marley, and Foghat. Rock on.

But this summer? Probably about every other week, for whatever reason, I have been getting all jazzed up and inspired drinking my lone cup of organic black coffee, as I just listen to the same band several times a day for a week or so and then I just move on. One week it is Bob Marley, the next it might be Willie Nelson with the Highwaymen, then Jethro Tull, even the Chick's "Not Ready to Make Nice," was my pump-me-up morning coffee battlecry, for a time, esp., coming into the the 2020 New Year when Bernie was leading in the Dem polls. But the past three weeks it is all 1960s trippy and euphoric, Moody Blues, like "Tuesday Afternoon," (extended version) and the Zombies, "Time of the Season, " and Strawberry Alarm Clock's "Incense and Peppermints." But the song that has surfaced as the ultimate ClimbROCKING music? From the 1974, double-live album (Where We All Belong) "24 Hours at a Time!" It is 13:32 long! Whew! As I am working out, I feel the energy of the great Marshal Tucker Band. Like a shot!

[Likewise, in my mind, I've been envisioning strange and wonderfully colorful and lucid 1967 imagery, as if retro stock footage scenes, as seen-from-a-hovering-drone, straight from Haight-Asbury and the Summer of Love. I picture myself wearing an Oculus Headset, with the trippy

late 1960's music. If I pedal with both arms and legs hard and fast, I soar into the sky, like an untethered Magic Carpet, I see the crowds of tie-dye hippies below getting smaller and smaller. If I pedal fast with just one of the flywheels, I am hovering over the crowd and I can see everything. I can also hover with two flywheels with moderate resistance going in relax cruise mode. If my CycleClimber machine had technology, If I knew anything about gaming and Oculus, I could see an unusual and fun mood-elevating workout to create from this interactive cardio imagery. Thanks again to the Moody Blues for giving me extended "Tuesday Afternoon" to just trip out on and sing to: "Something calls to me. The trees are drawing me near. I've got to find out why." I shamelessly belt out the lyrics, as I rise into the clouds above, with eyes closed, that kaleidoscope of tie-dye colors flickering in the foggy mist, just above the peace & love humanity regaling below. For me, this cardio imagery in my home workout sure beats the hell out of paying some instructor dude spinning his lone flywheel indoor bike, shouting at me, playing music I am forced to workout to.]

The best single song for a full-on 21-minute CycleClimber workout easily goes to the Outlaws' "Green Grass and High Tides" filmed on 11/10/78 at the Capitol Theater in Passaic, NJ. It is over 22 minutes long!

External critics and those always-gloomy faux-Devil's advocate naysayers (trolls of society?) have no place in the true creator's cerebral, soulful and artistic domain. Vacuous, divisive, invidious, killjoys always fade into oblivion. A planet comprised solely of this critic ilk cannot thrive. Critics are not part of the creator's dream innovation manifestation equation. They serve no noble purpose. They never have.

Negative nitpickers always look old for their age. Conversely, spirited creative types that are fully engaged and locked into an ongoing full-on brainstorming mindset, that never cease their quest to improving their labor-of-love, mission-of-the-moment, generally look far younger than their true age. Ah, but if they suddenly quit the pursuit of their dream, and concede and throw up their hands, thus allowing the corporate bullies and their plutocracy-loving naysayer peers to flush them down the toilet of adversity-marred also-rans (all of whom lacked the heart and resiliency to fight for their life as they crawled out of the cesspool of oligarchic waste and incidental small business casualties) the aging process will soon take hold of them, and they are not to be heard

from again. Sad. Yeah, I read the obituaries, more and more about people I knew. RIP to my increasingly growing number of my HS Classmates of '76. Both Salpointe and Catalina. I am seriously hoping to make the 50 year reunions of both high schools soon, just to catch up and mingle with those old classmates that are still alive and well.

Intuition does not need external substantiation to validate his or her initial claim because the end sum of the intuitive creator's impassioned efforts will eventually serve as the irrefutable ironclad proof-of-concept anyway. Pass or fail. This alone is ample. Besides, it always comes down to "fulfillment of purpose should be life's greatest joyride," thus making all else moot. The joy is in the journey. Like Lao-Tse said;
"The end is nothing. The road is all."

Are there not two means of gauging the success of a new invention? Financial and functional. Money is not everything. If a school janitor invents a new mousetrap that works better than any mousetrap ever invented, would this equate to being a success? Does it matter if he is an engineer or not? If the mousetrap performs as well or better than initially conceived, then it is mission accomplished, yes? In my view, the background of the school janitor should matter not. Maybe he just knows how to catch mice?

Gross sales and individual units sold are moot to the *functional success* debate. ART is the isolated image projection of the creator's personal perception. ART is also my acronym for **A**erobic **R**esistance **T**rainer. No. It does not go under the bed.

Is a non-fiction mockumentary an oxymoron? Doesn't 100% truth also have a whole lot to mock? Maybe more. Bingo! The Markomentary is born. A Markomentary is a docucomedy, that serves as a de facto video memoir, using readily available video clips to compile and edit to illuminate the funny yet painful truths one person has encountered in their travels and entrepreneurial journeys and artistic endeavors too.
A couple of years ago, I watched a four-part mini-series on HBO. "The Lady and the Dale." As far as inventor films go, it did not enthrall me quite to the extent that "Joy" and "Flash of Genius" did, but I cannot deny that I eagerly watched all four episodes, even feeling a light dose of giddy guilty pleasure as each episode aired, one by one.

Here was a four-part mini-series about an amazing concept car, but the car never even came close to passing proof-of-concept, as my total body cardio invention has (acing all 3 proof-of-concepts, after all 3 eureka moments prompted major design changes) in all those years. Do you have an all-time favorite underdog movie?

But of course, that mini-series was about so much more than a just a car that did not work. What made it more interesting for me (as with most films) was the the assemblage of offbeat characters. I opt for quirky character-driven films over action films 9 times out of 10.

How Ironic that Fox News' Tucker Carlson's father was featured in the HBO series, as a KTLA reporter intent on outing a trans person. Pffft. Fast forward over 40 years to the present day and his son, Tucker Carlson, is still intent on messing with transgender folks. I guess the apple does not fall from the tree is apropos after all. Of course this rather peculiar transphobia, exhibited by this father and son tandem reminded of me of a Hermann Hesse quote, *"If you hate a person you hate something in him that is part of yourself. What isn't part of ourselves does not disturb us."*

I am inventor/innkeeper in upstate NY. I am about twenty minutes, south of Ithaca, or 17 miles to intellect, heh-heh. I operate my life almost exclusively based on the proddings of my increasingly keener *inner signals*. In other words, my bullshit-detection radar is well-honed from over a quarter-century of listening to the hackneyed, snake oil spiels of self-serving corporate fools.

I 've made enough videos the past few years that in my view, speak for themself and potentially could knock the entire home-fitness market on its ear. If enough people were to watch, and get past the crude simplistic no-tech (minimalist?) look to just examine the fitness aspect of it, and look at the workout itself. The entire body is working hard, independently, yet totally in synch, with a surprisingly full range-of-motion.

In one of my self-made videos, I avow loud and proud, this incarnation of my dual-flywheel invention is my ultimate proof-of-concept "vindication." Yes, I meant "vindication" not "validation." In my view, my proof-of-concept validation came with

my first 1993 gorilla prototype. Hell, I have three very dramatic "before and after" pictorial shoots, on three different occasions, from 1992 to 2010 to 2022. There is no doubt that "*cycleclimbing*" is a novel, safe and efficient way to work the entire body.

For 30+ years, the stuff shirt fitness honchos looked at me with their closed-minded NIH mindset (Not Invented Here syndrome — abounding with skepticism that working out hard with two flywheels is easier than just one or the other) everso doubtful that some bloated ethnic clown off the street could invent a more efficient cardio workout machine than all of their R&D team. There is not an athlete in the world that would not be challenged, because of the two independent flywheels, each one with independent resistance to accommodate different body types. The upper flywheel assembly can be raised or lowered with a single knob. So imagine cranking the resistance on both flywheels on high, and telling someone to give their best to average about 60 RPMs? Of course, anyone would be challenged. High resistance with high cadence with one flywheel kicks most people's ass. Imagine that total body pump with two flywheels, with high resistance and pushing for 60 RPM for every crank rotation?

I have no engineering background. I have no formal study in exercise physiology. But I do have a plant-based, ADHD motor that is always locked into full-on-animal mode when doing cardio. My daily workout is biomechanically sound. I feel it with every circular stroke, I marvel at how I can control every aspect of the workout.

I know my body. I know what feels right. I have never had knee or ankle surgery. But sure, like a lot of my fellow 'class of 76' HS alums, in the past, I too have been obese and I've also had sciatica, Achilles tendinitis, golfer's elbow, etc… but now, in recent years, I feel like a lanky rubber man again. Extreme elasticity again like I enjoyed in my 20s. It's unreal. I feel better now than at any time in my life, incl., year 2000 when I was 41 with a 41 resting heart rate, living in Santa Monica. No kidding.

Here is what is so different and continues to blow my own mind. The automobile grade coil springs really are a game-changer. I mean, wow, the range of motion. I feel like a gazelle in the air now. As if the machine makes me significantly lighter and more springy too. I've always run up and down the stairs because it takes less time. But now?

I enjoy it all over again, like a kid that just moved into his first home with stairs. Really. I love the feeling every weekday morning I feel, upon dismounting.

Imagine if Andre Iguodala was a boxer playing man-to-man defense on Sugar Ray Robinson and then he instinctively starts catching or deflecting every punch thrown at him by the legendary Sugar Man. Speed. Mental clarity. Pffft! Feeling completely on the top of one's game! Both mind and body. Yeah! Iggy would have made one hell of a goalie too.

I want more and more. It is actually addicting. For sure, that is a first for me. All through 2021, I began upping my workout to 35 continuous minutes, times six days a week. Wow. I really never imagined that I could get up to 35 continuous minutes, six days a week, so quickly. Two flywheels, no seat, go faster, feel lighter. Like my gazelle-like dreams when I am jumping from rooftop-to-rooftop with grace and ease.

It is not just the increased energy (something most people say I do not need, ha ha) but the daily total body pump workouts shoots fresh oxygenated blood into seemingly every available artery in me. Wild. Whoa. I don't need to tell most guys what incidental benefits come about as a result of a full-on blood-pumping, daily 20-minute total body cardio workout. Heightened clarity too. The brain needs that oxygenation too.

However, since April 1, 2026, I flipped the switch too get serious again. While my wife was visiting her family this past spring, I got a tad stressed, thus lazier. My workouts waned down to 20 minutes, times four weekday mornings, except Wednesday. On the week of St. Paddy’s Day, I saw the mid-90s on the scale. NO! How?!

But just two days before both of my two class reunions, in late September 2026, I did it. The scale read **169.8 pounds** with 18.2% bodyfat. My weight at high school graduation in May 1976, I weighed exactly **170 pounds!**

Birth of an idea

As the autumn of 1992 waned into another unseasonably warm West LA December, I was a hyperconscious 34-year-old ADHD dude that was still excited to ride my bike 11 miles each way to work. I eased into my effortless early morning weekday routine like an ENFP maniac (aka the Keirsey "Champ" temperament type) as I woke up at a quarter after 4 to make my coffee and get ready to ride my bike from my Playa del Rey bachelor pad, then at 4:45AM, onto the dark surreal Ballona Creek bike path. Pre-dawn, or anytime before 5AM, that barren Ballona Creek bike path was spooky silent and hazy too, like a ghost town esp., with no bike light. Then came the grueling, penultimate mile of my commute; the Motor Avenue, off-the-seat climb, in Monte Mar Vista, until it abruptly came to an end at Pico Blvd., next to the Rancho Park golf course across from the MGM Studios. The memory is still lucid. That one-mile power climb kicked my ass. Esp., when looking back, I see how I much I loved that brisk and healthy 22-mile roundtrip bike commute to my job manning the front desk at Bear Stearns Los Angeles, which was then located on the 33rd and 34th floors at 1999 Avenue of the Stars in Century City.

Every weekday morning at 5:22, while I was off my bike seat (to generate maximum torque) cycling hard, working my way up that brutally steep one-mile ascent up and through Motor Avenue, I had a recurring creative vision as I pushed down hard on every grueling quad-burning pedal stroke. I'd ask myself repeatedly:

"WHY isn't there some kind of stationary workout bike that is vertically disposed, so that it also works the upper body, as if someone were pumping away — climb-pedaling their ass off as they're pushing hard, up and over a steep hill, like on a serious switchback up the Pyrenees? Suppose with their arms, they were also pulling themselves up and off their entire bicycle seat, and then up into the sky? Whoa. Nice. As if one was literally climbing upward (vigorously rigorously) and into the sky above on a dual-flywheel stationary Exercycle?"

On December 15, 1992, I made my first crude drawing of a big ugly yet fully-functional fitness machine that I believed would work from the get-go and could provide me with the exact total body workout that my mind was envisioning, thus would enable me to pump my blood hard through every cell in my being, to the full limit, certainly enough to satiate the strange physiological workout craving that my lanky, long-limbed body had long been pining for.



In short, the perfect singular total-body cardio workout. I wanted a full-on, continuous total-body-burn, leaving me gasping for breath. An efficient twenty-minute total-body workout with two flywheels — no seat — that leaves you with the desirable comfortable kind of addictive total body soreness and vibrational, inertia-driven, upper and lower body muscle pumping action that hyper healthy, overthinking, energized people pine for, cause more results in less time is just efficient and smart. I reasoned with myself how it makes total sense, hence, my hyper focus and obsessive thinking about this desirable vertical exercise methodology grew tenfold:

"The upper and lower body move independently of one another, so why not a flywheel for each one? Why not? Two flywheels going at the exact same RPMs (esp., if the resistance settings are tailored to one's exact body type) would surely make for a comfortable synergistic rhythm, with a full and steady range-of-motion too! Hmmm?!"

It seemed so obvious. But of course I had to make a prototype first. Okay, the drawing first, then build the machine. I walked a half-block up Pershing (the back street) to ask my neighbor friend Gina, to sign my crude inked-sketch as a witness to my first ever conceptual fitness machine drawing. Gina was busy cooking in her big ass rich folk kind of kitchen, but the gregarious bearded guy (the older dude she was dating that was sitting with her in her kitchen) who answered her front door, was all-too-happy to sign my drawing as a witness. Don Mills, Jr., son of one of the famous Mills Brothers singing group. Don worked at Oppenheimer at the time, so we knew some of the same Century City and Westwood stockbroker characters as Oppy had taken a few big producers from the Bear during this time.

"Hey, thanks for your autograph Don!"

"Anytime man. Hey, if this machine ever hits big, I can handle your investments, right?"

“Okay Don, ol' buddy ol' pal, you got it!”

My excitement to get started somehow possessed me to put the cart before the horse. I quickly found a metal fabricator in LA called *Paramount Rollform*, who agreed to build the frame and deliver the 400-pound monstrosity too; at the obscenely low price of $450. Barely over a buck pound, incl., delivery! Whoa-kay! I was excited.

But there was a problem. My little bachelor apartment was the only unit out of the 15 rentals in the apartment complex that didn't even have a designated parking space in the underground garage. Luckily, I was able to talk my compassionate airline pilot landlord into allowing me to temporarily store the giant frame (3.5” x 3.5“ square tubing with 3/16 inch wall thickness) next to the four-yard garbage dumpster in the parking garage which was secure. At least for a couple of months. All at my own risk of course.

After committing to having my prototype built from my crude drawing, I decided it was best to quit my job at Bear Stearns and move back to Tucson where patent lawyers, metal fabricators, welders and bike parts were probably a lot more affordable and accessible. Or so I thought anyway.

For nearly three months, the 400-pound prototype frame monstrosity just sat there in the underground parking garage, a couple of feet from the dumpster at my apartment building at 412 Culver, just across the street from my favorite westside dive bar, the Prince O' Whales. This is where I watched Pac-10 sports and always ate my weekend breakfasts. The crusty venerable baseball-lovin' ex-marine (DRILL Sergeant) bartender, Mike Moore, who worked Sunday mornings at the POW, also resided at my apartment complex. He saw the huge frame near our garbage dumpster and told me he thinks it looks like a DRILL press.

“Well... yeah Mike. I can see that. I guess. Heh. See, right now, it is just a crude metal frame. You just wait until I put two 20-inch BMX bike wheels inside that frame. Then, you might get it.” Sad update; RIP to the late Mike Moore who passed June 18, 2024.

Farewell to LA & the road to finding a licensee & acing proof of concept

My co-workers at Bear Stearns where I was employed for five-and-a-half years were surprised that I was quitting my front desk job and moving back to Tucson just to have the prototype finished. What I didn't tell them was that my resignation and relocation back to my hometown was also driven in large part by the overall life stress of just living in L.A. It seemed both laughable and ironic that I moved out of LA exactly one week after the Michael Douglas film, "Falling Down" came out at the movie theaters. I was excited to watch it. The opening scene in "Falling Down" depicted the exact same way I felt sitting in the endless traffic-induced stress of LA, which was making life increasingly less fun for me.

Once I was back in Tucson, for the interim for money, I worked several menial jobs; from working retail at the AT&T Store, to helping my old buddy from high school, Rob Hudman, lay flagstone in the hundred-degree Tucson sun. Dang, what was I thinking? Both jobs robbed me of my otherwise, free-flowing organic inner-child glee.

After the patent search was conducted and the the patent application filed in mid-1993, the utility patent was granted in August 1994. Perhaps I was thinking way too big (if there is a such a thing) when the first name that came to mind to contact was Phil Knight and Nike. I never did try making that phone call. When I searched within and asked myself why I never followed through and wrote Nike, I'd always rationalize, "I know, they're a sneaker company, but hey, a fella can dream can't he? But still... imagine... what IF Nike were ever to go into the fitness business? Wow. I can see it now! Verti-BIKE by NIKE anyone? Cool. Oh Yeah!"

There was an old machine shop located near the base of A Mountain, just west of downtown Tucson. The owner of the machine shop, David Booth, recalls knowing my older brother Gary from our old Jefferson Park neighborhood, from our grade school

days. Small world. Even in the 1990s, Tucson was still a small world, esp., after being in LA for 9 years.

The machining modifications that Booth did on the aluminum channel resulted in over $2,000 worth of work and materials. It blew my mind that the few pieces of aluminum channel that I had machined, cost considerably more than the entire frame fabricated by Paramount Rollform. Whoa. Maybe I was wrong? Maybe LA was cheaper than Tucson for getting a prototype built?, Perhaps because they do more volume? My initial reasoning? Tucsonans earn lower wages than Los Angelenos. But I also remember that the University of Arizona was about to have a great football team that season. The UA athletic department dubbed "93 as the year to see."

[After all, just a few months earlier on November 7, 1992, the day before my only niece turned a year-old, Arizona got revenge on the defending co-national champions; The number #1 ranked Washington Huskies lost; 16-3. Desert Swarm shut down Purple Storm, thereby ending their 22-game winning streak, while dashing their hopes for another national title. A co-worker at Bear Stearns I'd often chat with, Jerry Ross had a son, Jeff, that was a walk-on at AZ. Before leaving LA that November for that game, Jerry told me ahead of time what to expect. Billy Johnson up the middle. He was right. But Josh Miller, the punter was the MVP off that game. He kept UW backed up all day long. After Arizona's big win, I even kept the voice of my all-time favorite football voice, the legendary Keith Jackson was the color commentator for that game, for my answering machine for two years after that game. Anyone who knew me, knew that if they heard Keith Jackson's voice, they had the right phone number for me:

"The celebration is on at Tucson Arizona! With 48 seconds left to play in the ballgame, the Arizona Wildcats are on the verge of winning the biggest football game in their school's history. 16 to 3, over the top-ranked Washington Huskies!"

The thought of powder coating my beast of a prototype never crossed my mind. Instead, I'd just bought a couple of cans of black enamel spray paint from the midtown Standard Brands Paint Store. Semi-gloss. Black is black. What really counted for me was the actual moment of truth. The pass or fail proof-of-concept moment.

Would this big ass contraption that was conceived in my head, really work and feel the exact way I envisioned it on those early morning commutes biking up that Motor Avenue hill?

The moment of truth came and indeed, my first workout on the *GyroGlide* (as I called it back then) felt oh-so right, esp., when the upper crankset was extended slightly above my head. Yeah! A success. A functional success anyway.

The first person that I contacted was local Tucson businessman and lawyer, Burt Kinerk. Kinerk was a respected name in Tucson, not just for being a long-time Tucson attorney, but he was also the sports agent for the former NBA star and 1989 Wooden Award Winner, Sean Elliott. Kinerk showed up with Scott Thompson, another respected Tucson name, affectionately known to most Tucsonans as the founder of Arizona Health and Fitness.

In short, Scott told me that while my beast surely delivers a challenging total body workout, it was still at a very rough stage, hence it still needed extensive refining and testing. I agreed.

Something Scott said that I that silently dismissed (but I still respected and understood *in theory*) was when he explained to me how moving the arms straight in front of you back and forth is how physical therapists are taught in PT rehab applications. I should have spoke out loud and firm — then and there. But my insecurity at having zero credentials (while he had impressive formal schooling in this area) evidently must have suppressed my usually quick-to-blurt-out ENFP spirit.

What I should have said:

"Yes Scott, that's true, BUT this workout actually defies common sense and logic in that the higher I have the flywheel, the easier it is, because now my bodyweight, coupled with gravity and the inertia of the upper flywheel that's assisting on the pull-down, so this makes it easier than straight ahead. When your arms are in front of you, straight-ahead, it seemed much harder than high, above the head, where gravity seems to assist in some way."

This also partly explains why it is easier to pedal both the upper and lower body together, in unison, than using just the upper or lower flywheel by itself. It goes against common sense. In fact, it seems that a case could be made that with two flywheels, having your arms in front of you is not even climbing. No. You are simply moving your arms in front of you in a rotary motion, like for physical therapy in rehab, when you might use an Upper Body Ergometer (UBE) for certain rotator cuff rehabs, which is a fine and dandy exercise, but if you think about it, it is not really climbing. **A seated climber is an oxymoron.**

The first company that I wrote to in hopes of being offered a licensing agreement was Soloflex. I truly marveled at their simplistic, wood & metal & rubber, total-body machine that looked more like a minimalist exhibition or an award-winning art gallery creation than it looked like an unusual total-body workout machine. I'd always admired the full page color ads featuring my brother's favorite NFL player, Gale Sayers. The iconic Chicago Bears running back was the print model spokesman in the fast evolving overly glossy, color print brochures, back in the early 1980s. There was a time when supposedly, 1 in 7 US homes had a Soloflex brochure, albeit it was about a decade later.

In fact, after working at Hermit's Rest at the Grand Canyon in the summer of 1983, I bought a Soloflex machine. My dear mother was so proud of me that I'd saved enough money from a minimum wage summer job to buy such an extravagant home fitness machine. *"Uy, Markitos, I'm so proud of you."*

What my mom didn't know was this: The only reason I was able to save enough cash from my summer job at the Grand Canyon was that my brother found me a pound and a half of Mexican weed for just $600 (which motivated me to take a Greyhound Bus to Tucson, on my weekend off) so even at $75.00 for a puffy looking ounce, it put the other two greedy, profiteering pot dealers (who were selling regular Mexican pot for $95 an oz!) clear out of business. Even in 1983, greed pissed me off.

Just 8 years earlier, Mexican pot was selling for just 10 bucks for a generous, full, four-finger lid in Tucson. When all was said and done, my first and only stint selling weed

resulted in a hefty profit, close to a thousand cash. I sold mostly quarter ounces at $20 a pop. It worked out for me even though one dude stiffed me by summer's end. Not bad for someone that did not know anyone going into my lone summer working at the Grand Canyon. My penultimate day at the canyon, I hiked 49 miles, rim-to-rim-to-rim in exactly 24 hours. A manic journey indeed.

I was bummed however that it would take up to six-weeks for my Soloflex machine to arrive. Back then, they would build the machines in Oregon, one by one, but only after getting the money for the order first. Build to order. At the time, Soloflex did not have a cardio machine companion to pair with their flagship Soloflex machine. The Soloflex *rockit* would debut several years later.

Sadly, my 1993 letter to the Soloflex founder, Jerry Wilson, resulted in a "thanks, but no..." reply. My next letter to Bowflex also resulted in a "thanks, but no..." letter as well. This time the rejection came from Bowflex executive, Sandy Wheeler.

As months would pass, I would try and generate interest any way that I could. In 1994, I pulled up in the front of my old high school (Salpointe Catholic – same HS that current NFL 3rd year RB Bijan Robinson attended) and I spoke to the head football coach, Pat Welchert. As I did, Pat had also sold books door-to-door for the Southwestern Company (they later rebranded to Southwestern Advantage) for several summers, so both of us having that brutal book field experience in common, made Pat easier for me to approach to get some needed feedback from. I respected Pat's feedback because I recall in his own HS class of 1978, he was a first team all city middle linebacker, and the dude weighed just 165 pounds his senior year. He had a killer motor. It probably helped him kick butt on the book field too, where he came in 3rd overall in the Education Division in 1981, selling books in upstate NY, near Jamestown, the hometown of comic icon, Lucille Ball.

I pulled the old brown Ford pick-up truck in front of my old HS gym (really in front – on the sidewalk!) the same little high school gymnasium where Savoy Brown and Fleetwood Mac played live in March 1972. I had to give Coach Welchert credit for being

fearless as he just jumped up onto the bed of my old brown Ford and he gave my unsightly *Gorilla prototype* (the nickname it would be called) a brief yet serious whirl. He agreed that he could feel that it provides a full workout, but he also commented on the crude demo prototype – telling me that while it certainly it does not bother *him* (he likes rock solid functional commercial grade stuff) but it is rather big and heavy with all of the metal, so it probably needs a lot more refining to get others interested in it.

"Oh yeah. I know that. I know it's ugly. But if you think about it, machines are kinda like people; What matters most is fulfilling purpose, how they do what they do, more than their actual outward appearance, or solely based on how they look. But you're right, I know people care about shit like that. Heh-heh. Thanks Pat. Or coach."

"Hey, good luck."

"Thanks. Go Lancers."

Also during this time, I found needed inspiration from a random phone call to the Arizona Wildcat football team's head athletic trainer (the first female Head Trainer in NCAA Division I sports) Meg Ritchie. Meg was a two-time Olympian, and a wholly respected athletic trainer. I called her on a whim. I was all nervous and shit. Ah, but it was inspiring to me that she was so encouraging and she offered me some kind and supportive words. My twenty-minute chat with her on the phone was like taking a shot of instant confidence.

Defining moment at Arizona Stadium

The one bad thing I forgot about Tucson was the hot sun. But not really about how hot it got, but rather how *long* it stayed unbearably hot. On the afternoon of November 11, 1995, a random unexpected lucid life-changing defining moment became yet another luminescent inner signal that I could not ignore.

I was sitting in the North end zone at an afternoon Pac 10 football game with my old buddy, Mike Esposito. The Oregon Ducks were playing the Arizona Wildcats in an afternoon game at Arizona Stadium. I was drenched in perspiration. Esposito couldn't believe how hot I was as he saw the sweat dripping off my face. Then he saw me donning a glazed, almost hypnotic expression as I kept staring down at the field with melancholy eyes.

He finally asked me, "What's up man? What?! You wish you were playin' or somethin'? Or are you just sad because this is Bruschi's last game at Arizona Stadium?"

"Nah not that, but yeh, we'll miss Bruschi. Of course! I was just looking at the green on those O Duck uniforms, see? The greenest green (pants) you ever seen, yeah? So the thought hit me, hit me hard – for real – just how dang lucky those Duck dudes really are. I mean win-or-lose, they're going to be able to just fly back home to Eugene, a short flight after the game, and then? They're back to that cool, green, beautiful countryside. Win or lose, they won't be sweatin' tomorrow."

I actually half-jumped out of my seat, almost forgetting where I was.

"WHY NOT ME?! MIKE, I'M MOVING TO OREGON!"

Espo laughed it off.

Sure enough, just over a half-year later, on Memorial Day 1996, with my dog Sabre at my side (a 10-month fling with a bad mommy with a bad habit did result in a special canine gift from a couple I met at a barbecue) I drove over 1,300 miles to Salem Oregon. I was lucky that the Penske 1 moving truck I drove, only had 335 miles despite having Ohio plates. It looked brand spanking new to me. It must have been towed to Tucson from Ohio. I still was blown away that it really had 335 original miles. WOW! On a one-way rental?! Killer deal. Best I ever had.

Thirteen months in the great northwest

I moved into the exact same apartment complex in West Salem that was on the apartment guide cover sent to me by the Chamber of Commerce, the one that said, “PET-FRIENDLY.”

After signing the six-month lease in the apartment office, just behind the Safeway that was across from the Willamette River, I saw two regular looking party type dudes sitting outside smoking cigs having a beer. I seized the moment:

“Hey, do either of you guys wanna make 5 bucks in 5 minutes no kidding?”

Ha ha, even with a humungous special hand truck and three of us dudes, it took exactly five minutes. We were all sweating our ass off. They both agreed, that was the hardest five bucks they ever made - even though it took just five minutes. Holy shit, we thought the wooden stairs were gonna break. The wooden stairs creaked on our every step. At the time, scary shit. We were glad when it was over and the Gorilla prototype was in my new upstairs West Salem apartment.

Several months later, November 22, 1996 to be exact, I remember watching a big national TV game in my apartment, staring intensely at the large plastic soda cup in my hand, the “A” in Arizona's logo jumped out at me.

“The A, of course! The A!”

After watching every minute of that impressive double-digit win over the top 10 Tar Heels, I quickly began sketching my new “A frame” design for what would become GyroGlide prototype #2.

Everything happens for a reason. By the end of 1996, I already knew that *Stackhouse*

Athletics in Salem was not in the manufacturing or marketing picture. By then, it was apparent they were not a serious candidate for manufacturing my machine. No, not even my next prototype. It is not what they do. I understood. Making a soccer goal frame is way way different than engineering a vertically-disposed, dual-flywheel, stationary bike, with moving parts, and all.

Nonetheless, I was still grateful to the elderly executive from Stackhouse Athletics in Salem that I had been speaking with, as he was kind enough to give me the name of a metal fab guy who lived out in the country – the far NE end of Marion County. He was known to do quality freelance metal fab and prototype work.

Sure enough, even as I pulled into the driveway, I could tell right away, it felt right. But after seeing all of his beefed-up motorbikes and chrome-plated hot rods I don't know what he thought of my faded *lemon yellow* 74 Corolla Wagon pulling into his driveway. Not much I reckon. Ha.

There was even more of his impressive work on display inside his shop. The young man showed me his private metal fabrication shop inside his makeshift barn-turned-garage and there were some wildly colorful and creative projects of his metal work, esp., of the various shiny, eye-catching, chrome hot rod modifying variety. I was sold. The dude knew his shit.

I showed him my crude pencil sketch that again like the first prototype, featured a pair of twenty-inch, plastic BMX wheels, but with solid rubber inner tubes (the kind you can run over nails in alleys) that would be smooshed up against a pair of Performance Bicycle wind-rollers.

In a way, this gave each flywheel two kinds of resistance. The wind rollers provided minor resistance, but tightening the resistance knobs pushed the rollers into the rubber tires. The more the rubber inner-tubes got distorted by the rollers, the more the resistance. Crude, yet functional. By using slicks, it cut out some of the whirring noise. But the wind rollers, while noisy, did add a much-needed fan-cooling element to blow some light air towards the face. I loved that.

A short time later, upon picking up the frame, I was exceedingly pleased. The total cost was $800.00. I was proud. I did well.

New Years Day 1997, I saw what surely seemed like an omen at the time. Bowflex appeared on a ROSE BOWL COMMERCIAL! Later that day, on the phone with my mom, I told her about the Rose Bowl commercial and how I probably made a big mistake saying no to Bowflex in 1996.

My rejecting Bowflex, came less than a year after they said no to me. Wheeler the executive said no to me, but CEO Brian R. Cook said yes. But I later found out that 2% of net collected sales was not so bad.

It mattered not. I trusted fate. Once the regular 1996-97 Pac-10 basketball season finally waned into the beginning of March Madness, I had a delightful growing feeling that the Arizona Wildcats were special. Even though they lost the last two regular season games in the Bay Area, I felt something special was about to happen. Not that anyone in Portland cared. Ha.

Unbeknownst to me at the time, on Day One of the 1997 NCAA basketball tournament, I began a superstition-driven tradition. Just before I headed out the door and got on my bicycle and headed down to Claudia's Sports Bar on Hawthorne in Portland, I'd pet my dog Sabre, on the forehead, and the small wooden Buddha near the TV set too. I was wearing my red Arizona Final 4 t-shirt from 1994 Charlotte underneath. I wore my 1994 Fiesta Bowl sweatshirt over the t-shirt. The latter was my favorite bowl game I ever attended. Arizona's Desert Swarm defense stifled the Miami Hurricanes all day long, final score Arizona 29, Miami 0!

When I got to Claudia's, I was damn lucky to find the last bar stool. It was half-broken. It wobbled. It almost seemed unsafe. I took my chances. Those first two come-from-behind, grind-it-out games vs defensive-minded South Alabama and the College of Charleston gave the young Wildcats a chance to grow up fast.

Next came the number one overall seed, Kansas. The Wildcats were 2-0 whenever I

patted my Sabre dog on her head, then the wooden Buddha head too, and wore the same Wildcat t-shirts, and I also had to sit on the same wobbly stool at Claudia's. Of course I had to choose that wobbly bar stool again, even when several other stools were available for the Sweet 16. Kansas was the top overall seed when my scrappy hungry young Wildcats held them off 85-82!

Finally, it *appeared* my beloved Wildcats were in their 3rd Final 4 in school history. Just at that moment, I jumped out of my wobbly bar stool and I yanked off the Fiesta Bowl sweatshirt to reveal my red Final 4 undershirt, for everyone in the bar to see. I yelled out, "WE'RE IN THE FINAL 4! WHOOH YEAH!"

THEN?! Just at that exact second, some dude named ShammGOD from Providence makes this out of this world three-point shot to send the game into overtime. Yikes! I spoke too soon. My heart felt like it stopped. Luckily, the underdog Wildcats, the 5th place team from the Pac-10, would be the first team in history to knock off three one-seeds en route to winning it all, and they did it with a freshman point guard, Mike Bibby, but Miles Simon justifiably won Final 4 MOP. I watched all six March Madness games and the entire Arizona Wildcat championship run in that same wobbly stool. I petted my dog and patted her head as well as the Buddha's head too, for all six games, as I left home to get on my bike. Whew. Superstitious traditions can be exhausting.

Yet, part of me was wondering what the streets of Tucson, esp., Fourth Avenue must have been like at this grand moment. I felt like a spirited and inebriated solo clown feeling an ephemeral case of existential vacuum abound with die-hard Wildcat emptiness with no fellow Cat fans nearby to share the ecstasy of the moment with. I knew that my longing for Tucson was brief. I was all-too-aware of that dreaded morning-after heat, that scalding sun, in your face. AGH! No thanks.

Because of this grandest of all Arizona sports fan years, the 1997 Cats would be a new standard for me to strive for. Metaphorically speaking, to be full-on fearless in facing or attacking whatever task I need to do to complete my mission. Let no force stop me.

But for now, the feedback I could receive from the IDEA Personal Trainers from the 1997

IDEA show would be invaluable to me in honing the workout itself, to make it safe, fun and user-friendly.

I finally talked myself into it. Okay, the IDEA Show, in August, in Anaheim. That would be the show. I still had so much stuff to get ready. I did the math. I knew right away there was no way could I keep my graveyard security job at the Portland Hilton, get me and my prototype both shipped to Anaheim, and then get back to Portland, inside of a week, and afford it all. No way. I was a poor dude and I knew it.

I had no choice but to move back to Santa Monica. Evidently, my entire 13-month move to Salem and Portland, was to meet a SWEET girl named JANE? Maybe I've listened to Lou Reed's "Rock & Roll Animal" one too many times? Maybe the essence of the name *Sweet Jane* sank into my head, via repetitive sensory osmosis. Jane was very sweet and she taught me all about compost heaps and all of the many reasons why composting is good. She was right. There really is no need for coffee grounds, banana peels and eggs shells to end up at the landfill. Thanks *Sweet Jane* for planting the composting seed in me.

I really never thought of me and Jane from Salem being broken up. Just being away from each other temporarily, while I tackled an important creative entrepreneurial mission. But when I pulled the Penske moving truck in front of her Salem home, with my dog at my side (Sabre loved Jane) there was a definite sense-of-forever-good-bye, a somber, thanks-for-the-memories, woeful feeling that came over all three of us. Sad farewell.

During that final month in Portland, while I was employing some serious deliberation regarding my immediate destiny, I got a job offer from across the Portland Downtown Hilton, where I worked. The esteemed Heathman Hotel offered me a job as their in-house security. The big allure for me, was that I would have worn a nice blazer, with different combinations for my work attire. No more tacky uniformed security guard polyester crap. Polyester is my number one most loathed invention. Ha! It always has.

As I was leaving the interview, upon being told I would get the job if I wanted it. I was

still feeling flattered, energized and elated. Then? There, standing there in the main lobby of the esteemed Heathman Hotel, was none other than: Spalding Grey! The dude was one of my top 10 solo performance icons. I preferred the performance energy of Eric Bogosian and John Leguziamo far more though, as they were more engaging solo performers, and their characters were a lot stronger. But somehow Spalding Grey could just sit at a table, with a glass of water, with an air of pomposity, and read aloud through a microphone from his massive text and he could hold the attention of the audience like no one else. But for the most belly laughter I ever experienced watching a live solo show of any kind, I'd have to give the nod to Jackie Mason, "The World According to Me." My God, my abs were sore the next morning, as if I did 475 sit-ups and 125 ab crunches. *The same comfortable ab soreness.*

Anyway, I saw Spalding Grey standing there, and I've long known to respect celebrities and give them their privacy (I usually do) but this time, I chose to walk right up to him.

"Excuse, aren't you Spalding Grey?"

He smiled smugly, his nostrils even flared slightly like Ali McGraw's did in "the Getaway" with Steve McQueen.

"Yes."

"I just wanted to tell you that I really enjoy your work. Of course, I loved 'Swimming to Cambodia' and 'Sex and Death to the Age 14' too, but… 'Monster in the Box' was really special."

Again, he flared his nostrils slightly, then he smiled, and said, "Thank you."

As I walked away from him to head for the front door (the spot I was standing where I first saw him) I turned around to him, and I spoke out:

"By the way, I too, am working on a 36-character one-man play."

Oh my God! His reaction reaction totally cracked me up. It was like 180 degree change-about face. No more humble nostril flare-outs. He gave me a look that was more like elitist disbelief, as he slowly said: “Oh really?”

“Yes. Really. Take care.”

At that exact moment, I felt like Jack Kerouac saying “take care” to Truman Capote. Ha.

The IDEA FIT Trade Show & Return to LA

I knew I was damn lucky to know of a lady friend in Santa Monica that just happened to have a spare room in her backyard, near her swimming pool. It was a humble guest room and I had to walk across her pool to the cabana to take a shower. But at $400 a month, such a private and scenic backyard guest house set-up like that (esp., in Santa Monica) was a steal!

All I needed to do now was to get some flyers and a trade show banner made. Then, get my prototype powder-coated and just hope that my old five-hundred dollar 1974 Toyota Corolla Wagon that I towed from Oregon, would make it to and from Anaheim for a couple of days.

A couple of weeks before I left Portland, I met with an industrial designer who had been highly recommended to me. I was impressed with the spacious offices, a lot of glass everywhere, and not too far from the Burnside Bridge.

The frail effeminate casual guy was professional, confident and he truly looked the part. He was assumptive, spoke smooth and fast. Everything he said was matter-of-fact like.

“So... here's what we do. After one week, we show you three rough drawings. You choose the one you want to go with. Then, the following week, we give you the CAD drawing.”

“How much?”

“Uh... $15,000.”

Whoa. I was blown away at the time. Damn, that is more than most lawyer retainers. That is more than every patent fee and prototype cost combined, that I had incurred up to that point. If I had an extra 15 grand laying around, I'd already have been in business, esp., seeing that the young Salem dude can make a frame for $800, incl., materials and labor. Wow. I passed. No way was $15,000 for a single CAD drawing an option for me. Whoa. No way.

Soon after getting settled in Santa Monica, I called Kristina K, the most striking and modelesque LA woman that I ever knew well-enough to call. Even though I once took her as my date to the Bear Stearns holiday party, she was out of my league for even thinking about. One of her ex-BF's was a former Arizona Wildcat hoops star that played in the NBA. I was comforted that she was still genteel and girly sweet to me when I called her out of the blue. She explained why at the moment, she couldn't pose for a fitness machine flyer for me, but she did recommend her friend, the lovely Alicia V, who, as things turned out, I thought was almost too professional and lovely for my crude b&w flyers anyway.

My lame last-minute flyers with graphic-design-challenged paste-up layout, epitomized ugly, old-school and crude. But what was most noteworthy about that old crude b&w GyroGlide flyer was this line from the last paragraph that would become my battlecry to shout out to the world for the next quarter-century:

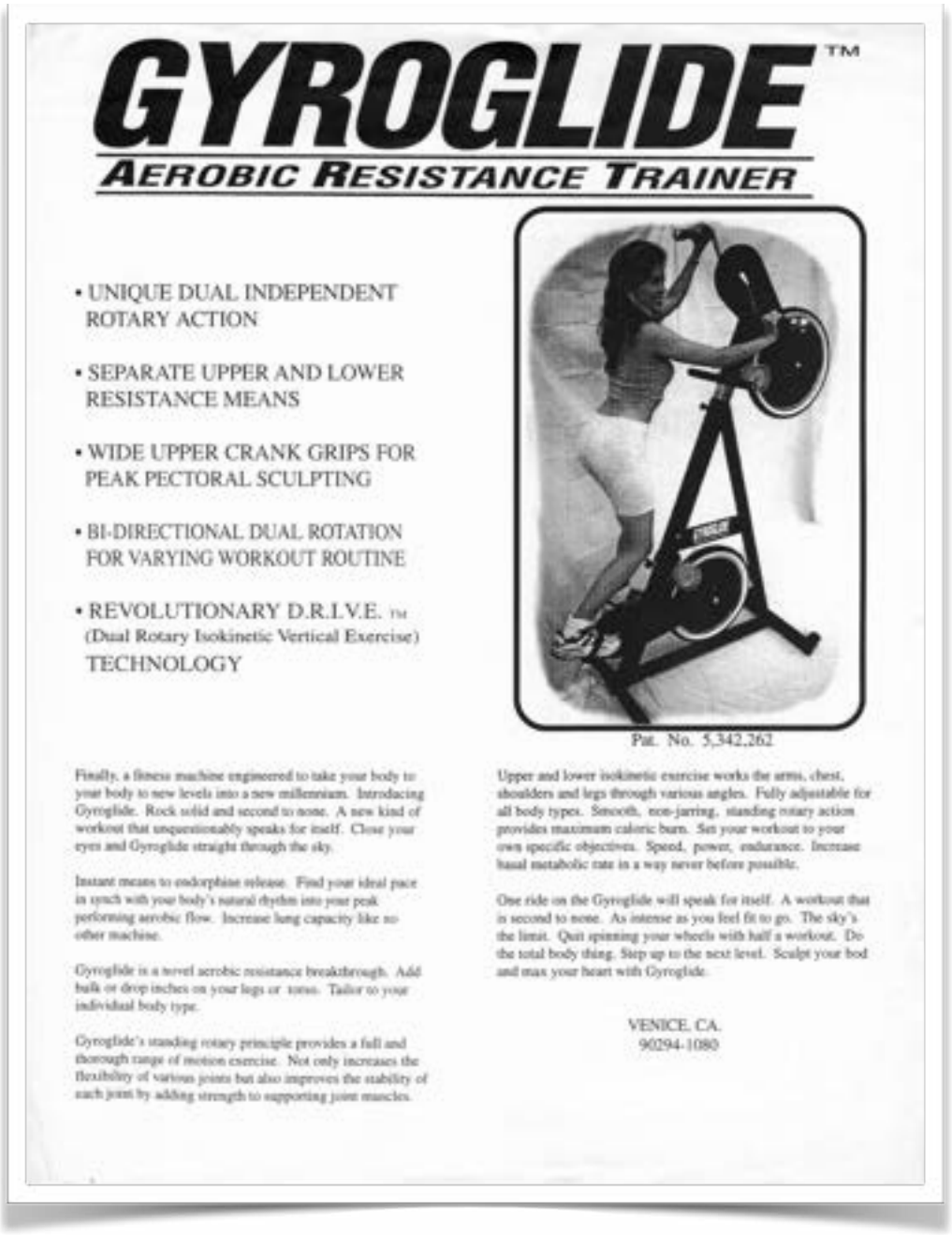
“Quit spinning your wheels with half a workout. Do the total body thing.”

Perhaps I should have said, “My battlecry shout-out to MY world.” Sadly, MY world, is not big, with nary one person of influence in it that’s able to help make big things happen. Oops. Ha.

When all was said and done, the old 74 Toyota Wagon held up and I was happy I did the IDEA trade show, despite there being only three real highlights for me.

One, there was a short stocky (double-wide-muscular) mid-30s black dude, that was reeking of bourbon and second-hand weed smoke. He stood, froze and stared at the

GyroGlide, then he whispered to his hottie girl that he was intrigued. He approached it and jumped on it.



GYROGLIDE™

AEROBIC RESISTANCE TRAINER

- UNIQUE DUAL INDEPENDENT ROTARY ACTION
- SEPARATE UPPER AND LOWER RESISTANCE MEANS
- WIDE UPPER CRANK GRIPS FOR PEAK PECTORAL SCULPTING
- BI-DIRECTIONAL DUAL ROTATION FOR VARYING WORKOUT ROUTINE
- REVOLUTIONARY D.R.I.V.E. TM (Dual Rotary Isokinetic Vertical Exercise) TECHNOLOGY

Pat. No. 5,342,262

Finally, a fitness machine engineered to take your body to your body to new levels into a new millennium. Introducing Gyroglide. Rock solid and second to none. A new kind of workout that unquestionably speaks for itself. Close your eyes and Gyroglide straight through the sky.

Instant means to endorphine release. Find your ideal pace in synch with your body's natural rhythm into your peak performing aerobic flow. Increase lung capacity like no other machine.

Gyroglide is a novel aerobic resistance breakthrough. Add bulk or drop inches on your legs or torso. Tailor to your individual body type.

Gyroglide's standing rotary principle provides a full and thorough range of motion exercise. Not only increases the flexibility of various joints but also improves the stability of each joint by adding strength to supporting joint muscles.

Upper and lower isokinetic exercise works the arms, chest, shoulders and legs through various angles. Fully adjustable for all body types. Smooth, non-jarring, standing rotary action provides maximum caloric burn. Set your workout to your own specific objectives. Speed, power, endurance. Increase basal metabolic rate in a way never before possible.

One ride on the Gyroglide will speak for itself. A workout that is second to none. As intense as you feel fit to go. The sky's the limit. Quit spinning your wheels with half a workout. Do the total body thing. Step up to the next level. Sculpt your bod and max your heart with Gyroglide.

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Within 85 seconds of him getting on and finding his rhythm, a small crowd gathered. You could see the dude working the *GyroGlide* fast and hard with high resistance. He really made the wind-rollers whirr so loud. That is what drew the small crowd in. But man, was he winded! Inside of a minute and a half, he was whooped. He admitted, *GyroGlide* kicked his ass.

Another highlight came from a 68-year-old anesthesiologist from Nashville who was recovering from rotator cuff surgery. He actually pulled out his checkbook. When I told him, it was just a prototype, he gave me his contact info. He went out of his way to tell me that he really loved it. He loved that you could stand on the ground and use the upper crank as a stand-alone, upper-body ergometer too. He wished me the best of luck in bringing it to market.

On the final day, I was also fortunate enough to meet Tessima Shifferaw, the true original inventor of Bowflex, a man that I both admired and respected. He got on my machine, and he quickly found his rhythm. I will never forget when he said with his slight foreign (Ethiopian?) accent; "I like this cause this is a complete total body cardio station. It can do many things for all your cardio needs."

"Wow. Thanks."

Then, as he was walking away from me, he added, "Oh. Brian Cook. Good man."

"Oh? Okay. Thanks. I'll remember that. Take care."

For sure, the most disappointing thing for me looking back at my first international trade show, was the rigid closed-mindedness of so many buffed, European bodybuilder types to just jump on a machine that was something new and different. No child-like spontaneity. None. As if they were all too buffed, too big, and too cool to get down to some full-on, full-body, inner-child-pleasin' serious cardio fun. Ha.

In fact, on the final day, I felt downright disillusioned when I saw a half-dozen German bodybuilders all lined up at a table that had Spandex sportswear on sale, straight across

from our booth. For 90% off?! I couldn't even get their attention when I jumped on the GyroGlide and gave it my all. Okay, while standing in line, maybe one of them might have glanced up at me for a second, and flashed me a perfunctory thumbs up, as if feigning giving me an "A" for working so hard. Heh.

But their fascination with Spandex really was wholly amusing to me. I mean these were big buffed dudes. But Spandex? Ha. Really? I never would have guessed this.

If I were more calm, rational, and less manic and last-minute, I probably should have waited a year and gone to the IHRSA (acronym for International Health Racquet Sportsclub Association) trade show in 1998, but there was a part of me, that was overly eager to see other people from the fitness industry get on my machine and offer whatever feedback they were willing to share. I knew I would attend IHRSA when the time was right, probably correlating with when and if I actually had a product to sell.

Another high point, at the time, was when I met Craig Garza, who at the time, was still with Star Trac Fitness that was in nearby Tustin. He was a nice and friendly guy, who was employed by Star Trac, who in fact, borrowed that same prototype for a couple of days to see if the workout was something they wanted to explore more and possibly develop. As it turned out, they would pass, but I was grateful for the experience and to Craig Garza's proactive efforts on my behalf.

During this time in August 1997, I also made contact with one of the most colorful, enthusiastic, informative, positive, creative inventors I could have hoped for. Umbert Ciccolella.

Umbert was the inventor of the Reebok Studio Cycle. I knew very little about the Reebok Studio Cycle or Fitness Associates, but the fact that they were in Santa Monica, made it too tempting for me, to NOT pop in and introduce myself and say hello. It was still a very small company. I think they did a million dollars their first year in 1996.

I walked in and I asked to speak to the head guy. Upon telling him why I was there, I asked him if he had a quick second to come and look at a very different kind of

stationary bike. Umbert was more glad to walk outside and see what I had in the parking lot. As soon as he saw it, he was so excited. It was comforting to me. His eyes widened like a contestant who had just picked the right door on "Let's Make a Deal."

"Ohhh…. I love it!"

He eagerly called all of his colleagues to come see. His enthusiasm lit up his staff. On the spot, he even said that he would present my idea to the folks at Cycle Reebok (who had given him the green light for a new cycle product) to see what he could do.

He later informed me that the folks at Reebok deemed CycleClimber a fitness product, not a cycling product, hence, it might interfere with their new (at the time) Sky Walker machine that had just been launched. He actually said they told him, "cannibalize" (metaphorically) which, as you know in marketing, refers to the loss of a product's market share to another product from the same company.

But still, his enthusiasm and positivity gave me huge confidence boost during this time.

A choice of beach resorts

Still, it was a start for me. The start of a journey. On the road to making my dream come to fruition. But having no money was real. The major immediate dilemma for me for August 1997 was deciding between staying at the hotel job I had just started (graveyard shift PBX switchboard operator) or going across the street to work for their main competition.

As silly and shallow as this might seem (to others) despite me being offered the night manager job at Loew's Santa Monica Beach Hotel (after just one month on the job answering late night calls?!) I declined the offer to instead take the humble overnight PBX switchboard job at Shutters on the Beach, for two reasons, and two reasons only. At Loew's, yeah, I could don a full beard, but I had to maintain short hair. At Shutters, I could have long hair (if pulled back into a ponytail) as long as I stayed clean-shaven. No problem there.

But the other reason was the true clincher.

At *Shutters on the Beach*, I was promised Friday and Saturday nights off. This was beyond huge for me, esp., for Day One. Conversely, at Loew's, I would have had the dreaded Sunday and Monday nights off. Whoopty doo. Even Santa Monica was a ghost town at 11PM on Sunday night, except for the Brit pubs, like King George's, and Ye Olde King's Head. The Brits partied hard and into the late hours, even on Sunday nights, at least in Santa Monica. I always loved that about the Euro pub crowd. It made someone that had Sunday nights off, feel like they too, have a place to go for beer, music, ladies and random festivity. Sunday night should be the exclamation point on a great weekend. Esp., for those who live in the now.

I still missed the old *Mucky Duck*, the greatest Sunday night dive bar on the Westside ever. I marveled at the full and pouty lips of the petite gal from Wales that always hung outside with her gorgeous, yet cliquey Euro pub girl gal pals that all spoke so bloody funny. Sadly, all of them were smokers. Sigh. But for sure, she was the most striking and

cutesy and humble. Similar to how Odeya Rush looks today, but with a Welsh accent. Whoa. I'd make her blush with sweet words, but she was too shy to actually go on a date with a full-on gregarious live-out-loud nerdy, lanky hot-blooded Americano. Dang.

Eventually, a sweet old grandma came to Shutters asking for my PBX graveyard shift cause she babysat her granddaughter, by day. No way could I give up my schedule, unless... Yes, between me and the grandma and management, I got... what to-this-day, was my greatest work schedule ever! Graveyard, 11PM to 7AM, Sun., Mon., Tue., then one HELL DAY. A split-double shift Wednesday, incl., one swing. After getting off my Tuesday graveyard at 7AM, Wednesday, I'd have to walk home (along the beach of course) and be back by 3PM. Brutal. But the grand reward at end of the dual-shift Wednesday labor tunnel, was getting out at 3PM on Thursday afternoon. With a three-day party weekend, meant that I'd have three great wild nights to party in a row (Thursday, Friday and Saturday) and I could still watch Sunday night football too. Yahoo.

"GOOD MORNING! *Shutters on the Beach Hotel,* how may I direct your call?"

A licensing agreement at last

Finally, it happened. This time Bowflex said YES to me after I had previously said no to them. This time around I was even okay with the part that said: "2% of Net Collected Sales."

The minimum royalty was a paltry $10,000 a year, to be paid out in four $2,500 checks every quarter. In today's numbers, that translates into $20,000 a year, for minimum royalties.

In short, the licensing agreement stated that either party could cancel within 30 days notice in writing, and they would agree to perform their:

"Reasonable best efforts to develop, market and sell."

Those words summed up the entire licensing agreement.

They quickly sent for my *A-Frame prototype* to be crated and shipped out to their Vancouver Washington headquarters to test and study. A short time later, they flew me out to the same Vancouver offices and I would show them how to use it.

I recall feeling somewhat proud as my prototype was now sitting in the boardroom of the corporate headquarters of a company that just a year and a half prior, had their first million dollar sales month and their growth was mind-blowing ever since, thus their obvious need for a second cardio companion to their flagship Bowflex machine, was growing quickly.

The second the familiar Bowflex model and VP of Marketing, Randy Potter walked into the conference room, he had a disdainful curmudgeon scowl on his face. Like he didn't know what to make of my machine. Like a moody kid that frowns at people and things

he does not understand. As he approached it, I offered to get up and show him how to use it. Instead, he just waved me off like a housefly, blinked dramatically twice, then he boldly got on it like a teen who was dared to jump off a cliff into unknown waters, but who must now finally face the music and walk the walk.

After a few seconds, he got the resistance settings right where he wanted and he rode. Inside of 45 seconds, he was totally winded as he got off the machine. He dismissed his out-of-breath experience as simply as, “I'm not a cardio guy.”

Well, that was not a good sign. The former Soloflex print model, and the recently appointed Bowflex VP of Marketing was “not a cardio guy.”

So, what next? As I was told, they would make their own state-of-the-art prototype to show around to gyms to get much-needed marketing feedback from people. Focus group type crap.

Going into 1999-2000, there wasn't any progress for them to report to me, although it was during this time, that Bowflex discovered they could not use the name: ***SpinClimber*** because of *Mad Dogg* and *Spinning*. No surprise to me. That made total sense. In my mind, this was fine by me. To add “spin” to “climber” sounded like my machine was trying to be what it is not. Related to a group-minded fad, like a wannabe. But CEO Brian Cook was dismayed nonetheless.

Randy Potter exhibiting such irrational disdain for me and the my prototype was a yellow flag, as was Cook's dismay at being unable to use the name (SpinClimber) that he really wanted. But looking back, the one thing that I did not see as a bad thing, was the one-hour video from Easter Sunday 2000.

Earlier, in one of our phone calls in early 2000, I said to CEO Cook, “But Brian, he (Potter) was winded after 30, 40 seconds! I am 41 and I do over one continuous hour every single weekday morning!”

This was when Brian asked me if I could make a video of one of my hour-long workouts to show them. Of course, I was game for the challenge. I was ready. I was ten pounds below my HS graduation weight of 170 pounds and I had my darkest tan since Mazatlan Summer of 1968.

Even when I ran the 1989 LA Marathon, I still was unable to get below 170 pounds. For several months of training (up to 37 hard running miles a week!) I could still not crack below the 170 weight barrier. The ultimate wall for me for many of my running years.

In all of my months of boxing training to prepare for the 1987 Diamondback Invitational Amateur boxing tournament in the City of Commerce. The lowest I could get was 171 pounds.

[Because I was 6 pounds over the middleweight limit, I was 7 under light-heavy. Oops.]

Every Monday through Friday, I rode for one-hour, at 5:30AM. But in actuality, I did dismount a few times in the hour, but just for a second, enough time for me to crack open an icy cold can of Coors Light.

Even at 5:30 AM, I usually drank three cans of Coors Light during my one-hour workout. But for the Bowflex video, I would limit myself to just one can of Coors Light (instead of my customary three cans for the hour) so I could ride the machine for a continuous sixty-minutes, without dismounting. No problem. For music, I had my 70-minute, Bob Marley Live CD, "Babylon By Bus" ready to blast.

By Easter Sunday 2000, I was down to my lowest weight of my adult lifetime, I stayed at 159-161 lbs., with 9-11% body fat. The fittest phase of my life. I have no idea how many calories that 300 weekly minutes of cycleclimbing burned, but it was a lot of light beer calories. In the thousands.

Australia, here I come!

I had a 41 resting heart rate. Like a pro athlete. But I also had my darkest beach tan in 32 years and it was only the second time in my life that I sported a beard, for more than a month. Growing my hair out was a first since HS. During this time, I was preparing for one of my Bucket List goals; To perform a one-man play in an Australian Fringe Festival. I knew I could rent out the iconic *Powerhouse Theatre* in Santa Monica in late summer 1999, to prepare for performing in the land down under. A plan. A goal.

When folks would ask me, “why Australia” I would reply, the Aussies remind me of Arizona. I mean, “both start with an 'A' and end with an 'A' and they both are adept at recognizing fluff and bullshit.”

So... I thought. Ha ha.

During this transition to a new millennium, I began piling up credit card debt. I would have been okay if I just quit after the Melbourne Fringe Festival, but nooo, I already had my sights set on the more massive Adelaide Fringe Festival, which was every other year back in those days.

The three weeks in Melbourne in October 2000 really left me wanting more in 2002.

Even as I entered the Melbourne Fringe, it came down to the final minute of the final day of the postmark deadline. I was at the Post Office in the Venice Beach Circle. It was 5:29 PM on a Friday, sweat was running down my face. I looked like a nervous, disheveled, amateur clown.

Once the postal clerk assured me it was postmarked, that was it. There would be no turning back. Truly, a defining moment; as if checking off a big box on my Bucket List. Aussie Fringe Festival? Check.

I felt lucky that I was able to find a quartet of very nice mid-20s Aussie vegetarians to rent a room from in Kensington. In short, I got to know a lot of great people and see one of the best, if not the best city on the planet. It blew all of their minds at the end when I departed and I said I was 42 years old. For that whole month, they claimed that they thought I was around 30, a couple of years older than all of them. I felt humbled and shy. Okay I blushed and thanked them.

To prepare for the 2002 Adelaide Fringe, I did three-nights of performing and honing my show at *Zuzi's Theatre* in Tucson. I was reminded of how much more cutting and editing of performance material I still had yet to do. My entire monologue text was close to 20,000 words. Oh shit.

The second trip to Australia was even more entrancing and magical than the first. After staying a few weeks in North Adelaide, I found places to stay for free, more than once, all the way into my third month. One dear lady named Annie, upon hearing I was from Tucson, asked me if I knew the Molly's TexMex band?

"Hell yeah, I know them. I love their music."

As it turned out, the Molly's stayed with this nice lady named Annie, so as a result, she let me stay with her for a couple of weeks in her Cowandilla home because someone from her family was out of town. She liked that I stayed for two weeks. After Annie's home, I got to stay with these two brothers in Bowden, who really loved to party and they knew their wine. I partied hard and met some really wild locals. Adelaide's Gaslight Bar was more lively and loud than Santa Monica's Gaslight! No relation.

After a few weeks with the Bowden brothers, I received an invite for a few weeks from a horny 26-year-old blond, in Moana South Australia, a most lovely beach town about 45 minutes out of Adelaide. That was another three weeks. A fun fling with a healthy and horny sexually-deprived blonde horticulturist (she was a workaholic – no time to meet anyone) was good for my esteem and my down under memories too. Besides, she had the same name as my favorite film, "Rebecca." When her mouth was closed, she looked eerily like Kat the Shutters concierge that served as my Bowflex licensing

agreement notary that electronically sent all of my Bowflex paperwork back to them for me.

Actually, Rebecca was 8 years younger and more interesting, more attractive and amorous than the mid-30s Shutters concierge I kind of once pined for *(albeit briefly)* yet I know not why. As long as Rebecca's lips stayed together, the resemblance was really uncanny. But if Rebecca opened her lips, it revealed she needed dental work, hence, clearly not in Kat's league. But neither of us cared. Fun was all that mattered.

I felt so guilty. Like a shallow rogue American heel for thinking all about an old notary, beach hotel concierge that never even liked me when here I was in the Land of Oz, dining, while having morning breakfast after having marathon sex the night before, with a 27-year-old blonde that wanted me more than any other woman, up to this point in my life. Gee. If I allowed myself to really go with the flow, I could have cancelled going to Melbourne and Sydney and I could have just stayed with Rebecca in Moana and had endless beach house sex.

But Seb (one of the Bowden brothers) had already invited me to ride with him on a trip to Melbourne, and he even waited an extra day or two. But it was hard to say bye to Rebecca. When joking with her, I loved the way she said with her Aussie accent, "aw fok off."

Once in Sydney, on my second day, I found myself in the wildest small world scenario I ever could have fathomed. I was at a blues bar in Bondi Beach. As I was ordering a beer at the bar, an attractive amiable plumpish mid-30s, brunette Asian-Australian (Australasian?) successful, professional lady introduced herself to me and asked me if I'd like to join her and her friends. I looked over at her booth and saw a couple of regular Aussie bar blokes who seemed cool and friendly enough.

As I joined them at their booth and we all got to introducing ourselves, the older gentleman of the group mentioned he was from Queensland, so I spoke:

"I know one guy in Queensland. He owns a cafe bar. Ric's Bar."

The older gent, who introduced himself as Roger chirped in, “I know Ric. Very well.”

I was stunned. “Oh my God. Are you serious? You know Ric Frearson? Whoa. Small world.”

As it turned out, Roger's roommate was at a jewelry buying show in India, so he had a spare room in his house. I was down to my last 10 days in Australia, and I was lucky enough to be offered a free room and Roger who cooked great breakfasts and knew all the sights in Sydney was elated to play host for a few days. Lucky again.

As Roger showed me the living room, he pointed out a beautiful oil painting hanging above his living room sofa, featuring a guy and a girl laying on the beach, with a bottle of champagne between in between them. I stared at it with genuine admiration.
Roger saw my admiration for the painting, he said,“Ric painted that.”

“Whoa? No shit? Man. That is nice work.”

As it was also April 1st, 2002, the idea for the grandest of April Fool's jokes popped into my quick-thinking, seize-the-moment mindset. Roger loved the idea too. I called Ric in Queensland, told him I was in Sydney and I was in a Thrift Shop and I saw a painting with a guy and girl on a beach with a bottle of champagne and it looked like his name on it! Boy was he fooled!

Then? I handed the phone to Roger. April Fool! We got him good. Several days later, I was back in Arizona. I knew I would miss Australia. In fact, I even wondered if I would ever set foot in the land down under ever again. Time would tell.

For sure, this trip to Australia showed me something. Both Melbourne and Adelaide are beautiful, gorgeous cities to live in. I loved them both. Melbourne had a great music and arts scene. But when it came to cannabis, sorry Melbourne, the folks in Adelaide have you beat! Better weed, they smoked their buds in a pipe, as they’d ask, “Wanna smoke a cone, mate?”

But at the parties and the Fringe Festival related events that I went to in Melbourne, I was shocked that a lot of the Melbourne potheads, smoked their weed with tobacco?! What the hell? Nasty!!!

I knew few kids back in high school that did that a few times, but I usually passed. Yuck! As I sat in the bathroom of the Sydney Airport, I decided to look into the little zipper pouch in the front of my backpack. Whoa. I found several cannabis roaches. Of course, I took them out and flushed down the toilet.

Several hours later, the plane landed in Tapei Taiwan, it was just a brief 45-minute layover. They announced to all the passengers, there was enough time to onboard there airplane and grab a snack or beverage.

The exact second I walked into the Tapei Airport, I saw a scary sign, that said, anyone caught in possession of drugs, could be sentenced to DEATH! Scary. Of course, I was glad that I flushed the roaches down the Sydney Airport toilet.

After sipping and enjoying a black espresso in the airport, I knew I had to rebound early, to be on the safe side. As I saw the security guys at the gate (they saw me a half-hour earlier ask where to grab coffee) I walked up to them, overly eager to let them search my backpack. I was cocky, I even hammed up the moment by saying to them:

“I know I know. I fit the profile. You’ll gotta do, what you gotta do, yes?!”

They looked at me, as if to say, “okay wise guy,” as they waved me on to board the plane, neglecting to look at my backpack.

Many hours later, as I was in the hallway bathroom to the Ocean Park Motel (this motel had affordable weekly rates but the showers were like dorms, down the hall) I was again in a toilet stall, with my backpack in hand.

As I unzipped the zipper pouch, I froze. Holy shit! I found two more, stinky & smelly roaches, that were somehow, trapped behind the hem or seam, that lines the bottom

pouch of the backpack! I froze. I began thinking.

“Whoa, IF those security dudes at the Tapei Airport had decided to check my backpack, who the hell knows what might have happened? I was lucky! If I were a tad closer to them, they would have smelled the roaches too. Weed roaches stink. Whew. I lucked out.”

A couple of days later, I was at a pay phone in Santa Monica, I left my little black book at the pay phone. It had every name and phone number of everyone I knew. Passwords too. I was saddened I would never get to stay in touch with the Bowden brothers. Sad.

Evacuating the Arizona wildfires leads to Oregon

I felt so blessed that after all that time having fun in Australia, I still had an Arizona hideaway to come back to. My parent's second home in Lakeside, was just the place for me to rest, gather my thoughts, and create a solid game plan.

The 2002 Rodeo-Chedeski fires in Arizona were the worst in Arizona history at the time. A picture of the horrific fires even made the front page of the USA Today that summer. Over 455,000 acres burned. Even though Lakeside was not anywhere close to the actual fire, there was a time the fire began spreading exceedingly fast, and it was coming right towards Show Low.

It seemed surreal seeing the huge black smoky mass in the sky growing closer and closer. I actually heard the soundtrack to the movie, Jaws playing aloud in my head, while all this was happening before my eyes. Even residents in Lakeside/Pinetop were advised to evacuate. We were supposed to tie a white rag on the front door doorknob to show the cops we had evacuated.

Even though I was so comfy and I didn't want to leave the White Mountains, I saw opportunity here. Two of my favorite festivals were happening in just a few weeks. Both festivals were favorites of mine, both were wild, festive and fun with a ton of ladies.

The Oregon Country Fair, was the granddaddy of hippie festivals. Near of the end of the Country Fair, in Veneta, the following weekend, as law enforcement was conducting THE SWEEP (law enforcement's way of telling everyone PARTY IS OVER clear the area – NOW!) I knew my window of opportunity to get invited by a vendor to the after-party was slim to none.

I had heard so much about this special country fair after-party, but it was for fair

vendors or their guests only. So, as everyone was being pushed out, myself included, this lovely late-teen redhead began talking to me. I asked her about the after-party. She told me to stay with her, and she will get me in. I was so thankful. When I told her I drove from Arizona in hopes of experiencing this legendary after-party, it struck a sincere and concerned chord within her. I was so lucky. But this reaffirmed to me, an old lesson. Never give up. Even when things look hopeless.

The teen Bohemian redhead got me in. I never saw her again. The first humans I talked to were a young couple selling tiny wooden stash boxes on a table in front of their trailer. The sign read: "Two for $5.00 or one for $20.00"

Upon asking them what the catch is, they were quick to smile and tell me:

"The one box for twenty dollars has something in it."

"Ah! I see. Okay then."

Of course, I smiled back and I bought the $20.00 box with the cannabis bud in it!

Back to the Portland Blues Festival a week earlier. As usual, the Portland Waterfront Blues Festival did not disappoint. I drank and danced the entire day. From start to finish, just as I did the previous days. These outdoor live blues festivals were my thing. Sheer fun. Dance, dance, dance. Like the countless Santa Monica Twilight Dance Series every Thursday summer night at the SM Pier, I preferred going to these things solo, so as to not be encumbered. I was free to go wherever I was drawn to. Esp., with two different stages. I marveled at how I could walk a couple of football fields and BOOM! Another band was already set up and commencing to play.

The ladies of Bowflex

The best way to cap the final night of waterfront blues festival fun was to end up at the famed *Candlelight Room*, an iconic downtown Portland blues bar. Some of the musicians from the blues festival would spontaneously just show up, play some sets, sometimes even just for a round of drinks. A fun time always. As much as I hated cig smoke, I overlooked this at the *Candlelight Room* because it was part of the ambience threaded into its live blues history as if ready and able to be the backdrop for a great movie scene or something someday. The whole bar was always abound with colorful, bigger-than-life characters too.

So... after talking to a trio of attractive older ladies (okay maybe a year or two older than me) for a couple of minutes and I discover: THEY ALL WORKED FOR BOWFLEX EXECUTIVES! Ho ho, what are the odds of that? One of them even knew my name because her boss was Rod Rice, the CFO, who's signature appeared on my quarterly royalty checks. I felt embarrassed. She knew about my meager $2,500 checks that I received every three months. HA! The fact that she recognized my last name led me to believe that Bowflex probably didn't have licensing agreements with a whole lot of other inventor dudes out there? Maybe? That was what I'd hoped for, at that moment anyway.

I also recall vividly at that moment (just as I then headed to take care of business in the men's room urinal) standing in the bathroom of that smoky old bar, I began thinking intensely inwardly, “should I ask the three ladies about the current status of my deal with Bowflex? Have they seen the hundred-thousand dollar prototype? Or... is this one of those times, I keep my mouth shut?”

An ADHD-ENFP dude feeling festive and good after a full day of drinking and dancing is not a good candidate for keeping his mouth shut. Upon returning to our table, I finally spoke of the *elephant in the room.*

“So... have any of you all heard anything, or at least seen the prototype?”

The next five seconds were inwardly horrifying for me, like a dagger in my creator soul. A bona fide reality check that shook me — albeit briefly. All the festivity the chatter, and even the background music felt like a long stretch of suddenly unimportant silence to me. I chose to not to speak another word about what seemed so traumatic for me, esp., at the time. Thanks to my ADHD and my acting ability, I clicked on the ON switch in my party-first soul, and I went right back to drinking and dancing like nothing happened.

Bowflex cancels, back to square one

Over the next couple of months, I tried contacting Cook who suddenly seemed unreachable. I left a message twice, he called me back twice. But because it happened twice, I knew he must have taken a page straight from a Seinfeld episode (give or take a twist of his own) the one episode where Elaine did not want to waste time with idle chit-chat with Dan, the boyfriend of her friend Noreen. When Elaine called, she turned on her hair blow dryer to make it appear she was in the car with a bad static, phone connection, so as to not have to chat with Dan. Very clever.

And so it was with the two phone calls with CEO Cook. He kept saying there was a highway tunnel or something he had to drive through. So why did he call me back the only two times he was approaching the tunnel? Needless to say, I never got any straight answers from him about the status of my "*GyroGlide* project," as it was then called. That is until October 22, 2002. That's when I received the dreaded letter.

After receiving the cancel letter, I called Cook at Bowflex Corporate Headquarters one last time. This time, to his credit, he took my call in a real office, not on the road approaching a highway tunnel. I spoke first:

"Brian, well, I received the letter. No worries, I understand. Big companies do what they gotta do. I understand companies going in different directions too. But... I must ask. Seeing that for me this was a huge four years I just wasted and lost, esp., smack dab in the middle of the life of my patent, you kept speaking of a prototype that was being shown around to gyms for your market research. Well... it would be nice to at least see one video? Or even one photograph?"

Then? The most uncomfortable long pause in any business dealing of mine in my lifetime. Almost five full seconds went by. I had to let him speak first, regardless of how awkward the silence was. Finally, he spoke:
"Uh... I guess I don't see any reason why not. I will see what I can do."

“Thanks. That would be much appreciated.”

As that final phone call concluded with Bowflex CEO Brian R. Cook, it irked me that I forgot to ask one other question. If I thought of it, I would have blurted out:

“Brian, I hear ya when you say you did not see my machine ever selling 100,000 units a year. It is not for everybody. But there are many *Schwinn* products that do not meet those kind of sales volume numbers. Why the lofty and rigid 100,000 unit number for my machine?”

But then, it hit me. I think. Supposedly, they were looking at my machine solely as an infomercial product, like the cardio companion to Bowflex. So maybe that is why he said he did not see it selling 100,000 units a year. Spending infomercial dollars meant higher expectations on the ROI.

I recall in an earlier conversation, I asked Cook, “Come on Brian, what if Michael Jordan pumping hard on the machine, appeared in a series of short repetitive TV ads and all he said was: '***Quit spinning your wheel with half a workout, do the total body thing***,' don't you think it would sell 100,000 units a year? Maybe?”

Of course he then asked me, “Do you know Michael Jordan?” That is an old bookman trick to deflect being put on the spot. Answer a question, by asking another one back.

For some sports fans, former Chicago Bears legend, Gale Sayers appearing in glossy, multi-page Soloflex brochures in the 1980s, is probably as impressive, as if Michael Jordan were to agree to be spokesman for a stationary dual-flywheel climbing bike in the early 2000s. Almost.

[While Michael Jordan had bigger name recognition than Sayers, it is worth noting that the NFL has always attracted far more viewers than NBA games do. Years later, they compared Christmas Day games, and the NFL had more viewers than the NBA by a 5 to 1 margin.]

Anyway, of course all was moot at this point. Every thought and idea uttered aloud became just another grandiose pipe-dream left unfinished, leaving me feeling bummed and creatively unfulfilled. I was quickly reduced to being another lowly broke inventor feeling some hurt-child fueled self-pity, in need of a shift in mindset or just a connection to the right person.

A couple of weeks passed. Finally, I got the email! The long awaited photographs of my invention in the hands of a mega-behemoth in the fitness industry, after four years of R&D. There it was. On a pallet, in a warehouse, side-by-side with THE MACHINE THAT WOULD BECOME THEIR CARDIO COMPANION, and new darling to the Bowflex line. The TREADCLIMBER! Ouch. It stung, but I let it go. I had an idea in my head, to try and still use that picture somehow. I had a friend of mine use some Photoshop to get rid of the unsightly Bowflex warehouse. It didn't look so ugly once their makeshift bicycle seat was also deleted from the picture. I would soon find out.

During this time, when I was feeling a tad blue about having to be back to square one, I came across an inspiring feature story in December 2002 in the USA Today chronicling an extreme fitness trainer that taught five full-on extreme cardio classes a day! I wanted to talk to him. After some serious due diligence, I was able to contact Sean Burch, the same world-class fitness trainer featured in the USA Today article.

I thought, “now there's a dude who'd totally get and appreciate the CycleClimber.”

Years later, Sean scaled Mount Fuji in record time. He got into the Guinness Book for the fastest ascent to the top of Mount Fuji. He would eventually earn seven Guinness World Records as well as writing “*Hyperfitness*” a book on getting in the best shape of your life.

I was elated that Sean actually came to Tucson (where he had some family) to try out the CycleClimber workout, I loved when he said, “Wow. This kicked my ass.”

“Oh?”

“No, that's good it kicked my ass. That's why I am here.”

Sean gave his best to show it to a few folks he knew too. Clearly, such a high profile, esteemed, endurance athlete having such a good vibe about my labor-of-love fitness creation, served as a needed confidence boost during this adverse, confidence-eroding time of my life.

I quickly went back to randomly contacting fitness companies. Of the companies I had already contacted (post-Bowflex) the one that showed the most interest was Pro Cycle out of Canada. A guy named Jacques in their Quebec office. He asked me if I could obtain any of the so-called research that Bowflex had on my machine in the four years we had a licensing agreement.

Upon contacting Bowflex, I was assured, there was nothing. No research. Hmmm. Not even some informal notes, from all the years? That was a turn-off for the Canadian company. For me too. It was during this tough time that I really saw the damage that those lost four years wreaked on the life of the patent, as well as the jaded perception from other companies that all knew about the Bowflex debacle. While some showed a little bit of nominal interest, none of the companies magically appeared with any kind of unyielding passion to develop CycleClimber.

In 2006, the maintenance fees were due. This was about $2,000.00 that I really did not have. I was late in paying the fees, so I also paid the extra penalty but I kept the patent alive. It was during this time I made what I see now as a costly mistake. Despite spending over $1,000 on parts (a pair of RevMaster flywheels, cranks, pedals, belts, etc…) for a new prototype, I ran out of money and I never got a final prototype built. Of course having a snazzy, belt-driven prototype with the stainless steel flywheels would have opened many doors and planted seeds in many potential manufacturers and investor’s mind's eyes. I wrote a few letters to some new product decision makers, but they all pretty much said the same thing; we’re holding off on developing new products until the economy improves.

Between 2006 and 2008, I got the idea stuck in my head to try and contact NBA star, Gilbert Arenas, who a few years earlier, signed a 111 million dollar contract, over 10 years. The Adidas ad: "Impossible is Nothing" featuring Arenas as Agent Zero was exactly as though, metaphorically speaking, they were telling CycleClimber's life story. Esp., this part:

"If no one believes in you, anything you do is a positive. It wasn't even about basketball anymore. It was about proving them wrong."

I learned a lesson about social media from all this. Getting Gilbert Arenas contact info was no easy matter. I decided to start with Dan Steinberg of the Washington Post aka *DC Sports Blog.* I actually got him on the phone on the first try. He did not share Arenas' contact info with me. BUT, much to my surprise and brief dismay, on his *DC Sports blog,* he actually posted:

"The CycleClimber inventor asked me to help him get in touch with Gilbert Arenas."

Man! Isn't there any phone call that is private these days? I was blown away that a simple, private request for contact info would be published online in minutes, for all the world to see.

My two bucket list trips that included performing in a pair of fringe festivals in Australia seemed like a bygone dream now. The three months in Australia in 2002, felt like the three weeks I was there in Melbourne in 2000. A blur. Random party memories. Nothing more. But I had fun.

The years between 2006 and 2008 were brutal for not getting a break. Despite my increasingly pitiful financial plight coupled with my manic ADHD, scattered *ne'er-do-well* desperation, I still only chose work that offered weekends off, rather than making the most money I could.

This also explains why selling cars was never an option for me. Car salesman work Saturdays. I knew myself all too well. There was no way could I see myself closing a car

sale at the same time a big-time televised Pac-10 (back then) football or basketball game was going on.

Asian adventures: Married in Kaifeng

In 2006, I was lucky to get three weeks off from the Arizona Inn to visit Thailand. But a year later, I knew that my dream to visit China for a month was not going to happen unless I quit my hotel job altogether. I had several lovely pen-pals that I wanted to meet, but they were all spread out in different provinces, so I'd need at least a month to make a first trip to China worthwhile.

After visiting China for the first time, in 2007, I saw more than my share of beautiful green countryside. I met friends in several major provinces, but they were far from one another. From Shenzhen in Guangdong on the southern side of China, to Xiamen in Fujian, Lishui in Zhejiang, and Fushun in Liaoning on the northern side. So many great people, so many beautiful places. A trip of a lifetime. BUT... as I was flying back to America, I was feeling a wave of emotion come over me — life companion vacuum — like I missed "meeting THE ONE."

I almost swore off chatting to Aussies and Asians on the internet. BUT... a month later, I met a lady that lived near Shanghai. But after two months, she met a different American, at almost the same time I met a different Chinese lady. We began chatting daily around April 1st.

I met her in the Pudong Airport on September 12, 2008. I married her 7 days later on my 50th birthday. But technically, I was 49 years old when I said "I do," because of the 15-hour time difference between Tucson and Kaifeng. I turned 50 years old at 10:50 PM on my wedding night. Yep, I slid in, just under the half-century wire. I'm often late to the party, but don't count me out.

Back to Tucson, tending to my aging parents, it would take some time for my new wife, Yihua, to arrive in America. Excessive paperwork bullshit.

On March 3, 2010, I found myself in the worst condition of my life. I weighed a whopping 230 pounds, by far, the most I had ever weighed. Yeah, I was at my peak chub, up to this point of my life, but I saw opportunity here. Time to make a statement and rekindle the fire. I immediately took some before pictures and I began and documented a new CycleClimber workout regimen. Using the machine just 30 minutes a day, I dropped 34 pounds in 2 months. I weighed 196 on May 1, 2010. My goal was to lose 52 pounds and weigh 178 by my 52nd birthday. I reached my goal early; I weighed 178 on July 25, 2010.



Maybe it worked out that it took three full years before my Chinese wife was finally granted her visa. I weighed 208 when I got married in 2008. By the time I flew back to China in 2011, in what would be my last visit before she arrived in Tucson, I was like a new man. Her friends and family were so surprised. I was around 180.

During this time, I contacted Tim Hallmark, the legendary trainer that former Heavyweight boxing champion, Evander Holyfield credits with 95% of his athletic training success. Tim became a great inspiration. He offered me words of encouragement and avowed that he saw great promise in CycleClimber. He saw how it could be a valuable training aid for boxers. I had a seat built by a local metal fabricator.

POSITIVE FEEDBACK FROM ESTEEMED FITNESS TRAINER, TIM HALLMARK
[After six months of CycleClimbing, the "lat development" shows that CycleClimber really melts fat!]

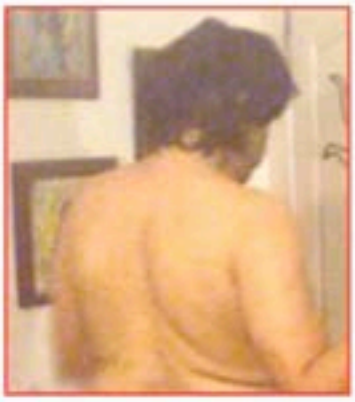
Tim,

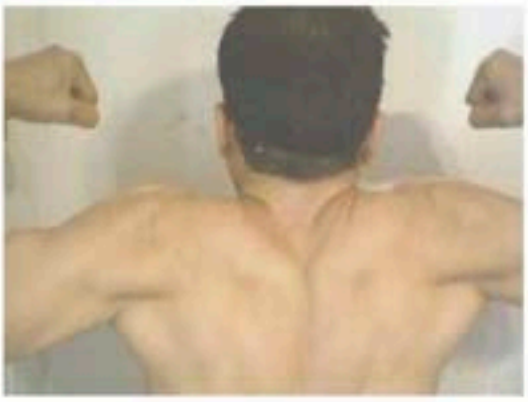
Many years ago, Brian Cook, the former CEO of Nautilus told me, **"Cardio machines can not build muscle. Only weights can build muscle."** Well... the proof is in the pudding. If you think about it, a half hour of intensive CycleClimbing is like doing weights in some ways. i.e., RESISTANCE + HIGH REPS = RESULTS! Am I correct?

In addition to the attached picture of the new CycleClimber drawing, I have enclosed two pics. One pic is from March 3, 2010 (a screenshot from a video) that shows how flabby (rolls of fat) I was, the other pic is from the day before Labor Day. **This is not from weights.** A swimmer is lean from swimming, so why can't a CycleClimber also derive similar benefits?

Hence, my claim: **CYCLECLIMBER CAN BUILD MUSCLE.** THE LATS ARE PROOF. I AVOW THIS IS NOT FROM WEIGHTS. Or could this "incidental benefit" (toning the lats) simply be attributed to the melting of fat? In other words, if you lose fat, muscle remains? Or could Brian Cook have been wrong? Maybe a 30 minute CycleClimber workout (1,800 reps with resistance X 6 months) does defy fitness logic? **A cardio machine that builds muscle?** Maybe?

Mark Hansen





Mark,

I really like the way the CycleClimber looks. I think if a cardio machine burns enough fat there will definitely be a more muscular appearance. Sometimes a more defined muscle will look more muscular and larger just because it is more defined. Now if you change your body composition and have a lower percentage of body fat, do you have more muscle on that frame than you did before?

On a percentage basis you have more muscle on that same frame than before so can you say you've built more muscle or lost more body fat or both. Now I think we would have to be more precise on defining the workout protocol. I want to entertain the idea that if I do an intense interval cardio workout with the proper nutrition I could develop some muscle. Why do a lot of cyclists have very muscular and large legs compared to the rest of their body. Why do a lot of swimmers have muscular upper backs compared to the rest of their body. It makes for a lot of thought and again I think the most important question is what kind of workload and supported by what kind of nutrition.

Either way man I think you are close to hitting a GRAND SLAM. Keep your focus on getting it finished and do not get distracted.

Tim Hallmark

["Tim Hallmark has been my personal trainer and I consider one of my best friends for going on 22 years. Tim has been responsible for 95% of my physical training and the success of 3 cruiserweight World Championships, moving me up to heavyweight, 4 Heavyweight World Championships and my comeback."

—Evander Holyfield
Former Heavyweight Boxing Champion]

From a perception standpoint, a seat could be a selling point. Personally, I did not care for the seat. There were already great machines out there (i.e., Scifit Pro II) that had a seat; this seated UBE methodology was especially useful in specific rehab applications.

In August 2010, I contacted the owner of a local gym. She arranged for me to perform a demo for her trainers, some of who were SPINNING instructors. Their feedback motivated me. They all agreed a seat is not really needed. What separated CycleClimbing from all other machines is the height adjustability of the upper flywheel.



Higher the better. Esp., for the lats.

One added benefit of having a Chinese-born wife is that now I had family in China, so if I needed to vet a potential manufacturer, I could now do so more easily now than if I did not know anyone there. Of the first two companies we looked at to manufacture CycleClimber, the second one seemed ideal. I was grateful to my sister-in-law (who is married to a factory supervisor) for checking them out firsthand. I loved that their head engineer could work off a drawing I made.

IHRSA trade show

For me, the bad news was that all I would have for the IHRSA Trade Show was a single prototype. For sure, it appeared that having the machine in production, with units on hand – ready to sell was out of the question. I can admit it. My spending over $4,000 (incl., the one-year $895 annual membership fee at the time) for what amounted to half-assed market research and nominal exposure to the industry was a bloody big mistake.

IHRSA was a hyped-up corporate exhibition, where the richest and biggest mega-corporations (aka the movers and shakers) show off their latest products. Big huge booths with an entire staff to assist the placement of every item. Loud, nasty thump-thump music, it was hard to talk to people.

My favorite moment was when a VersaClimber dude heard about us and he made his way (slithered along the back perimeter) towards the bathroom area, from the backside, staring sideways, and from afar, his eyes were staring wide, at our booth, as he walked backwards into the bathroom, stunned! HA!!!

In my first ever Final Cut Pro project (Markomentary trailer despite being over 16 minutes) in the video description, I made it a point to show how the whole IHRSA experience made me feel like a backwoods rube:

“IHRSA made me feel like Amos McCoy as I said no to carpet in our 10' x 10' booth (they put us close to the toilet) I said, "No, I like the concrete! Good branding. Rock solid."

[Upon returning from lunch, they still put in carpet, but they did not charge us the $200!]

I am well aware that I should be kind of embarrassed at even bringing up the "Markomentary trailer!" It is over 16 minutes long! Heh heh heh. It really did start out as a trailer. It was my first full project using Final Cut Pro. It had inconsistent fonts, and I did my own character voiceovers too. It was silly yet fun, with cameos by the few people I know in Tucson. Needless to say, if the "World's Most Disrespected Inventor" were to team up with the *"World's Worst Marketing Dude,"* yeah, it might be a challenge to get something seen. Tsk.

It was posted on Green Satori's YouTube channel, not CycleClimbing's You Tube channel, cause I was somewhat self-conscious and embarrassed to have it seen by any of my 7 ***@CycleClimbing*** followers on You Tube. But now, what the heck, it is what it is. The 16-minute video may or may not be found by entering, ***"Markomentary trailer"*** in a Google search bar.

Because Google hates me, you might still get this prompt.

"Did you mean ***mockumentary*** trailer?"

[Google is hellbent on dissuading anyone from going to my channel. Even if you entered everything 100% correctly. Same with "cycleclimbing," Google still tries to send people away by saying: "Did you mean 'cycle climbing?'"]

However, whatever you do, unless you're a fan of objective, bipartisan politics (I do not hold back in saying what needs to be said to both major parties) while you're on the Green Satori You Tube channel, do NOT look at my unhinged unmedicated-full-blown

ADHD rant from before the 2024 mid-terms, that somehow became a homespun, 27-minute spontaneous documentary that I made in 48 hours, to warn the DNC, that they will need the vote of the progressives to win in 2024 and going forward. So… whatever you do, do NOT search for:

"What if the Democrats Decided to Turn 'the Elephant in the DNC Boardroom' into their Ace-in-the Hole?"

Finding the CycleClimber postcard models

The Friday night, just one week before the IHRSA Trade Show I got the whimsical idea in my head that I could just walk up to few photogenic people at Tucson's Festival of Books, and BOOM, the perfect male and female fitness model to use for a CycleClimber half-page postcard-brochure for the next week's IHRSA trade show would just magically appear and say, okay. Another whacked idea that I was intent on making happen. Yihua laughed with me at the idea, but agreed that it had some merit. If I could find anyone that would believe me. I know I should have had the trade show brochure finished a long time ago. Now, I needed it like day-before-yesterday, or at least usable pictures in a day or so. Typical, last minute ADHD shit; procrastinating, stressing, hurrying, dreaming. Yep. Same old shit.

On the first day, Saturday, it was cold, windy and rainy, no prospects, nary a fitness model in sight. We were a few minutes late to see David Wayne Fitzsimmons (Tucson's own homespun political cartoonist icon) and I was also hoping to run into a friend who was visiting from Oregon that had mentioned he might help if we get in a jam. No luck running into him... besides, they had already quit letting anybody in. Fire code rules... blah-blah. But then a few secs later, I run into Martha Retallick, the photographer, at the exact same second that the one decent, fitness model prospect goes jogging by. What was I gonna do? Just sprint after him and have my wife tell Martha why I went running after some dude? Ha!

So after talking to Martha (who advised us to find this guy she heard of that knows "real models") we headed back home. I was finally lucky enough to meet the Tucson Weekly's brilliant senior writer Jim Nintzel, a Facebook friend for some time now. It was a real treat (a hoot too) to finally meet the jolly intellectual from the Weekly, but still no cigar, no luck on finding any random fitness models.

It was simply not meant to be. That Saturday it was just too cold, windy and rainy, to attract the crowd the event usually drew, so for us, Saturday was a let down. Big time. My nervous energy intensified. But as Sunday's 1PM sun came out strong, Yihua and I both felt an electric destiny vibe simultaneously jolt our consciousness, serving as an affirmative, organic *inner signal* that we'd get lucky as we headed out. We gave ourselves one hour. Again, we walked from our house into Tucson's Festival of Books. Then? BOOM! We saw this young handsome photogenic couple. Well, I don't know about a couple, hell, they might have been on a first date for all we knew. But they seemed chummy and simpatico. They came walking out of a booth a few feet away, then past a food booth behind Yihua. Then I did what must have come across like a full-on Cosmo Kramer imitation (i.e., like when he freaked out Fred Savage?!) in front of a bunch of food people in line off to the side. They appeared curious, overly nosy as if hungry for something or someone to observe.

"Uh… excuse me..."

The young guy was standoffish, he looked at me like I was one of those campus preachers with a megaphone trying to save him… so he shrugged, "Nah man sorry… not today."

I had to let them know I was a sincere inventor with a pitiful, promotional postcard plight. This is where Yihua standing next to me gave me that, humbled, loco local, 'ne'er do' well credibility that maybe I do have a bizarre and worthy story that needs to be heard. I could see that the couple sympathized with us as they suddenly looked like, OKAY, they'd give me my 27 seconds to speak. They were real. Not shallow, flighty, group-conforming, Bud-Lighty fluff types. They appeared to be genuine, young fit, good Tucson people.

After a minute, they said, “OKAY!” Yihua and I were elated. We agreed on a reasonable fee and of course we also threw in a pair of CycleClimber t-shirts of their choice.

Ah, but would they call or show up? A lot can happen between 1:47PM and 5PM. I called my friend, Stephen Davis to see if he could photograph the shoot. No answer. Dang. Had it really come down to this? Yihua and I doing our own brochure pictures with her camera? If the couple became a no-show, we would have no choice but to be our own models too. How lame is that? No way! I may be crazy but I ain’t no fool. The video shoot two weeks ago was one thing (our aim was to use average people to show the machine was user-friendly) but we needed a real photogenic face for helping brand this cardio fitness product that already has twenty years of poor man's R&D prior to the product launch in less than 10 days.

Let destiny happen. Our new LLC battlecry. Tick tock. Right on! Charlie called. Yay! They were a few minutes away. Sure enough, at 5PM, my fears were eased as they walked in. Despite our limited, amateur lighting, Yihua began clicking away. We both took a bunch of random, experimental, artsy, interesting shots. The hour flew by like 17 minutes.

We were so thankful to Charlie and Ronika for being so cool and agreeing to be our spontaneous fitness models and for understanding our manic, rambunctious, deadline-driven, on the edge style. Now my neighbor has to eat his words. He said, “you CAN’T just walk up to people and find a fitness model.”

Inside myself, I chuckled. I thought about how me flipping my *magic switch,* giving my best effort usually overrides and disproves anything a conflict-craving critic or neighbor onlooker can say, think or do. i.e., “Oh? Ha! Keep telling me I can’t do something Cee.’

I thrive on making full use out of my highly reactive, intrinsic emotional springboard threaded within my assemblage, to always assist me to give my absolute ZonaCat best, esp., when the naysayer critic ilk is out and about, doing what they do, which is to disrupt or gaslight the confident creative flow of anyone getting something done. Armchair critics be damned!

A few years later, my *inner signals* were validated yet again, when I read that Charlie Ware finished in the top 10 of the Western States 100 Ultramarathon. He ran 100 miles in under 17 hours, good enough for an 8th place finish in June 2018. I knew Charlie Ware was a bad-ass.

Including IHRSA 2013, my wife and I drove that old 1998 Nissan Frontier pick-up (with over 360,000 miles) to three different trade shows. When all was said and done; The vibe at the 2014 Fit Expo LA and 2014 Fit Expo Bay Area were equally lively and welcoming. Less stuffy than IHRSA. Like comparing regular working folks (our neighbors?) to entitled power-hungry executives with corporate name badges.

Prior to going to the Fit Expo Bay Area in the summer of 2014, I wrote to the one man who wrote several books ideally suited for entrepreneurs. Prior to my wife and I loading up the old 1998 Nissan Frontier with over 360,000 miles, I wrote to Guy Kawasaki at his bay area offices. I introduced myself and I mentioned that I'd be at the Fit Expo in San Jose, and I offered to leave them a fitness machine to check out.

Much to my surprise, I got a reply that was friendly, but Guy passed on allowing me to leave the machine there, in their offices. Oh well. A month or so later, I updated what would be my last Windows PC and my internet browser on my Toshiba Satellite, and I was slightly distracted too. I know that when you update your Internet, it is a good idea to back up your files. But I remember Microsoft saying that this won't delete files.

But In was using Mozilla Firefox! The upgrade wiped out every single email I had. I could never find a way to write back to Guy after that. Yeas later, I found none printed copy of the email exchange, but it was too little, too late. Damn.

I was excited to speak with Mr. Kawasaki because he was instrumental in many of Apple's early years. I knew there was some kind of partnership project with Apple and Nike too. By 2014, I thought BYOT (Bring Your Own Tech) would have made it so the machine itself, doesn't have or need any bells & whistles, because you can wear it on a. Watch or something. I was close. Technology has come a long way. But eve if I bought an Apple Watch today, of course, it does not have dual-flywheel climbing as an option to choose from for activity. I suppose elliptical option would have bee3n the closest one.

I personally have sold and shipped machines to California, Washington, Hawaii and Virginia, with nary a return. But wearing every hat had its challenges, because a lack of money. Looking back, the first 2014 Fit Expo LA trip in early 2014 also exposed me to something else. The ugly side of privilege and elitism.



Thank you Charlie & Ronika for understanding our extreme sense-of-urgency. Congratulations to Charlie for a top 10 finish in the Western States 100 ultra-marathon. Under 17 hours? Wow.

Soulless Cycle in Santa Monica

In Los Angeles, in early 2014, with my CycleClimber machine still in the back of our old truck, a random idea jumped into my head to try and get any available LA personal trainer interested to the point to just take a look at the machine and see firsthand what it does and how it performs. I had nothing to lose. Make one quick random stop on the drive back to Tucson.

I turned to Yihua. Despite my feeling increasingly moody, sweaty, beat and humorless, I tried justifying my random thoughts to her.

"I just feel that now, while we're here, we should just pop into some random Santa Monica gym, and show it to someone just to see if anything happens. Let destiny rule!" Yihua was tired but she agreed, "Oh? Yeah okay why not?"

A couple of minutes later, while driving through Santa Monica, the Equinox gym just appeared. I really didn't know diddly-jack about Equinox, other than they used SoulCycle bikes in their indoor cycling classes and the bikes were known to be of decent quality and the high-energy indoor cycling classes were targeted more to the affluent female boutique health club member demographic.

The outside parking lot seemed exceedingly far from the entrance, but because I had the CycleClimber in the back, Yihua stayed in the truck, to keep an eye on the machine. Even after I walked the first twenty yards, I felt my forehead bead up with a lot of unwanted perspiration. That was the last thing I needed at this nervous moment.

That was another thing. WHY WAS I NERVOUS? In my three summers selling books door-to-door for Southwestern, I knocked on 50 doors in a 14-hour workday, times six days for 13 weeks.

Of course, it was the involuntary perspiration. Every time I start sweating profusely from horrid unwanted sunbaked heat, the beads of sweat keep coming out, as if to the point of no return. Then, upon walking into any air-conditioned building, my sweaty, toiling (abound with *ne'er-do-well* blue collar anguish) facial expression and an exhausted mind and body state, combined, probably suggested that I looked nervous, or anxiety-ridden at the very least.

Once I walked into the Equinox front desk area, everything about being inside the place felt so wrong. I should have just did a 180, and marched right the hell out of there. The most unwelcoming vibe of any establishment that I ever walked into on my own accord, in my then 55-year-old life.

The cute young front desk girl was chatting away, as if she were catching up on the latest juicy gossip with what appeared to be more of a friend than a gym member. For sure, she seemed perturbed to see a dark, sweaty, dude from the blue collar ilk (working man type) a seemingly old and nervous manic hispanic man, approaching her.

"Uh excuse me…"

She was already prepared to slight me based on my appearance. Boy did I feel it. I should have walked out then and there. Did she even hear me speak to her?

"Uh…"

“It’ll be a minute. Please wait a moment.”

The girl whispered to her friend that they will continue their chat a bit later. The other girl walked away. As I saw her walk away, I saw two other random pretty girls walk behind the receptionist, wiping their face with the new fluffy white towel they had just picked up.

The cold front desk girl finally turned around, as if she were now forced to face and deal with an old minority man, one that clearly was out of her *communicational comfort zone.* While I was waiting for her to speak (after she scolded me to wait a moment) I felt exactly like the same way as the Jennifer Beals character in the “Flashdance” movie, the scene where she wants to inquire about getting into the prestigious dance academy.

I recall the other young snooty ballerina-clad girls, looking back at the Jennifer Beals character (who was wearing her welder work clothes and work boots too) with snob-laced pity and elitist xenophobia.

That is exactly how I felt. Yet, while I was waiting for the 20 something girl to allow me to speak, I prepared myself well. She finally looked towards me.

“Yes. May I help you?”

“Yes. Actually, I am from Arizona. I was in town for a trade show. I had heard great things about SoulCycle, so, while I am here… I thought I’d… well, stop in here and see if I could find one personal trainer that has a quick sec, to come outside and see a truly one-of-a-kind fitness machine, I mean…”

She cut me off and began telling me, that there aren't any trainers on hand. I then asked if she has any means to get in touch with the owners in New York. Her eyes rolled back, as if she had already deemed me to be a poor perspiring rural rube, from the get-go, not worthy of being inside their endless fluffy towel facility, bothering her for corporate contact information.

"Yes, I am sure if you go to the website, you will find contact info there."

"Thanks."

I walked out of that place, as though I knew that was the last time I would ever be in California. As I got back to the parking lot around the corner, I half-laughed at my own idiocy and naivety. Once I was within eyesight of my wife and I saw that she saw me, I was eager to mime mouthing the words out to her: "*Oh. My. God. You will not believe!*"

Once inside the truck, I continued," Well, I was curious. But not anymore. WOW. What a bitch! Yikes. Even if I were given a gift card for a year of their classes, I would not set foot inside that stuffy ass place, ever again. That place is like the opposite of everything I like and respect in the world. Let's drive back to Tucson NOW."

As we drove back, I had so many racing thoughts. But I looked back at that horrid Equinox moment as par for the course. I quickly comforted myself upon analyzing the whole experience.

Despite being snubbed and disrespected yet again by a fitness behemoth, I felt strangely comforted. Something I learned in my three summers selling books door-to-door was the simple wisdom that suggests, "upon dealing with rejection, just move along to the next prospect."

For me, that meant scratching SoulCycle off my list of potential licensee prospects. But first upon getting home, as a token gesture, I would find whatever means I could find to contact the owners.

Of course, a part of me wanted to change my short letter about CycleClimber to a rant about how cold-blooded and UNWELCOMING the front desk at the Santa Monica Equinox was.

But then? I deduced that would not accomplish anything worthy. It mattered not. Of course, the two main ladies that run the Soulless show in NYC never bothered to reply to my otherwise genteel letter introducing my stationary climbing bike invention.

A short time later, I discovered that SoulCycle was partly funded by Trump-loving Stephen Ross, then of course, it all made sense! The elitist snobbery, and the instant disdain for my ilk by the preoccupied front desk gal spoke volumes. The keep out the sweating working latino man mindset, that appeared to be way over-the-top and prevalent for my tastes. Click. Next.

Burning the SoulCycle bridge was the easiest one for me to burn of all fitness companies in the world. I lost what little respect I had for them. Yet, like the Jennifer Beals character in Flashdance, I would soon feel empowered to do what I must do to manifest the ending that, by now, felt like it was laced with some kind of out-of-this-world destiny that would soon be forthcoming.

All I need is one chance to show what this machine can do. My time would come. I could feel it oh-so strong. But when?

"I was tired of learnin' I was ready for earnin'!"

-Larry Warren
[former Southwestern Co., Sales Manager]

Imprisoned by sunshine, good-bye Tucson

October 27, 2016 was the huge defining moment. Not only was it a typical, wicked, sun-baked 97 degrees, it was also the day that my 89-year-old father went into home hospice just 27 days after my 87-year-old mom went into home hospice. My life joy was at a nadir.

My wife and I, knowing that my folk's time on the planet was entering their twilight months, began reassessing our future. Tucson and the 350 days of hot sun and eleven-month summers were clearly not part of our plans. There is a reason that Tucson consistently ranks in the top 3 in suicides per capita.

Just for fun, we began looking at homes on Zillow, from Brockport to Binghamton. I sold books door-to-door in 1981 (my third summer doing this) in Batavia, Brockport, Clarence Center, Castile, Arcade, Attica and Wyoming County so I knew about the green scenic beauty of upstate New York. That summer was special as I saw Simon & Garfunkel in Central Park on my 23rd birthday and I saw my first NFL game. The Bills '81 home opener over the Jets. Joe Cribbs ran wild on that day. The Bills crushed the Jets.

Suddenly, BOOM! A fixer-upper home just *appeared* that just looked too good to pass up. Just like that! We bought it, sight unseen. It is hard to beat finding a 2,200 square foot home on ¾ an acre for $19,900? Whoa.

We continued overseeing my parent's caregiving team until my mom passed on 1/5/17 at 9 minutes after the hour. My dad passed exactly two-months later, also on the 5th

(3/5/2017) also at 9 minutes after the hour. We held their memorial services together on 4/5/2017 at 11:09AM.

We began making our get-the-hell-out-of-Tucson dream come true. My wife had a dream of opening up her own boutique. Ithaca was the place! Ironically, Ithaca's Downtown Alliance even had a retail wish list that even included, “women’s clothing” and “women’s accessories.” Wow. How much more credence is needed to validate the growing notion that destiny was threaded into our plans, than that?!

Despite the threads of obvious destiny that were seemingly being woven together so quickly and serendipitously, our friends and family in Tucson thought we had lost our mind, moving to a place where we know nary a soul.

After awhile, to ward off unsolicited negativity from well-meaning friends and family, I resorted back to simply reciting my favorite Wayne Dyer quote again from the audiotapes I heard back in 1979, from my bookselling days.

”People who operate from outer signals will never understand those people who operate from inner signals.”

A funny thing happened on the way to fixing up our new fixer upper home. This Facebook post from Sept 13, 2017 says it all:

“OMG! WE BET THE HOUSE! Literally. The scariest, riskiest yet most exciting business venture either of us have ever done. We just jumped in and did it!

We have had heaps of adversity thus far. Our 11-year-old dog already needed surgery that set us back 3K. We put in over 15K on a money pit of a house that we cannot live in for a long time. Even our travel trailer had a myriad of issues that makes it wholly unlivable! We bought a new washer/dryer and refrigerator and 500 gallon propane tank for a house we will not use. Ugh.

We also paid $900.00 deposit for an Ithaca store for Yihua's boutique, but luckily we had not yet signed the three-year lease.

BUT! Because of this money pit of a house, we had to find a motel to pay weekly rates for the interim to live in. This motel which is on three acres is owned and managed by a late 70s couple that is ready to retire.

Over the years, the couple has tried selling the property for a price that would have been well out of our reach. But their asking price to us, was barely within the possibility of our reach. WE HAD TO SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY.

If not, we both would have been haunted with the dreaded "what if" for eternity. It will mean obtaining a secured home loan ASAP on our Tucson home, a small chunk from my sister-in-law and all that we have left in the bank. Yihua is totally on-board with this because the daily commute in ice and snow to a shop in Ithaca seven days a week had risks too. With this, we rarely have to leave the house.

BUT, if all goes through, by mid-November, we will own and manage this property. We paid a deposit and signed a purchase contract. My secret "Petticoat Junction" dream may come to fruition after all!

Green Satori Inn: a red county

The first order of business for our new motel was to find a heating guy to see if our old and inefficient boiler could get serviced or checked out. During this time, oil fuel was going for $3.35 a gallon. It was a nearby company with great service. But if you do the math, when you have the original boiler and it is 420,000 gross BTU with a net BTU of 290,000 which equates to 69% efficiency. Not good. We knew we needed to call a heating guy. The ornery old man we called was quick to inform us that he wanted no part of servicing our boiler.

His exact words: “I told Frank and Kath to not even give my number to whoever buys the motel.”

“Whoa. Okay. No problem. Bye.”

I performed an imitation of the miserable old coot for my wife, after our very brief call concluded. I am pretty adept at instantly being able to imitate certain old crackpot voices. The old heating dude was easy. I told Yihua:

“Whoa. Yihua, do you know what he said? ‘I told Frank and Kath to not even give my number to whoever buys the motel.’”

“Oh? Why?”

“I have no idea. Okay. No problem. I am sure the miserable old coot is not the only heating dude in this whole area.”

Then, we had to find an insurance guy. But one of his staff members was married to a dude that did our first snow plow. He told me his wife actually said to him:

“WHY is it called the Green Satori Inn, but it is still red?!”

I was taken aback. In my head, I was like, excuse me, why does our name change bother her? She works for us. I should not have to answer to her, that we had not yet gotten around to painting it, because it was deemed too cold to paint.

So, I was quickly learning what to expect. But the first order of business was to get a new sign made. We were already in agreement that the “Green Satori Inn” was a catchy name that also showed the world a colorful glimpse of our upbeat rebranding vision.

For us, painting the motel green (esp., after it was red for so many years) was more than just a color change. It served as a subtle political metaphor as well.

A green-minded innkeeper in deep red Schuyler County? No one needed to know, but of course it would come out. Even worse (in the eyes of many was that now a vegan owned small business that quiet motel that hunters loved and booked every November. The Redwood Inn would cease to exist.

After calling several local and regional sign companies, I was left drained and distraught. We barely had seven thousand in total operating capital left in the bank. Several of the quotes for just one luminescent overhead sign exceeded all the money that we had! Shit.

I knew that we had no business buying a motel on such a shoestring budget. As if we deliberately went full-on contrary to the sensible advice usually dispensed by bankers, business professors and level-headed, SBA consultants. Oh well. It is always fun to buck the convention and not adhere to societal standards. This also explains why my wife and I, upon seeing a prospective home in in an HOA, we don't even look. Click. Next..

Noble and soulful inner signals always trump the onslaught of unsolicited opinions that come from the peanut gallery of mainstream society.

A quote from a Georgia sign company gave us a needed jolt of justifiable hope. A twelve-foot cloud sign for just $2,500! This includes shipping. This quote blew away the competition.

A short time later, our sign arrived in a humungous twelve and a half foot wooden crate, but it still weighed under four-hundred pounds. There was nowhere else to put it except in the front, next to the front door. The elderly trucker seemed peeved and in a hurry. During our first, slow, long winter, that unsightly crate would just sit there, until spring finally came around in May.

We were able to rent a few rooms to a couple of long-term, monthly tenants in March and April; the motel bookings from overnight guests began picking up by May, right about the time the parents of Cornell students begin flocking to Ithaca for their graduation ceremony.

Once we finally installed the new sign that read: GREEN SATORI INN to replace the old sign that just said “MOTEL,” my wife and I began our new lives as innkeepers in upstate NY.



Pitching reality TV is fun:
Evolution of workplace docudramedy

By the time 2020 and covid rolled around, I already knew from the first few years of weekly and monthly tenants I had a true gold mine for really wild, quirky stories of countless Cayuta locals. Characters everywhere, and the situations were almost beyond my imagination. I mean like, when you think, "WOW! You cannot make this shit up."

Without going into details, I do want to share brief summary of my pitch. But it was the one-hour phone call I had with an actual reality TV producer. I had him laughing for 82 minutes! On a 60-minute phone call. I recall pausing for a second, at the 65 minute mark, and he was still laughing as he said, "No, you're okay. Please continue."

His laugh out loud feedback felt redeeming and reaffirmed many things I wanted to know about how all this Reality TV thing works. He liked what he saw so far, and told me to prepare a Pitch Book and prepare a reel for this.

But the one scene I did for him that made him laugh more than the other was my characterization of a dude, we'll call Doakie Gimmel. Doakie was an ornery, painter, handyman, carpenter type dude. So… after telling the producer guy this I continued.

So one day Doakie comes out of his motel room, all cussing and pissed off at foreigners and Mexican immigrants because of something he saw on Fox News. So, I walk up to Doakie and I asked him point point blank.

"So… Doakie. Let me ask you. Have you ever actually met or known or even seen met a real Mexican?"

Doakie squinted his eyes puts his forefinger to his lip as if feigning that he had to think for a bit. Zoom in on his rube thinking. Ha. Several seconds go by. I am staring at him waiting for his answer. Finally, Doakie has an answer..

“Uh.. yeah. I think so. Once, a few years ago maybe. I think when I was working on a bridge, outside of Watkins, there was a Mexican feller.”

“And? So? What happened?”

“We smoked a bowl at lunch. He was pretty cool”

“AH! So… you smoked a bowl at lunch. He was pretty cool?! So… why do you hate immigrants again?”

Again, Doakie puts his forefinger to his lip, as if feigning that he had to use his thinking cap. Again, zoom in close on his rube thought-processing. His gruff faux-Goober facial expression exterior, as he continues thinking hard. Ha. Several seconds go by.

“Okay okay. Ha ha. Let’s smoke a bong.”

There was no punchline or anything. Just a real person being real. My aim was not to entertain the producer, but rather to give my best characterizations of real people. I recall watching some video on the early roots of King of the Hill, which is probably my most watched TV show, post 2000 era, after Seinfeld, Frasier and Friends. The key with cartoons is to have the perfect voice that embodies the art of the cartoon character. So, I borrowed my late best bud’s gruff character voice, which was Mike Esposito, who

passed in mid-2006. In other words, my friend who died at 47 from early onset Alzheimer's in Tucson, had the ideal character voice, played by me, to go with Doakie's drawing. Doakie's signature line was, "Here's what ya outta do."

But I gave him one more scene that showed a true dialogue exchange I had with Doakie, that I cannot believe he did not know it was a joke. Doakie was outside standing on his front porch having a cig. I called out to him as I walked towards him, as he was just two doors down.

"Hey Doakie. Did you hear the news? The head of Fox News human resources got fired?!"

"Huh? For what?"

"She inadvertently hired an intellectual. She got fired for incompetency."

"Damn right! I am glad they fired her. She had it coming. They outta be able to hire whoever in the hell they want!"

That made the reality TV exec break out in genuine laughter. It wasn't me. It was Doakie. He was real. But I made him real and come to life, through Esposito. It was a match. I disagreed with Doakie (Espo too for that matter) on dang near everything but that was the allure here. In these polarizing times, real working people living in one establishment, all with extremely different views, yet everyone co-existing somehow, because of an agreement to show respect to others. Everyone has a voice. So "Green Satori Inn a red county" had great material, but like the old late 1960's, Dragnet, it is scripted reality TV, all true stories, based on events that already happened. Because

most of these characters can't act worth a shit. Heh-heh. I know this for sure. Dependability is an issue as well. This is why scripted animation works.

Finally, I had to ask a question that I had been dying of curiosity for over a dozen years about this. I had to know. This was my only chance to ask a TV industry dude a question, that I use as confirmation bias for a mini-conspiracy theory I concocted in my head privately. I had to ask.

He said, "that's fine. What question?"

"Well, there was this one episode of Friends. The only one that I did not care for and it steered me the wrong way. So Phoebe is carrying her brother's babies a surrogate. Phoebe is ike one of the very few vegans (Lisa Simpson too) on TV during this time and we all know they made her character ditzy. But ditzy ad spineless are not the same. So… anyway, Phoebe mentions that she has a craving for beef, and she feels guilty because as a vegan, she does not want any more animals to be killed.

So Joey says something to the effect of "Hey. I got an idea. How about if I give up meat for a few months? Then you can eat the meat I woulda ate, so no more animals would be killed?"

I said, every gut vibe inside me tell me that was bought and paid for. Like that scene probably did more damage to the plant-based movement than anything the Texas Cattlemen could ever buy in an ad. I mean product placement and thinly-veiled ads are one thing, but this corrupted the character of Phoebe for good, and made her worthless, as far as as I'm concerned.

He replied, "oh, yeah things like that happen all the time, I would not be surprised."

Shortly after that phone call, I began toying with the idea of noble sponsors. In other words, find three or four noble brands, like the companies that spent money for we the people in battles like Prop 37, I-522, Prop 105 and Measure 92. I love and embrace those companies. They have my back as a consumer. Why can't a coalition of noble advertisers be be put together. Companies to be proud of being affiliated with? Give companies love that deserve it, and hope they like the way their brand is highlighted so positively. Look at Dr. Bronner's with a starting wage of $27 an hour for entry level. Why not see if these companies could somehow sponsor or fund the required animation work to create a good pilot, then shoot for the streaming market.

Anyway, here is the gist of the proposal to show why I think it will work. One show that I was heavily cheering for that only lasted around a dozen episodes was "the Goode Family." Great artwork! Best ever! Brilliant characters. Identifiable episodes. How did it fail?

In my outsider view, there were two reasons it did not do well.

It came across as corporation unfriendly. Network TV needs ads to survive. If you piss of the sponsors by doing the right thing, it is the wrong thing for prime time content. This is why you do not see many or any Monsanto activists on primetime TV. Some colorful character leading a bunch of impassioned and animated locals doing the right thing is not good for their toxic corporate factory food offerings.

Two. The wrong POV. We already have King of the Hill. It is a great show. But if you're going to be the opposite of King of the Hill, go all the way. Don't show these Goode Family characters, as if *they* are the ones we're supposed to laugh at. They need to make us laugh at people, they see as weird and laugh at.

In one film class I recall hearing it is hard to have a hit show, with characters that no one likes. But then the topic of Frasier came up, in which case we cheer for him to lose the girl at the end. The episode where he reconnects with the Jean Smart character, as she was the dream girl from high school that he never had a chance with, but now? She wants him, and sleeps with him. But the next morning, he discovers that she smokes, yells at her kids, etc… nothing like the girl he idolized and put-on a pedestal. That was almost as fun to watch as Seinfeld's Elaine yanking off Costanza toupee and throwing it out the window and George goes to look and gets stuck in the open window like Winnie the Pooh. HAH!

Anyway, here is why I want to be done with CycleClimber, which I deem unfinished business. Making cartoons with real locals feels right.

My one gripe on Agnes Nixon, who created All My Children and One Life to Live, is that she often portrayed the working class as crazy and psycho, like Billy Clyde Tuttle on All My Children.

The PITCH:

Why consider a Reality TV Show with a recurring, animated docudramedy twist?

Over the past two years, I have explored what I thought was every possible angle to structure and tell my story. I consider myself an advanced student as far as analyzing the old Paul Henning CBS rural comedies go. Not to mention, every Andy Griffith show too as well as the Waltons.

But it was not until this past summer, when I took a year off Facebook that I would discover the most important layer to my rural sitcom schooling. THE REAL MCCOYS! I binge-watched the Real McCoys this summer. My story is the Real McCoys, in reverse.

I'm intent, if not obsessed, with exploring any and every option to my multi-layered, all-true yarn.

In the four years that my wife and I have owned this upstate NY motel, we've already seen countless country characters come and go. From con men, to escaped felons, the meth ilk, junkies, drunks, hookers, hunters, lumberjacks, bikers, pole dancers, also a Cornell professor and a lady glider pilot too, although the latter two were one-night guests just passing through.

I'm a hyperconscious, green-minded vegan, who ran side-by-side with a Schuyler County Sheriff in the backyard chasing an escaped convict that was in Room 6. He ditched us, but was found asleep the next morning all passed out on a farmer's porch over a mile away. Ha. Good episode?

Like the Waltons, GSRC, will focus on an interesting country character that is passing through town each week, or in this case, the Finger Lakes part of NY. The random character that shows up each week (a guest in our lone suite?) usually evokes as strong visceral reaction from the long-term (monthly) motel tenants and Cayuta townsfolk in some strong way. Maybe in a positive way. Maybe in a negative way. It depends if the visiting character gets their *green satori* or not.

Like the "Twilight Zone," every weekly random character is connected by a single theme;

Will they experience a *satori,* while staying at the Green Satori Inn? Or not?

Also, taking a page from Rod Serling himself, my innkeeper character (an absent-

minded, hyperconscious 63-year-old green-minded vegan) acts as the curator.

Like “Trailer Park Boys,” there is a reality TV show element that connects and highlights the working class, unemployed locals, and fish-out-of-the-water tourists into one show, esp., interconnecting the existing featured characters that live in the same place, with occasional common man cameos peppered, recurring characters pop in too.

Like “I Love Lucy” and “Green Acres,” the primary focus is on a married couple, where one of the spouses speaks with a strong foreign accent, thus offering a refreshing fish-out-of-water spin for effortless conflict, esp., among the red county MAGA locals

[Also, taking a page from “Green Acres,” is that the main character is a city dude that pines for stress-free country living, while his foreign wife misses shopping in her old home, Kaifeng city, and even the malls in Tucson. But ultimately, she learns to love and adapt to country life.]

Confessions of an off-again social media dropout

The TWO WORST things about Meta is that they have the power to enable corporate behemoths by quashing any and all innovation (suppressing the reach of videos of potential competitors — i.e., small indie inventors) to ensure that only the corporate behemoths get prime visibility always. EVERY TIME. This creates a playing field that is not level. In short, *"Corporate xenophobia quashes innovation."* Why does this problem exist? Imagine you are an inventor, and you get a patent on the next great total-body machine, for calorie-burning, superior to Tonal. Unless you're a billionaire (or backed by someone) no one will never know about your workout machine. They certainly will never get press in the Washington Post? Because Bezos owns stakes in BOTH the Washington Post AND Tonal! Hence, he can use his power to keep Tonal at the top, by refusing any press on a fitness machine competitor. To some extent, this is what Facebook has done to me the past decade. My invention (CycleClimber) uses two flywheels, hence is far more efficient than any Spinning or Peloton bike. But Spinning and Peloton pay Meta big money to remain at the top. Why should Meta allow the reach (even a paid ad - as I have tried) of a small inventor, esp., if the operation of said device shows the world I have been right for 25 years! "TWO FLYWHEELS ARE FAR MORE EFFICIENT FOR A TOTAL BODY CARDIO WORKOUT THAN ANY ONE-FLYWHEEL BIKE." I wrote in ALL CAPS to show the simple message that I have tried in vain to impart to the world, Even a PAID AD CAMPAIGN with Facebook, my reach is squelched by Meta. Why? Because my claims about the benefits of dual-flywheels, by default, makes their big corporate advertisers look bad. But think about it. I am right. Two flywheels are superior to one, esp., for working the entire body.

My Number #2 negative about Meta is this. Your entire system (includes ads) that all want to put us in specific categories, like a box. I might be an Innkeeper to pay my bills, but in every thing I have done in life, I spend more money on my personal creative

projects, than whatever it is that happens to be my occupation, at the time. My worst FB experience was when I spoke with a Ad specialist. Again and again, she was hellbent on making me commit my motel to spend a certain dollar abound on monthly FB ads! Again and again, I told her, "Please respect what the paying customer wants." I wanted to create a campaign and pay to get my CycleClimber video (the one linked above) seen by the right people, investors and fitness execs. I was so upset that this ad lady seemed oblivious of my needs or goals. It was like she was on commission, and she saw I was an innkeeper. I hate that Facebook (and Google too) want to classify us by solely by our current occupation. Also, a creative inventor type should not be shadow banned because they are anti-Monsanto. Oh! One last very important point! There is no way that Meta AI can make. a sound judgement choice on the intent of a comment reply. Many times, I am on topic for the first three lines of a comment, but say my abstract/ random thought-processing, makes a parting shot, that meanders off-topic? IT IS SO WRONG TO SHADOWBAN a comment (or hide it so if someone has the "Most Relevant" filter ON) so the content, will then be essentially squelched on-the-spot.

Connection to old friends from high school, and family. The new REELS has possibilities, but again, it favors the behemoths. I KNOW I have seen REELS that exceed one-minute in length. But for me, they are limited to only one-minute. I bet Bowflex would get more than 60 seconds in they made a reel? A level playing field is all people ask. For sure, for sure, Marianne Williamson's every post is squelched. her ideas for a sustainable Whole Life Plan was visionary. Keep pesticides out food, keep people healthy. My late father called this preventative maintenance, when it came to his car.

I really wanted to understand and participate in Tik Tok. Up until a few years ago, I had around 20 reels posted. But then? One day, with no notice whatsoever, for no apparent reason, MY ENTIRE TIK TOK WAS WIPED OUT.

I have no idea why My posts were all related to CycleClimber, with a few cat videos too. It blew my mind, and left me disillusioned. The only thing I can think of is my highest

rated reel, was an offer to fight Kanye West. So, maybe he got wind of it, and gave Tik Tok some cash to delete me altogether. Heh-heh. That sounds plausible.

Intolerance to Idiocy is High-Functioning Self-Care

Every time an adverse event has prompted me to instantly commit to make a permanent and positive lifestyle change, I've always called this a defining moment. Dissatisfaction with the status quo, prompts instant change.

Our move to upstate NY from overly-sunny Arizona, came about as a result of a defining moment. That 97-degree October day in 2016, just four days from November served as the proverbial tipping point for pushing my warm weather tolerance to the absolute limit. The catalyst that served as a vivid reminder that we needed to make a huge life change. The nasty sunbaked heat was way over the top, way too late in the year for my comfort or liking. Life had lost all zeal for me. For Yihua too. She could tolerate the hot sun slightly better than me, but for sure, she missed seeing green trees and grass everywhere, like back in her home in Kaifeng. I felt as though our lives were in pause mode. Our reaction to the defining moment could determine our fate with a perfect solution.

Even before seeing the movie, ***Idiocracy,*** thus seeing a flash of our future plutocrat-run dystopia, abound with cult-of-personality nonsense, I had long begun developing a strong disdain for dumb or obnoxious or trite ads (all TV commercials?) that in my mind, were contributing to the dumbing down of the youth of America.

Because I went vegetarian on Jan. 1, 1989, this meant saying no more to nearly all fast food too. I was truly blown away at the exceedingly high percentage of TV commercials that are comprised of loud, gaudy advertisements hawking greasy fast-food fodder (whether it is daytime soap operas or the NFL Playoffs) to the masses. There was and still is, no balance. Okay, maybe a rare commercial for Florida or California oranges pops up every other year so.

What I remember most from the end of the 1990s was that I was becoming more aware of commercials that did not deserve even a single nanosecond of my time or energy. I became fast at changing the channel — to any channel — to avoid hearing even one moment of a glib pitchmen selling something I rarely, if ever, needed.

But in late 2023, my intolerance for anything that seemed to go beyond the cusp of what I deem sane or believable, thus is simply not worthy of being heard reached an apex. No ifs, ands or buts.

I was on my second month alone, as Yihua would not return home from one of her trips to China, until December. 2023. At first, it was just another TV football weekend. The last year of the Pac 12 Conference (aka "the Conference of Champions") made every conference game, a must-win game for my Wildcats, who were off to a great start.

When watching football on TV, I have a bad habit of having several TVs on at once, because if I dash downstairs to grab a beer at the commercial, I never want to miss any of the game if I was still in the kitchen or living room.

BUT… this is when being unprepared can trigger an unexpected "defining moment."

As I alluded to earlier, for me, a defining moment, means that a moment that was so intense it changed my behavior, from that point forward. A perception-reversing experience is sometimes a prelude to satori, not that that is necessarily applicable here.

Sure enough, while I was in the kitchen that awful, horrid TV commercial (the BK jingle! AGH!) came on. In less than a two and a half seconds, I muted the kitchen TV,

then I dashed into the living room and I muted that TV too.

Sadly, I was not fast enough to end the horrid jingle on the spot, in time. The upstairs bedroom TV began playing that God-awful noise trash, I made a mad dash and yanked the cord out of the wall. A man has to do what he's got to do! I yelled out, "WHAT THE HELL?! NEVER NEVER AGAIN!!"

That low-brow noise-trash invasion to my psyche was totally obnoxious and uncalled for. I began employing some intense thinking as I asked myself:

"Was that the all-time worst sound or TV ad trash-noise that ever came out of any TV of mine in my entire lifetime?"

Then? Vague images and squeaky shrieky little kid voice noises from the late 1960s rushed into my thoughts, and a game that my brother and I would play whenever this one really annoying TV commercial came on. It was a commercial for a kid's board game called "Operation," by Milton-Bradley. So in the TV commercial, this bratty sassy little girl nervously but successfully plucks out a bone (funny bone?) without making the buzzer go off. Then she brags to her fellow players with: "HA. HA. HA."

AGH! That sound of her "HA. HA. HA," was beyond excruciating to both of our ears. One "ha" is okay. But 3 in a row, ALL CAPS? With a pause between each one?! Agh!

So… if we were playing in the house, and that Operation game commercial came on, we'd sprint against each other to see who is first to physically yank the TV cord right the hell out of the wall! If we heard even one "HA" it was one too many and neither of us won. It means we both failed.

THAT is how far I have to go back in time (the mid-1960s?!) to remember a commercial almost as vexing to my ears as the BK ad jingle. The other thing about that horrid sound, that some of my tenants here have found funny is because I have never heard what Elon Musk's speaking voice sounds like (partly because I have not watched any TV news since 2023) the sophomoric voice of the BK ad jingle works perfectly! HAH!

Try it. It really works. Maybe one those Meta content creators can use their A.I. talents to make an A.I. version of Elon so that it appears he is the voice behind the BK ad jingle, by making the A.I. version of Elon singing karaoke to that same BK ad-jingle? HAH!

At "that exact moment" I swore, then and there, I would commit to never hearing a TV commercial ever again. I was DONE! Cold turkey. I would mute the audio as soon as any ad came on. The BK ad jingle crossed the line. This changed the way I have watched TV since around 1960. Whichever Madison Avenue ad-agency that is guilty of putting their name to that horrid fast-food jingle are the parties that are solely responsible for me never listening to a commercial ever again.

This went deep. I mean, I will never watch a Super Bowl at a party or a bar, because of serious fear that the damn BK noise trash would just come on, without notice.

It took the worst, most obnoxious, invasive, apex-of-idiocy BK noise-trash jingle for me to finally avow: NO MORE! NOT EVER. NOT EVEN THE SUPER BOWL. NO ADS. EVER AGAIN.

As I analyzed my heated emotions and fast-reaction time, I asked, "Why the BK ad?"

My answer to myself: "We have our limits. BK is rock-bottom. The apex of idiocy. The kind of ad that actually dumbs the youth of America down to an all-time nadir."
That BK jingle sounded like the Frito Pendejo character from "Idiocracy" trying to do his best Barney the Purple Dinosaur impression. I mean this shit is targeted to pre-schoolers.

For sure, BK is not trying to sell sandwiches to the working man. Not with that inane noise garbage. No. They are reduced to targeting ad campaigns to 5 years olds, so that tots sitting in shopping carts can scream out at malls, "Wah. I want BK."

Whichever ad agency handles Burger King is either soulless or devoid of a conscience or fully-functioning moral compass, as they push way too hard to dumb down the youth of today to new nadirs, by hawking unhealthy fast-food with what that has truly gone rock bottom.

That BK jingle is an ASSAULT ON MY SENSE of hearing.

To illustrate BK's noise trash metaphorically, by using a different one of the 5 senses.
Let's say some raunchy spokesperson dude, okay say ESPN's Pat McAfee was hosting a free Pay-per-View Boxing event party at a bar. Free food. Free drinks. No cover. But in return for sponsoring the FREE EVENT, McAfee was allowed to walk around the bar making loud, smelly flatulence for EVERYONE TO SEE AND SMELL?

I cannot speak for others, but I would be like? WHAT? This is nuts! I'm outta here! Just cause a raunchy dude sponsors or is hosting a sporting event, he does not have the right to ASSAULT MY SENSE of smell.

The same logic is used here. WHY should Burger King be allowed to assault any of my senses. NO!

BK's ads being at the nadir of decorum and good taste ruined it for every other advertiser for me until the end of time. NO MORE COMMERCIALS!

THANK GOD FOR THE MUTE BUTTON!!!

On October 8, 2026, it will mark three continuous years of muting every TV commercial. But less than a month earlier I had already avowed to quit watching all TV news too. I'd listened to the constant biased bullshit and corporate-first drivel coming from both major news networks, I am now 4 days from going two straight years without being lied to by either news source. If *the Guardian* had a news channel, I would watch. *The Guardian* reports what needs to be read, not what they want to push to the masses.

If Fox, CNN and MSNBC continue protecting Monsanto, by neglecting to report about the dangers of glyphosate and diquat, they are of no use to me, because I cannot trust selective (Monsanto approved) news reporting. Give me the Guardian every time!

Just like other defining moments, that changed my behavior, from that point on, going forward, quitting all TV news cold turkey, came about because of a singular incident that made me turn it off.

This is why I quit all TV news cold turkey, back on September 19, 2023. I could no longer stomach what the corporate news was pushing. It was my 65th birthday. I had just dropped my wife and her friend off at the Binghamton bus station, where they would connect with a shuttle to fly out of NYC to spend a few months of rest &

relaxation in her home province of Henan China. Upon arriving to our empty home (it was just me and the cats for a few months) as I began feeding all the cats, I turned on the TV.

Since the horrific events that took place on January 6, 2021, I'd found myself slowly getting caught up into watching this Ari Melber guy on MSNBC. His January 6th coverage of the insurrection was stellar, better than anything CNN was pedaling.

But on this day, Ari Melber was about to interview Bill Gates. I could not watch more than two minutes. He was almost pandering to Gates, as went on and on and on, praising Bill Gates for this and that. Cringeworthy ass-kissing is what was! BUT! He never said anything that I feel needed to be said. I was pissed. I grabbed the remote and turned the TV off. That was the last minute of TV news for me.

I already know I did not miss anything. I still look at newsfeeds though. I am sure that neither Fox nor MSNBC has done any coverage on news I want and need to read about. Like how unlabeled glyphosate is still in many General Mills foods (thanks to the FDA allowing foods sourced from RoundUp Ready technology foods to proliferate) as reported by the Business Insider back on May 14, 2019. The article actually said:

"Of the 28 new samples, the group found that Quaker Oatmeal Squares cereal showed the highest levels of glyphosate, nearly 18 times a high as its safety threshold."

If it were me interviewing Bill Gates, I would have immediately yanked the elephant out of the MSNBC's Green Room (that Gates was probably sitting in) and unlike Ari, I would have been far more candid, with compelling must-ask questions and words like:

“Bill, it seems like yesterday that the Gates Foundation bought 500,000 shares of Monsanto stock. This was during a contentious and turbulent time, right around when the national bipartisan March Against Monsanto movement began sprouting and slowly gaining momentum to implement mandatory labeling of GMOs. A few years later, the March Against Monsanto events took place. I myself marched three times in two years for the most important political fight of my then, half-century plus a half-decade lifetime. No other issue comes close to this level of importance for me, at least as far as adversely affecting my life and health on a day-to-day basis goes. After Obama’s ‘bait & switch” on mandatory transparency (he signed off on the Dark Act in 2015 after promising mandatory labeling in 2007 in Iowa on the campaign trail) a deep and seemingly permanent scar formed on the Dem party that created two factions. Progressives and the MEDs. MEDs being an acronym for Monsanto-Enabling Democrats. I found it odd that your own Microsoft became a member of the now disbanded GMA or Grocery Manufacturers Association, the most nefarious lobbying group in my lifetime, who’s members collectively spent 101 million in a single year averting mandatory labeling that was supported by 90% of all Americans, per the NYT poll. HOW COULD YOU?!”

Another large and beloved company that crossed the line is PayPal. I had a rarely used account back in Tucson. The PayPal rep even found it. No one else could have supplied the info I gave him. The two-way verification feels like a scam to me. The over-the-top efforts of seemingly every major corporation wanting users to give them a cell phone number is insane to me. No way. The best way to cease corporate bullying is to say “good riddance.”

I have never accessed any online banking or social media with a mobile phone because of this. Think about how idiotic this sounds.

Pay Pal was hellbent on wanting me to give them a cell number to prove I am me? I said, “I have a business landline I pay good money to the phone company for. I live in a motel that has been here since the early 1960s. Yet, you want me to buy a throwaway

cell phone that I could buy at the Family Dollar Store in 10 minutes to prove I am me?"

Pay Pal is crazy! As it is, I cannot even answer my phones now, because of robocall scammers. I told PayPal (on a recored line) if you think I am going to give you my number so you can sell it to robocall scammers like Spectrum (who refuses to cease and desist robocalling us) and the car warranty scammers too. Enough! Bye!

Once I discovered all the companies that spent big bucks enabling Monsanto's Dark Act to pass, my boycott forever grew to several hundred companies.

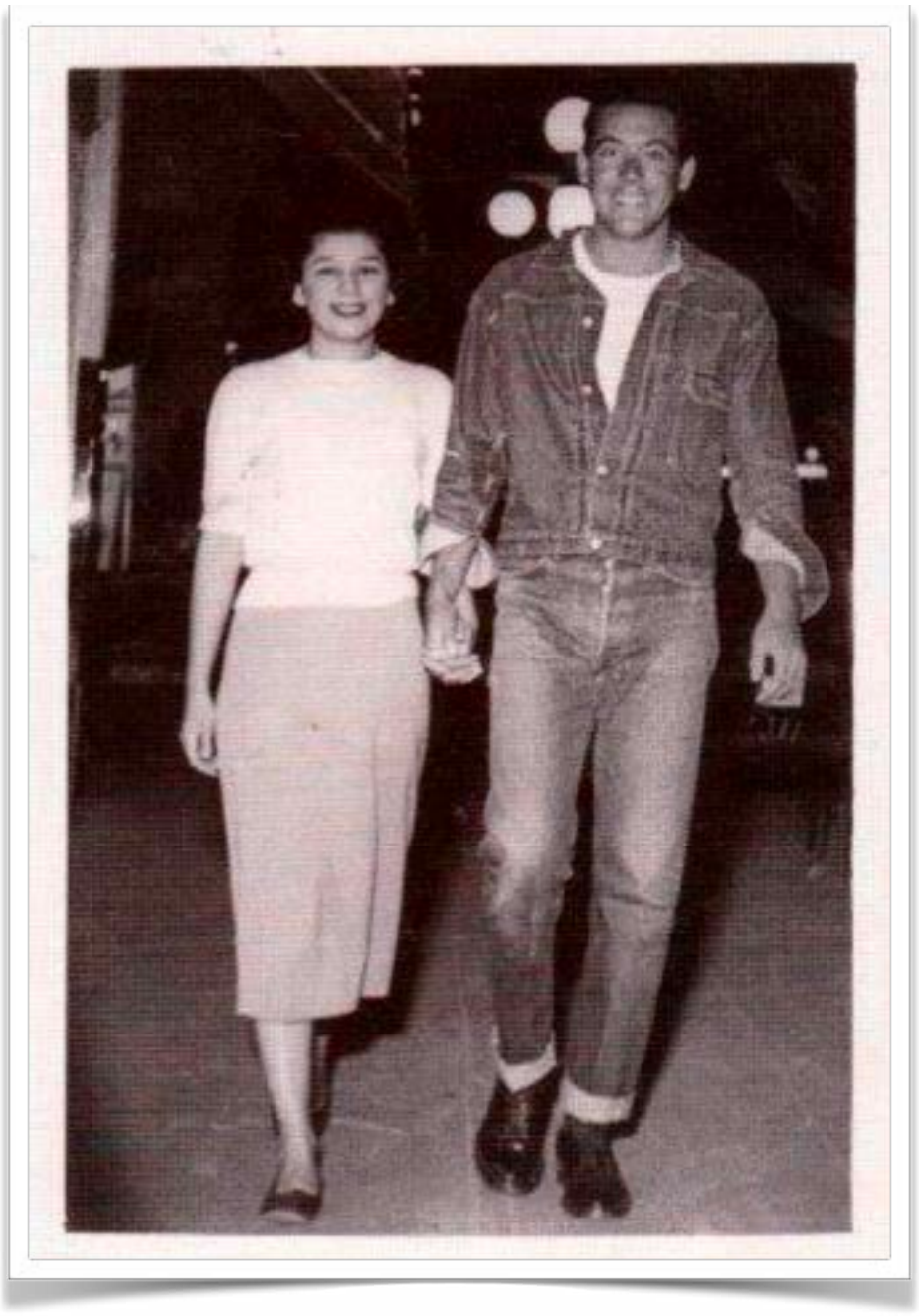
Of course, my *boycott forever promise* won't end Pepsi or Kelloggs or Nestle or General Mills or Coca Cola, but by conscience and my soul feels content and intact, which on a daily basis, sure beats the hell out of cognitive dissonance.

The last major company I had to quit forever was Amazon. When Bezos donated $1,000,000 to Trump's inauguration, thereby becoming the first A in MAGA, after META, that was it. Good bye Amazon!

Up to that point, my reasoning was "the enemy of my enemy is my friend."

I prematurely concluded that by buying from Amazon, it would be like hurting Walmart. But they're just as bad to me.

Thank God for Wegman's, who tries to respect human rights and believe that women deserve equal pay for the same job as a man and kudos to Aldi's for stocking alternative brands, that did not enable Monsanto. Thank you Aldi's.



Stella & Hector Hansen in 1949 in downtown Tucson, one year before their November 25, 1950 wedding at All Saints Church.

Fast-forward several years and many characters, as well a new boiler. November 25, 2020 would have marked my parent's 70th wedding anniversary. Of course inwardly, I knew that being with both of my parents as they made it to 66 years of marriage (and seeing the end of of 2016 going into the 2017 New Year together) in their longtime Tucson home was almost an idyllic way to go. The thing about special dates is that they always bring lucid memories and emotions to surface. While going through pictures and folders on an old external hard drive, I came across a random video clip from August 2013. I had put my CycleClimber machine in the back of my old 1998 Nissan Frontier. I parked it just adjacent to the old Hippie Hill. The same Hippie Hill I told my parents I got the double-dose cube of LSD from in October 1973. I was 15, and I was not going to rat out my new buddy, Esposito.



Anyway, with Hippie Hill in the background, I came across a couple of scenic moments of my wife wearing a dress on the CycleClimber and I was reminded not only how nice

and breezy that day was, but how the machine felt that day, while using it in the back of an old pick-up truck with shoddy old shocks in dire need of replacement.

There was a bit of a bounce, but it did not seem to do anything all that significant, but I clearly remembered it being “kinda fun.” The bounce added a new dynamic, like the novel ephemeral joy a kid feels when jumping on a trampoline for the first time. Cool. That is when the fun starts; when one discovers the intrinsic joy of random experimentation to feel firsthand and not only feel the full gamut of what the movement does, but to also quickly intuitively understand the full potential range-of-possibilities too.

I then began searching for the clip from that same day that showed me riding on the CycleClimber. For whatever reason, on that afternoon shoot at the park, the upper flywheel was extended high, almost at maximum extension. The shoddy shock bounce helped with the climb, coupled with the gravity of each pedal stroke. This is when the thought struck me in a flash of newfound Eureka-laced inspiration. What if the bounce came from just one side? That would add an angled vertical oscillating dynamic to the dual-flywheel workout. What if there were an adjustable pivot in the front (rubber bushings, door hinges, etc,) with a pair of large coil compression springs or gas compression springs, mounted in the back of the frame, right where the weight was the heaviest? A much needed rhythmic bounce was born. How would it feel?

As I was locking up our motel front office, I looked up at the framed picture of my parents from 1949, walking on Congress Street in downtown Tucson, I felt what seemed like the proverbial love nudge of moral support – as if magic – direct from my parents, who, unbeknownst to them of course, heh-heh, planted another great seed, or Eureka #3 in my inventor's mind's eye. Would this newly inspired version also ace the proof-of-concept test as prototype #1 and prototype #2 had done? There was only one way to find out. Build it ASAP.

Less than one-week later, on Dec 1st, 2020, the pair of 8-inch coil springs arrived via UPS, from McMaster Carr. After some experimentation with the angle and a surefire means to adhere the coil springs, I knew at once, I had stumbled onto a total game-changer.

One incidental benefit that shocked even me (after using CycleClimber for over a year with the new spring-based oscillation) was this: My height and reach increased!

Because I had already received the Notice of Allowance in September 2023 (I even paid the issuance fees in October) I was actually hoping the two utility patent numbers could end up spanning 30 years apart!

These big half-dozen fitness behemoths have invested huge money promoting their own flagship fitness products. If word came out that an old vegan pothead is burning more calories, generating more power and working the upper body on an old 2013 inertia-based dual-flywheel machine in his living room that most people can take apart and put back together again (almost zero maintenance in 8 years) and nary a dime was spent on monthly subscription crap, it would not be good for their corporate agenda and/or their DR marketing model. Heh-heh. Ya think?

Looking back, everything seemed to change after I sent Bowflex the one-hour VHS tape from Easter Sunday 2000 that they asked for. The thought hit me that some of Bob Marley's lyrics may have been offensive to the exceedingly conservative Bowflex boardroom tribe.

i.e., “Rasta don't work for no CIA.”

Obviously, there is probably an entire alternative story of what really went down in their view. I understand that a large and growing company can change product development focus, but this was not the case here. Even as recently as January 2002, Cook still assured me, “it would be on an infomercial. Any day soon.”

One month later, while performing at the Adelaide Fringe Festival, I was allowed to put in my bio that I currently had a licensing agreement with Bowflex and that my machine would be coming out soon.

The thirty years of giving my best toward a creative, labor-of-love was EVERYTHING. As an inventor, I felt validated as I passed all three proof-of-concepts and I exhibited both a hunger and a willingness to test any and all my claims in an undefended sports-medicine lab, against any and all competitors. It works. If after all is said and done, all I have to show for it, is being cardio fit going into 2050, when I am 92, so be it. That is something far more precious to me than Fitness Honcho Big Club validation.

Like the late George Carlin said, “It's a big club and you ain't in it.”

[The founders of UFC and Crossfit are both hardcore Trump supporters, hence the expected snub, ha. The main money guy that was instrumental in the initial founding and funding of SoulCycle, Stephen Ross, is also a Trump supporter. I stand proudly from afar; a Bern-Green-Dem vegan-pothead that loves my 7 C's for sustainable happiness; Coffee, cats, comedy, cardio, cannabis, cabbage, creativity.]

Now at age 68, I am cerebral, lucid, hyper and healthy with excessive physical energy, above average agility, with no pain and no surgeries on my elbows, knees, ankles or shoulders. My elasticity is magically all back. It sounds unbelievable (even to myself) that NOW, for the first time, I really have a true 80-inch reach, and I am, once again,

exactly six-feet tall on the nose.

Earlier this year when I had my most recent bloodwork tested, I was concerned about a too-low HDL level of 30. I asked the doctor about this. She damn near laughed when she told me that my blood is healthier than most 20 year-olds she sees. She explained the reason my 30 HDL was nothing to worry about, was that my LDL was just 48, so this means my LDL to HDL ratio was 1.6 to one, even more desirable than the three and and half to one most doctors want for their patients. Some folks are even 5 to 1, so for sure, the 48 LDL and 55 triglycerides, and 90 cholesterol was close to stellar for an old mid-60s hippie celebrating his 54th year smoking cannabis, not to mention more than a half-century of steady beer and tequila consumption.

In my view, this is science. Excellent elasticity, flexibility, no joint or tendon problems, good bloodwork, all from using this one machine. For me, the results from using the machine with springs, for almost three years are even more unreal to me. This is proof as well.

I remember all too well how portly I was on the morning that Foles won his Super Bowl MVP. It was the damn blue corn tortilla chips and bean burros. I weighed 256 pounds. I had sore joints, knees, a painful case of sciatica and something called xiphoid process, like a contusion sticking out from my solar plexus area. For me, this was my physical rock-bottom. I hated myself, and the pitiful old man stat that I was somehow becoming part of and contributing to. I felt as though the countless TV ads try to make people think and feel old, and age fast, so they can sell them Big Pharma crap. I am not buying.



That was then. The end of my 50s. But now, because I am blessed with an inordinate amount of daily energy, I really am perfectly content to be that Ernest T. Bass on Bowflex collective boardroom ass, until the end end of time (or even until New Year's Eve 2050?) gleefully shouting from rooftops with Ernest T. Bass like mockery too. Heh-heh.

“Tee hee hee, hey big bad Bowflex, you ain’t got nothin’ I want. Are you serious? The best that your entire six-figure R&D team can do is Max Trainer?! Hee-hee, haa-haa.”

Then, my Ernest T. Bass laughter (with a wisp of Frank Gorshin’s Riddler’s LOL) will morph into my best Woody Woodpecker laugh for added exclamation. That works for me. Really.

“Heh-heh-heh-eh, Heh-heh-heh-eh! Is that the best total body cardio machine, your entire six-figure R&D team could put together in all those years since you tried to flush me in 2002? Max-Trainer? Ha. Bring it on Core Fitness! I’m back! And you can’t flush me THIS TIME! Why? Because less than a year ago, your stock sunk to modern day nadir. Why? Lack of innovation. Hee hee haw haw. Can you feel the irony? Heh-heh.

Once I looked up Bowflex, I saw that they were now a part of Core Fitness, I remembered the name, Michael Bruno. I found an email from August 17, 2010 from Michael Bruno. I said to myself, “wait, who is Michael Bruno?”

Then I began reading, hoping of course to jog my memory. The email was sent at 3:25PM. My first line gave me a huge clue who this man was.

Michael,

First of all, I would like to congratulate you on your acquisition last month of Star-Trac.

I saw that his reply to my August 2010 email came at 3:38PM. Fast response, yes? Under 15 minutes is fast. His concise two-line reply to my longish email was respectful.

I am willing to look at your business plan, and as I remember you were going to make me a sample. I need to see and understand.

Before buying out Star Trac, he was and still is the owner of Land America in Xiamen China, but I think he resided or also had offices somewhere in Ohio at the time. I sent him a very short 25 second reel so I could embed the video in the February 22, 2021 email. My brief one-page email concluded with:

"Because your 2010 email showed me so much class and respect, I thought of contacting YOU first.

I will call you in about 10-15 minutes.

Thank you Michael!"

A short time later, we spoke one the phone. He told me that he would show it to one of his trusted engineers and *get back to me soon.* He never did. I knew it was time to move on to the next prospect. Just like selling books.

Fast forward to 9/11/2021, just over six-months later. On a whim, I tried finding the engineer (that Michael Bruno placed all his trust in) online somewhere. After a couple of minutes, I found him. After about a minute after looking at this guys page, I was like:

"OKAY! Well, now at least I know why I didn't receive any callback from Bruno."

Then? At that moment, something kind of snapped in me. I saw a picture of fireman in their fireman gear, riding StairClimber machines, while wearing all of their heavy fireman gear. The post was about honoring first responders, as this was 9/11. I did not care that he was trying to do a cross promotion to boost the StairMaster brand and giving respect to "First Responders." No. During this time, actually since 9/11, I have seen certain conservatives use the term "first responder" as if it is a term that implies that only to republican men & women heroes. My late father retired in 1976, as an Assistant Chief with the Tucson Fire Department. He had many fireman friends over the years. If anything, there were probably more democrats than republicans in TFD. Right then and there, I snapped. BUT, I decided to still take the high road, by playing dumb, and giving the guy the benefit of a doubt.

I proceeded to write a long comment post saying all that I needed to say. In this message, I said nothing bad or about how I felt that this goon was trying to politicize 9/11, yet again. Instead, I played it cool. I shared a link, reminding him about the workout, the early history of Star-Trac's initial interest in the workout, along with saying Michael Bruno told me he'd look at it, and get back to me, and maybe we can talk. Of course, I did not expect any kind of reply.

I was okay with crossing Star-Trac off my prospect list. Esp., after I read where they peaked out at around $185 MIL, pre-2008 recession. Then, I saw came across a 2015 article in Manufacturing Today that said that Star-Trac was "struggling" and in need of a "financial turnaround" at the time of its acquisition.

Also, the downturn of Bowflex (another brand that Core took over) went from over a half-billion in 2003, to where they were sold for 37.5 million on April 22, 2024 to Johnson Health Tech, after filing for Chapter 11 in March 2024.

Star Trac never really recovered from their peak, pre-2008 recession, and Bowflex, post-Covid never recovered as more people began going to gyms again. A huge reason that both companies were not able to duplicate their past success, came down to *failure to innovate*. A classic example of how the NIH syndrome can come back and bite the big behemoths on their GMO-loving corporate ass. KARMA BITES.

Looking back, I was astounded at how many lawsuits these behemoth have had against one another. It is really hard to keep up. First Soloflex sues Bowflex. Then, Mad Dogg sues Peloton. Then Peloton sues Echelon.

I am okay with this. Because I pitched a Reality Cartoon idea all-true episodes featuring the local motel characters we've had our first half-dozen years as the Green Satori Innkeepers in a red county. It is a fun new adventure to sink my cerebral teeth into,

that's all that matters. On a one-hour Reality TV pitch, I had the TV Exec laughing for 82 minutes, as I performed all the voices of our whacky guests. A new creative labor-of-love. I used to tell people, whatever a kid did in 5th grade to occupy his time, might relate to what one really wants to do in life, or retirement.

In the meantime, it might appear that I occasionally resort to desperate measures to generate a Madison Avenue like champagne buzz for bringing attention to CycleClimber on an Alpine Junction innkeeper, beer dude's salary. Like my 2022 April Fool's Day joke that fooled my old boss from Bear Stearns, claiming that Adam Sandler was going to play me in a forthcoming Netflix film. HA!

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TONAL is finally set to launch their long-awaited total body cardio workout companion to their flagship digital training system in conjunction with the premiere of Adam Sandler's new movie: "The CycleClimber Dude."

While product placements and corporate product tie-in partnerships are certainly not uncommon in film, launching such a high-ticket home fitness product for the first time on a live Netflix streaming premiere, as the centerpiece of a character driven, inventor dramedy is clearly a first. The caveat is that the actual Direct Response marketing 1-800 phone lines and a special online website will be revealed during the Netflix streaming premiere, as well. The units are priced at $4,999, two-thousand more than their current total body digital training system. For this Netflix premiere, they will sell the first 200 units at $4999.00.

Adam plays Marko Hansen, a quirky, small-time, absent-minded, yet hyperconscious inventor, who, while experimenting with automobile coil springs in his upstate NY motel living room, stumbled onto the most efficient total body cardio workout on the planet and became patent pending again after a quarter century.

Aly Orady, CEO of Tonal, a technology-based fitness company that is fast becoming a global leader in digital training technology saw a few minutes of the 63-year-old Hansen's half-hour CycleClimber Workout (with spring-based oscillation) on his crude, minimalist, no-tech, inertia-based, dual-flywheel machine from 2013, and he jumped out of his boardroom chair. "Hey, that old man is working more muscles, with far more power than a high cadence Peloton instructor!"

Soon, Sandler, Orady and Hansen all agreed on a deal, and the rest is history. Peloton, Bowflex, Wahoo, Pro Form and Echelon are suddenly feeling the heat, as this could turn the tide, and signal a major change in the indoor home fitness cardio fitness market, and reaffirm TONAL as not only the undisputed leader of all home fitness companies, but also the new cardio home fitness darling and emerging force in Direct Response Marketing, all in one daring swoop.

When interviewed, CEO Orady replied, "DON'T LOOK UP PELOTON!"

[Peloton might see firsthand that CycleClimber's upper-flywheel serves as scientific proof that you can work out both the upper and lower body, independently, yet together. Hansen was right all these years, the dual-flywheels really do deliver the most efficient total-body workout of any cardio machine. A seated climber really is an oxymoron.]

www.cycleclimber.com

The 2022 April Fool's Day mock press release that fooled my old boss. Oops.

If I had my druthers

We often hear that people with ADHD are scatter-brain motormouths devoid of patience and no sense-of-organization or self-control. I plead guilty to all of the above. Except the last one. At least in recent years. The good thing about full-blown ADHD overthinking is the all-encompassing hyperconsciousness (that accompanies and eventually dictates the cerebral focus) that's already intrinsically (via genetics) threaded into the cerebral assemblage. This allows for some creative, spirited, unconventional but exceedingly useful outside-the-box brainstorming to ignite and take the neurodivergent thought-processing all over the place.

The myriad of viable ideas to check off a list (after writing them all down) one-by-one, as well as celebrity influencer names that are constantly changing and evolving and are growing all-too quickly in my withering optimist ADHD head, feel infinite. However, as the summer of 2026 wanes to a close, these are the two-dozen or so outside-the-box options I thought about the most, beginning with the current dozen or so, which are also constantly changing. Of course, for me to even officially submit any of these ideas to any of these names and brands, it would already be deemed an enormous bigger-than-my-life long shot. I know that the likelihood of busting through this increasingly humbling and seemingly surmountable obstacle is between slim to none, esp., at this stage of the fitness founder game, but it is still a fun, engaging, and interesting activity

to jot down on paper nonetheless. This is what makes no-limit thinking so damn fun. The plan. The chase! The end result is none of my business. The effort put forth is what matters.

Unlike inventing, where the proof-of-concept serves as the cut and dry, pass or fail means of grading a given project to prepare for pitching. I am responsible for imagining it and in giving my absolute best in getting it out there so others can possibly get an idea of how the machine works, as well as the multitude of options there are in order to introduce it to the world. But of course, no one can control what others think, but I've always been adept at planting sincere and spirited seeds of endless possibilities, so this leaves me a bona fide glimmer of hope that there is a decent chance that at least 4 to 7 names out of every name or brand mentioned below, might see this chapter. I hope so.

Just for fun, what if Miley Cyrus took off a few months from her music to also brand herself a fitness pioneer on the side? Or Serena Williams, in her new weight loss love for Ozempic, decided she wanted a machine to call her own, but with her own sense-of-styling and bells & whistles? Or maybe her vegan sister, Venus? The possibilities are endless. The sound business advice given to me by my old Bear Stearns colleagues and even my hour-long meeting with an SBA business advisor in 1997, all seem null & void, non-applicable, hackneyed fluff, esp., now in 2025. Outdated.

I wonder what these same business experts would have said, back in February 2018, our first winter here in our little country motel? An antiquated boiler that was ready to die, just two long term tenants, one was a couple that we later discovered might have have

been planning to make a batch of meth in the bathtub. By February 2018, the bank balance dropped to under 1K. Scary. But we weathered the storm, through Covid in 2020, which might have been our best year.

Same thing with trends. I have always loathed the notion of paying heed to anything the masses deem "trendy" since junior high. Thinking back to 7th grade, Doolen Junior High in the fall of 1970, most of the new smokers were predictable Marlboro and Winston kids. I recall thinking how those two red & white brands of smokes were so trendy to me. I had to be different. I chose Tareyton 100's, so I could say, "I'd rather fight than switch."

Likewise, the year we moved from Arizona to New York, Arizona was a top 3 destination to move to, while NY was a top 3 destination for people moving from. But when you ignore trends, or the exact opposite of what the masses do, you can closer align yourself to to your own *inner-signals* and make the RIGHT CHOICE, as opposed to the trendy choice. Out of all my options, I really love the top half-dozen or so.

I'll start with the obvious no-limit brainstorming names and ideas, then delve into more unconventional licensing options for a solo innovator, lacking necessary start-up capital or PR connections. The top dozen or so. I lost count. Maybe two-dozen. Maybe more.

Taylor Swift, the biggest music star of the current era. Progressive, fit, kind and lovable. No one is a bigger star that could make the workout as mainstream-friendly like Taylor

could.

Caitlin Clark, who initially signed a contract with Wilson Sporting Goods, but more recently with Nike. Caitlin already has the profile, tenacity, and talent to become every bit the superstar in the WNBA that Steph Curry is in the NBA.

Paris Hilton, an attractive young woman with huge name recognition, a propensity for fitness and she is smart and insightful at using her name with her unique strain of marketing acumen.

Serena Williams, the iconic women's tennis player and best pure female athlete in my lifetime. Serena is surrounded with a smart team of investors that could help make the workout methodology really big, in a very short time.

Oprah Winfrey, a powerful, influential, self-made woman, who has a keen interest in both health and self-improvement, who's passion and generosity could make any “next great thing” happen, at the snap of her fingers.

Candace Parker, recently retired WNBA star who signed on with Adidas as President of Women's Basketball. In my view, a retired WNBA player is the ideal target market for the machine, but Adidas boxing might be an even better target market.

Sometimes, the random names of wealthy women with an interest in self-improvement or health come to mind too, like MacKenzie Bezos and Melinda Gates. However, I am acutely aware that both powerful women are extreme long shots, seeing that I am the total antithesis of their billionaire ex-husbands. My guess is that Melinda Gates heard of my first trade show customer, the late Daryl Rubin, one of her ex-husband's brightest engineers during Microsoft's early years. My cousin Rose was my first sale.

If I trek way outside conventional in-the-box thinking, random couples and or biz partnerships jump to mind like Dwayne Wade and Gabrielle Union, or Martha Stewart and Snoop Dogg. Just kidding on the last one. But Snoop Dogg would be a logical licensing partner for Madd Dogg (Spinning) to pair up with for obvious reasons. Heh. I wonder who had the double gg on dog first? Okay. I had to peek. Evidently, Snoop Dogg used the double gg before Madd Dogg by about two years.

"If a solo inventor rebrands in the forest, does anyone know, does anyone care?"

[That's what I call a quasi-koan.]

But the idea that I am starting to like the most (as far as couples go) and really makes a lot of sense to me, would be filmmaker Jay Roach and his wife, Susanna Hoffs. The reason that Jay & Susanna bounced into my thoughts? Not only am I exactly between their two birth years, Jay was born in 1957, Susanna in 1959. I am in-between, 1958. But also their birth states too. Jay was born in New Mexico. Susanna was born in California.

Again I was born in-between; Arizona. One parallel might be a coincidence, but in my book (literally) two parallels make for *inner signals.* The more I thought about it, the more it made sense. Susanna Hoffs would make for a great CycleClimber or *ClimbROCKER* spokeswoman. I am still teetering back and forth for the name change.

Jay would have the resources to make a compelling film. Maybe the prospect of them owning majority interest in a fitness company, has some appeal to them? I could easily see Susanna Hoffs as the main spokesmodel (okay – a fella can dream can't he?) just as she is, all fit and photogenic, looking a quarter century younger than her true age, could possibly generate a viral buzz.

Recently on my Google newsfeed, I saw this headline:

"Carrie Underwood Flaunts 'Best Legs Since Tina Turner" in New Concert Photos

Of course, I had to click on the Yahoo Entertainment news story (courtesy of Parade) which showed Carrie, and yes, her tan and very nice (toned) 41-year-old legs.

But my hyper-reactive mind immediately wondered why the title mentioned, "Tina Turner?" I knew Tina had nice, toned dancer legs too, but what made her, and now, Carrie,, the new "nicest legs over 40" Gold Standard?

This is when the rock goddess image of Susanna Hoffs jumped right into the forefront of my immediate consciousness! So, upon doing a quick image search, I saw a picture that proved my claim and I even showed my wife, as if to pine for true objectivity on this imaginary debate that was germinating in my ADHD-fed over-analysis. However before showing her, I discovered that the picture of Susanna was not recent, but rather from 2010 and she was just 51 years old, but still a full decade older than Carrie Underwood's Parade's pictorial spread on her 41 year-old legs. I am not dismissing the quality of Carrie's fine legs. No, I am challenging the random claim as worded in the Parade headline, “Best legs since Tina Turner.”

At the time, it never occurred to me that I was asking my wife to vote on a picture of another 51-year-old women's pair of legs! Oops. My bad. Esp., when my wife's own 52-year-old legs (at the time) were suddenly exhibiting their own signs of definition, after just one year of using the CycleClimber machine herself.

Nevertheless, I rephrased the question by framing it differently. This time, I framed my question to make it sound as though I was merely asking my wife, “Don't you think a 51-year-old can have better legs than a 41-year-old?”

Of course I was NOT surprised when my wife agreed with me, upon seeing the 2010 pic of Susanna Hoffs. Whoa. In my eyes, at the very least, you could call it a tie with Carrie, but Susanna Hoffs' legs take a back seat to no one!

Of course, newsfeeds with eye-popping headlines still make people click. I sure did. I was promised nice legs, I saw nice legs. But “best legs since Tina Turner?” Hmmm...

When I see what is trending, I know that was put out there with money and PR people. On one Yahoo newsfeed, it said a new Taco Bell offering was trending. So much for me trusting news bits that trend, even those that seem not paid for. They usually are. Any splash of real PR, comes at a price.

This makes me wonder how much Taco Bell (or their parent corp., Yum Brands) paid for somehow making “the Blind Slide” the slickest PR piece that really tried showing moviegoers that Taco Bell owners actually have a human side. Heh. Thanks to stellar acting by Sandra Bullock to pull that off! Ha.

[Gee whiz, prior to watching “the Blind Side,” I had foolishly deduced that any Yum Brands franchise owners were all equally awful people, as they all they all shamelessly profit from shortening the lives of kids and adults worldwide by pushing the most unhealthy fast-food fare of any mega-parent corporation in my lifetime.]

My bad. “The Blind Side” set me straight! Sarcasm off. Not to mention the horrid animal abuse the late Bea Arthur brought to light, and spoke about in the now iconic Kentucky Fried Cruelty video she appeared in. I cried. Really. No kidding. I did a complete 180. Prior to seeing that KFC video, I was not a fan of Bea Arthur, aka “Maude.” But after I saw her with my own eyes speak out against animal abuse, my love and respect for her soared tenfold. I love Maude now. RIP Bea Arthur. You rock.

On the flip side, to Taco Bell's credit, at least they never stooped to the lowest of lows like Burger King with that hideous and horrid ad jingle that served as the defining moment that made me mute every TV commercial since October. 2023. Life is too short for noise-trash.

Out of nowhere, in early 2024, I got hooked on the Bangles version of Simon & Garfunkel's "Hazy Shade of Winter." The first half of 2024, I was on pace to have played Hazy Shade of Winter more than any song in a six-month stretch. I remember wondering in June, if I would play that song again and again, through the end of 2024. If so, that means I will have played that song more than I played Zombie by the Cranberries in 2022, a record at the time.

The combined imagery that good music and total-body cardio fitness brings, cannot be underestimated. Good music often brings out our best efforts.

Larry David. I thought of writing the comic icon back in mid-2022, when I had the wildest, unfinished "Curb Your Enthusiasm" themed-dream. I found myself walking into a Brentwood coffee shop that felt like Montana Avenue, like the chic area near *Father's Office.* So… in the dream, I had already ordered coffee and Larry David was in the process of ordering coffee as well. I then seized the opportunity, and I go off… I mean like a full-on animated *Kramer-like* maniac — pitching him about CycleClimber, as if an elevator pitch. I could tell I overwhelmed him as he reluctantly accepted my business card, but then he cautiously backed out of the coffee shop, and I could tell that he simply feigned being polite to me. But then? The strangest thing! Instead of waking

up (dream over?) I found myself observing Larry in a nice home, gazing at a basic old school PC desktop computer, while looking at the business card I gave him, still in his hand.

It was like I was able to peer in and see everything in *his world.*

He poked fun at a web page I had, consisting of two posters, both made from a template from a free Chinese app my wife found. He burst out laughing! "Ha ha. Oh my God. Get a look at this guy's posters. Who does he think he is? Andy Warhol?"

Suddenly, from out of the dining room, Mary Steenburgen comes out as she immediately sees the CycleClimber poster images on Larry's computer monitor as she erupted in cold, callous, marginalizing sting-inducing laughter! "Oh wow. Hideous! How gauche and gaudy!"

Larry added, "ostentatious. Like a Trump inauguration."

Then? Steenburgen's laughter morphed into that of hideous high-pitched horror-struck laughing hyena sounds. I woke up. Even though I knew it was just a dream, at the time, I really wanted to go to Brentwood and defend myself, and plant a seed to Larry David and say:

"Hey, maybe you could have an episode that *starts like that,* but what if you share the ugly poster, it goes viral, you kill me, keep the patent, and bring it to market yourself? Ha ha."

Actually, that was a rehashed offshoot of an old idea I once sent to ABC Daytime. This was shortly after ABC Daytime tried selling real products connected to their shows. Like Erica Kane's Book on All My Children in 1998, sold to the public, but written by her fictional character so the ABC soap fans could engage with her.

But my idea was to feature this seedy sketchy sinister no-good RJ Gannon character on One Life to Live (like All My Children OLTL was an Agnes Nixon creation) discovering my patent application, AFTER wrecking into me and putting me into a coma. Then? This is when RJ discovers a patent application in my briefcase. After my character dies at Llanview Hospital, RJ pursues the invention himself to develop himself and prosper from. In true RJ Gannon form, the machine is then launched and really gets sold to the viewing pubic on the same 1-800 number RJ hypes via his soap character on One Life to Live on his own Llanview, PA infomercial, within the OLTL universe. I know that daytime soaps are filmed two to three weeks ahead, so I meant to coordinate the official product launch in live time during the actual airing of that episode. Not during the filming of the episode. Because of the different time zones, the 1-800 lines would not get hit all at once. No. They would be scattered an hour apart, by EST, CST, MST, etc…

I also thought of presenting this idea to the *Bold and the Beautiful,* as they had fashion models on their show and they prided themselves on their show's characters having high brow marketing acumen.

That silly idea from over twenty years ago is the one I figured ABC had in their old unsolicited submissions pile, which could possibly explain why I never got any callback from Shark Tank. Heh-heh. But the root of the rejection may have also come from my social media, while I was moderating a a GMO-free group with over 20,000 followers and I once enthusiastically shared a video clip of an interview. One of the Shark Tank dudes — the conservative Kevin O guy — and the inspiring young Canadian GMO-free activist Rachel Parent. Rachel schooled O'Leary about GMOs. As I recall, he kept trying to trip her up, but she took control and ended up schooling him because she was wholly informed about GMOs. She put the Kevin O'Leary dude straight. I shared the clip and raved about it too. Ha. Surely, if ABC or O'Leary saw that, it probably did not help my chances of getting on Shark Tank. Duh. Heh-heh. Whatever. I am okay with it.

Alas, my recent rants about being dismayed about so many recent changes at Disney-owned brands veering so far to the right wing, like ESPN. Not so long ago, they even suspended Jimmy Kimmel for something he said too. This is why the outsider view should not always be disregarded by the powers that be. Wow. They might learn different views is okay, instead of pushing an invidious, lugubrious, combative, conservative world view.

i.e., That Jimmy Pitaro dude seems to like pandering to the SEC sect of the viewers. While guys like *'Pat MAGAfee'* can refer to Caitlin Clark as a total bit*h" and still keep his 17 MIL a year gig, why doesn't Doris Burke and Monica McNutt get anything close to the same benefit of a doubt that McAfee receives? Maybe because Doris and Monica don't pander to those SEC loud boys. Ha. That must be it. Why else would Disney allow the *redneckification* of ESPN to continue? You got anti-weed Republican Stephen A. Smith making 20 MIL a year, and even then, several years ago, when I quit watching

First Take on the spot, it was prompted after they brought in yet another far right dude. I remember like it happened last week. My late brother was still alive. I walked into the front room of my parent's house. First Take was on the TV. My brother was having coffee with my father, who was also still alive and having his coffee too. I looked up at the TV and saw yet another entitled opinionated embittered white dude trying to start some shit like why Colin Kaepernick should be disallowed from playing football.

I asked my brother, "So… who's this random no-nothing imbecile?"

My older bro's raw disdain for the goon showed in his now disgusted squinting eyes, "Eh, that's Will Cain."

"The Superman dude?"

"Nah. Same kind of shit though. He's just this sorry ass right-wing blowhard they brought on the show to talk shit to keep Kaepernick from playing."

"Oh yeah? You mean like a ringer to stir the hate Kaepernick pot? Sad. I am done with this show. Not that I watched it very much. But I did crack up how the Stephen A dude liked to piss off Dallas Cowboy fans after a loss, with words he learned out of a thesaurus the night before. Ha ha. No more though now. I am done. I mean they were trying to blackball Kaepernick from the NFL for Christ sake. From now on, when I'm at my house and this is on, I'm watching Dennis the Menace. Hell with that nonsense.

If I really wanted to get children interested in CycleClimbing, the key would be to find a healthy bubbly spokeswoman that is kid friendly to go with this next concept. Old style cartoons (like the old Popeye and Daffy Duck and Yosemite Sam) that are integrated into an app. So, imagine YOU have your own colorful cartoon character avatar on a unicycle (to mirror your lower flywheel action) but for the upper body, you had a paint roller in each hand, and they each took turns as you alternated reaching the apex to do a paint stroke on the edge of the roof? Or, an off-shoot to Jack (Jackie?) and the Beanstalk, how about Ariana Grande and the Humungous Hemp, with this same interactive old school Loony Tunes type animation? *Chasing Ariana.* Or the meticulous line drawing cartoon art of R. Crumb, with the colorization and surreal melting of Salvador Dali? Ha. There's an assignment for an A. I. Program. Make an Ariana Grande inspired Jackie and the Beanstalk avatar with R. Crumb style line art, with a trippy colorful, surreal melting dollop of the essence of Sal Dali. Whoa. Who needs shrooms? HA!

That would be fun interactive imagery to exercise to. Yeah yeah, White Rabbit by the Jefferson Airplane is the obvious choice, but for starters, I think I'd crank up Moody Blues Tuesday Afternoon (Extended Version) to accompany the long slow CycleClimb.

What is the fun in power climbing the Humungous Hemp plant? You never catch Ariana! Like Gilligan's Island, the cast of 7 never get off the island. Same with Chasing Ariana. You can CycleClimb as hard and fast as you can, but you never can touch ClimbROCKER Goddess Ariana up that beanstalk. Ha ha.
Chasing Ariana. A game for younger users. Hey, if keeps kids off obesity, why not? Ahhh, assessing and studying every option is a form of MULTI-CHOICE MADNESS.

Speaking of having a unique hook or idea, but using the idea on someone or some

company that was not the one who really inspired the idea. When I tried posting an April Fool's joke (that Adam Sandler was going to play me in a movie) and Tonal would be involved, well, it actually fooled my old boss at Bear Stearns.

The way it really unfolded was on a birthday morning drive through Arnot Forest to Ithaca. My wife was driving and I had just eaten a strong cannabis edible. A vague marketing tie-in idea began sprouting and growing fast, and in fact even crystalized into a full-blown plan, just as we entered Newfield and my cannabis buzz grew strong. Suddenly the idea to do the product launch on a live streaming premiere, piggy-backing on an already established company jumped to mind.

But at the time, the actor and fitness company that inspired the idea were different. Instead of Adam Sandler, it was Jim Carrey. Instead of Tonal, it was Wahoo. I've always known that Jim Carrey is almost as unreachable as Gilbert Arenas. I don't know if that has changed. But I did eventually write Wahoo. I made a huge beginner mistake. It was something I usually pride myself on too. Attention to detail.

I wrote what I thought was a fresh, from-the-heart, plant-a-creative-seed proposal to Wahoo. BUT! I inadvertently sent it to the conservative money guy, Saturnia, not the brainy creative inventor guy: Chip. If I had just taken a few more minutes of performing my due diligence. It might have made a difference. Maybe not. But I do remember that my sincere, impassioned words in that letter were probably better suited for an upbeat, spirited, creative inventor type letter reader, as opposed to a stoic uber-pragmatic Atlanta accountant minded exec. Oops.

I had never even been on a Wahoo KICKR Bike before. But I liked the design and the smart bike bells & whistles. Personally, I am less infatuated with high-tech smart bike gadgetry now than I was in 2020. But I know this is not about me or about what I like. I still recall the main message that I was supposed to heed from the esteemed West LA Personal Trainer Todd Person, who the late great John Carswell helped me connect with shortly before passing. Person emphasized to me that high-profile professional athletes want data and feedback. I can understand this.

Anyway… would changing my mock April Fool's press release to something more to the spirit that it was actually conceived, really have made any difference? Looking back, that was a grossly out of character thing for me to do; Changing the essence of the way something went down because of of my preconceived notion of other peoples' possible perception of something with no basis.

The thought also crossed my mind to send a pitch package to Stages Cycling in Colorado, with the same idea, but with Keanu Reeves! But almost exactly two years ago, Sept. 20, 2024, Stages was sold to GIANT for a mere 20.1 million. Oops.

For being able to show the manic ADHD energy, the best actor for this is Ben Stiller, but the 80-inch reach would be too big of a stretch. Ah, but what about Ben Stiller, but with CGI special effects?

I recently watched a hilarious scene in my head unfold showing Ben Stiller (as me) discovering that his reach has increased to exactly 80 inches! With the use of CGI like they did with Robin Williams in Flubber or Eddie Murphy in the Nutty Professor, it is not a stretch that Ben Stiller could have arms stretched out to 80-inch reach like me. And it would be hilarious. I know, I know. That is a too big of a long shot. I wasn't much of a Ben Stiller fan, until I saw him in my favorite episode of Friends, where the episode ends, with his character, T*wo-Faced Tommy,* shouting and cussing out Joey & Chandler's ducks, and he was unaware that all the friends were watching him go unhinged psycho on the ducks, from across the hall (the doors were all open) thus proving that Ross was right all along. *Two-Faced Tommy* was crazy. That scene showed me he could be adept at playing an ADHD character.

Maybe I just need to place an ad in Variety soliciting film producers to consider being a fitness pioneer, and owning majority equity in a breakthrough fitness product. Is this even legal? I would think so. Why not? Also, can newspapers own a fitness machine that they are actively marketing under the guise of expanding their product portfolio?

If Jeff Bezos can own the Washington Post, and a stake in Tonal, and he can use it to his advantage, why can't I offer Jay Penske of Penske media controlling interest in exchange for getting the machine seen? It would seem like Men's Health and Triathlete Magazine would be ideal for targeting the right demographic, but that pair of publications feels way out of reach for someone with my lowly status. Oh well.

Despite more than 30 years of PR and news media futility, I still believe and continue to reach out to editors. As a result, if I had to bet on myself, to get one news article to write

any kind of article about my plight, I think I'd single out these six news publications below, all for different reasons as having some kind of chance. At this point in my 33-year journey, I can see myself putting all my inventor eggs in in this half-dozen news media carton. Surely one of them might consider a story? But outside of these half-dozen, my chance for any kind of PR, is slim to none. It is okay. This is when things happen, when it seems one is down to their last six.

1) The Guardian
2) The Verge
3) The Daily Mirror (US)
4) The Santa Monica Mirror
5) The Huffington Post
6) Ithaca Times

It is not easy for me to talk about news media I trust, because the total number is slightly less than all the fingers I have on both hands. BUT! If *thumbs* count too (they have to be pointed upward) then Oprah Winfrey's media company beats all of them, for warranting major respect. In fact, if right now, we had a Democratic primary straw poll for best Democrat tandem for 2028, I'd choose to enhance and AOC, with Oprah as VP, over Newsom, with Buttigieg, piggy-backing on, as VP. Yes yes, I know, they don't run tandems with VP candidate names, while campaigning in the primaries. I am just saying. I get this sounds like I am not taking my own advice. This probably looks like I am taking a page out of the GOP playbook, with more cult-of-personality nonsense. Oprah is a TV star, why throw her name out there. BUT, it is the other way around. Oprah represents substance based on her actions, while Newsom and Buttigieg are campaigning, like Hillary did. With nary one mention of getting unlabeled Round-Up

Ready toxins out of our foods.

Oprah Winfrey did something so rare and special, it should have been on the front page of every newspaper. Yet, what she did was probably just another day at the office.

She did something that BOTH the DNC and MS NOW could learn from. In fact, I am 99% convinced if Kamala Harris did this one gesture that Oprah showed us all, she would have won hands down.

Oprah had already won my respect a long time ago, back on June 24, 1992 (exactly twenty years to the date of my first Soap Box Derby in 1972) she invited Marianne Williamson on her show to promote her new book "A Return to Love!"

I had barely heard of her back then as I rarely, if ever watch any talk shows. Well, not since Johnny Carson and the Tonight Show. I had been attending Marianne's lectures on some church on Arizona Avenue in Santa Monica on Sunday nights for several years. I knew Marianne was a charismatic and gifted speaker, with a truly worthwhile and spiritual message. At that moment, I saw and heard Oprah Winfrey announce that she had bought 1,000 copies of that special and enlightening book. I jumped up out of my Playa del Rey bachelor pad sofa and I said aloud:

"WOW. Oprah is enlightened!"

My spiritual core and emotional innards felt a surge of warm and loving emotion permeate my entire inner being. From that day forward, I always respected her. She also owns an organic farm in Maui, so that is worthy of mention. Okay, so what did Oprah Winfrey do that was so courageous and worthy of tremendous respect?

In early 2015, she made what many of her viewers deemed a serious mistake. Okay, no big deal. Everyone makes mistakes, right? Her magazine which promotes a healthy lifestyle accepted an ad from Monsanto! It showed a family and the ad was promoting GMOs. Immediately, a petition began getting circulated. I was quick to sign it. **But what Oprah did was something that both the DNC and MSNBC have stubbornly refused to do:** She listened to her supporters. She pulled the Monsanto ads that were scheduled to run in February and March. **She turned back Monsanto! It cost her big money.** But she knew that this mistake could come back to haunt her and damage her brand. She became a hero for many families and she saved her brand and won many people's lifelong respect.

That is all the DNC and Kamala had to do to ensure a win in 2024. Instead, the Republicans who also have access to polling data and know what people want, pulled a fast one. They brought in a Trump critic, RFK, Jr., to help orchestrate the ultimate Dog & Pony Show (under the guise of MAHA) to show this disenfranchised 90% of all Americans that they have a guy on board who's law firm actually BEAT MONSANTO!

RFK, Jr., was the most difficult of all candidates to vet. On one hand, I respected his efforts in battling mega-behemoths like Bayer/Monsanto, esp., seeing that no one else

seemed to care about the 90% of us that did not want unlabeled glyphosate in our family's food choices. BUT! The more I thought about it, RFK, Jr., was NOT to be trusted. First, I am old enough to remember his father, who I respected and admired. RFK was a former US Attorney General. Can you imagine what RFK would have thought if he knew that his own son dismissed the events of January 6th as no big deal, or not enough to make him refuse Trump's offer? Bobby would be rolling in his grave!

Also, the fact that I am a vegan and I have spent many years researching foods and what is best for my family, made me wholly appalled at RFK's push for BEEF TALLOW?! Is he kidding? I am not saying he does not have a point about seed oils not being healthy, but by now, I'd think that at least 9 out of 10 people know that for health, avocado oil or olive oil is much preferred. Beef tallow? Come on dude!

That was it for me. Yeah, RFK Jr., is a quack. Ignoring Jan. 6, 2021 coupled with his beef tallow push served as the ultimate definitive deal-breaker. At least for me! But sadly, I cannot speak for others. I wholly disagreed with several Bernie supporters who, upon hearing that RFK Jr., was brought into the MAGA fold, completely changed their alliances, and they jumped ship from Kamala to Trump in November 2024, but inwardly, I understood.

This is worthy of mention because it explains how and why Trump won over Bernie supporters which is something I never thought could be done.

In retrospect, all Kamala Harris had to do, was one of two things.

If, on the campaign trail, she promised to fire Tom Vilsack and repair the damage or the scar that Obama's "bait & switch" on GMO labeling did to the Democrat brand. Admitting a mistake is huge. It is real. It is honest.

I tried again and again to tell the DNC to do one thing. Incorporate into Kamala's campaign and platform, that she will promise to initiate RUR labeling.

All foods sourced from RoundUp Ready technology or crops would have a label saying:

"***These foods were sourced from crops that use RoundUp Ready technology, thus they might be higher in glyphosate.***"

If she campaigned with that, I would have been so proactive, in my support of her,. I would have donated whatever extra money I had, like I did with Bernie in 2019, posting unyielding support for her. Instead, I felt wholly disenfranchised, and held my nose as I quietly still cast a vote for her, with no fanfare or passion. A perfunctory vote was cast.

My main reasoning for doing this, was that it would be wrong for me to hold it against her, something that her husband did. The LA Times reported that Doug Emhoff bought and sold stocks (including Monsanto) until as recent as 2015. But I still felt afflicted with some cognitive dissonance, knowing that I voted for a woman who's household may have profited from Monsanto investments.

Nonetheless, Trump's wildcard pick of RFK, Jr., (even though he's 50% quacky wacky) was huge, enough to sink the Dems for 2024, but you will not hear this from Maddow or Hannity, because BOTH of them have something in common.

That's right. In my voter's eyes, Rachel Maddow and Sean 'no-sanity' Hannity have something in common. Something big. Something ugly. They're both too greedy, corporate and gutless to dare say anything negative or disparaging about Monsanto. Even when it is warranted! This was before the Bayer merger. Monsanto spent big money on ads. Monsanto used their big ad client privilege to their advantage. Because of their financial clout, by default, this indirectly coerced Fox and MSNBC to protect Monsanto's brand at all cost.

Both in a town hall with Tom Vilsack and in a speech to the biotech convention attendees, Hillary said the exact opposite of what the 2013 NYT poll showed she needed to do: LISTEN TO THE 90% of all Americans that wanted GMOs labeled. She refused.

Yet another strong example of how Hillary's unyielding, irrational Monsanto love cost her back in 2008 vs Obama in the 2008 Democratic primary. Again, this is not anything Maddow or Hannity will ever report, which also adds credence to the fact that BOTH of the major corporate news media clearly protects Monsanto's agenda at all cost. The voice of the people, be damned!

On Feb., 10, 2008, Hillary led Obama in an AP/Ipsos poll 46% to 41%, with a margin of error of 4.3%. This poll was Feb., 7-10. Roughly one-week later, Feb., 13-16, according to a Reuters/Zogby poll, Obama moved way ahead of Hillary, 52% to 38% for Hillary.

WHAT HAPPENED BETWEEN THOSE TWO POLLS?

On February 10, 2008, an "Open Letter to Hillary" by Linn Cohen-Cole (aka *Sacred Cow* on the Daily KOS) that opened my eyes and made the choice easy for me which of the two I should support. After vetting the contents of the brilliant, insightful, informative letter by Cole, I never said a positive word about Hillary ever again. Evidently, I was not the only one. I saw that letter shared on various GMO groups, and I posted it too.

Just because these stats and findings are not reported by the corporate news media, or echoed by Maddow and Hannity, does not mean it was not a huge factor in HRC's loss.

THIS IS WHY THE OUTSIDER VIEW SHOULD NOT BE IGNORED BY BEHEMOTHS!

Another example. Another political outsider gave Hillary the best advice. About a month after Hillary spoke to the biotech convention in San Diego on June 24, 2015, Marianne Williamson wrote Hillary a brilliant, insightful open letter in the Huff Post on July 21, 2015, pleading with her to distance herself from these companies. She went on to explain that she really wants a woman president, but Hillary needs to distance

herself from the Wall Street companies and the GMO companies too. Hillary was warned. She still chose her former client from her dozen years at the Rose Law Firm, over American voters. BIG mistake. It cost her. Esp., in Michigan, where Bernie polled far better.

This is why when several national March Against Monsanto events took place, it was like a corporate media blackout. Thousands of people protesting and marching the streets in support of the 90% of all Americans were never shown.

Yet? Hillary still chose Monsanto-enabler Tim Kaine for her VP running mate. That sealed her fate. If she chose Elizabeth Warren, Jeff Merkley, Bernie Sanders, or any progressive to balance the ticket, she wins hands down. But Tim Kaine?! Choosing that MED was akin to flipping her proverbial middle finger to every Bernie supporter and anyone who marched three times against Monsanto. People saw that her agenda was more for Monsanto than it was for we the people, and her consistent arrogance in this, implied that she did not need any progressives. Big mistake. As a result, she lost her chance.

The Dem exit movement grew bigger than she fathomed. Ignoring 90% of voters from both parties on an issue that affects their family's life and health was a huge mistake. But the DNC and the Democrats still have time to fix things and get it right for 2026 and 2028. Sadly, I am not holding my breath.

Hey DNC! Please take a page from Oprah. She is smarter and more successful than anyone you have. Quit pushing MEDs to run against Trump. I love the fact that Newsom is trolling Trump and doing what he is doing. But it is just entertainment. Like I want to eat popcorn. Same with Buttigieg. More cult of personality nonsense. Not one word from Pete, against glyphosate immunity for Monsanto or mandatory labeling of any crops that use RoundUp Ready technology or even the dangers of diquat. Sad.

I recall the 10th and final Democrat debate on February 25, 2020 in South Carolina. Four days before the South Carolina primary. CBS was televising it. I wrote a letter to CBS begging them to allow the topic of food into the debate. Of course, they didn't. If they did? Here is what I was hoping would have happened. Every time, the MED candidate from Minnesota, Amy Klobuchar got on her high horse, claiming she is for we the people, I was hoping hope against hope that Bernie would have interjected with:

"Senator Klobuchar, how can you claim to be FOR the people, when you yourself chose to vote for Monsanto's Dark Act, over 90% of your constituency?!"

Boom! Mic drop. Good bye Amy! Yes!

Bernie is a nice guy, and he might not have done that, but if he did? It would have been a viral moment, and it would have surely ended Klobuchar on the spot! DNC, dump the MEDs. They're destroying the Dem brand. This is how we got Trump. Okay, so you're pushing for Newsom and Buttigieg? Fine. Please make them promise to get

unlabeled carcinogens out of our food. Like the Business Insider reported on May 2019, "Quaker Oatmeal Squares cereal showed the highest levels of glyphosate, nearly 18 times a high as its safety threshold." This is NOT okay. Show some backbone!

This reminds me, back in 2012, Mitt Romney used to push the nonsense that corporations are people. This hackneyed tripe is easy to counter.

"Senator Romney, if corporations are people, let me ask you? If Monsanto was one man, and that man was caught putting unlabeled carcinogens into the majority of school kid's snacks, wouldn't he justifiably go to prison for chemical terrorism? Think about it Mitt!"

In fact, even NOW, over a dozen years later, I am eerily tempted to buy some plain black t-shirts, with this caption in bold white font, on the front of the shirt:

"UNLABELED GLYPHOSATE IN CHILDREN'S SNACKS SHOULD BE A CRIMINAL OFFENSE.

[If corporations were people, it would be a crime.]

The funniest part of the Adam Sandler April's Fool's mock press release escapade that was undeniably true at the time? Prior to receiving their letter back via Fed Ex informing me that my business offer was unread, we'd been having problems receiving packages from Fed-Ex. Because our home address is the same as the motel, it is deemed a commercial address, hence no one could possibly reside here, *in their eyes.*

Or, if someone did live here, there'd be a suite number. Anyway, we received the Fed-Ex the day BEFORE the tracking said. A day early! When I saw the Fed-Ex letter arrive from Happy Madison Productions, I did not even have to open. Because of the fast turnaround, I knew it was probably deemed a thinly veiled script idea submission *(in their eyes)* more than a business offering. But in my view, offering majority equity from intellectual property (even though just patent pending at the time) was still a bona fide business offering nonetheless.

The wildest wildcard! Because self-serving, xenophobe elitists like Elon Musk were working tirelessly behind the scenes to sabotage the working class, one idea that hit me, that could serve as the perfect anecdote to counteract or offset the injustice, esp., for helping inner-city school kids with a different skin color, which would obviously alienate Musk, who would not want white suburbanite charter schools to be deprived of performance enhancing intellectual property, that inner city schools could have. Heh-heh. I could simply FORGET ABOUT MAKING ANY MONEY FROM MY THIRTY YEARS of working on this labor of love, and find one noble, selfless, CEO that has NBA ties: MARK CUBAN!

Then? Plant the seed to get a batch made for inner-city (Detroit, Chicago, Baltimore, Boston, Philly, Buffalo, etc….) school kids, start a non-profit charity, and write to every NBA millionaire to donate to help cure kid's obesity THE RIGHT WAY! Though cardio fitness.

But before sending anything to Mark Cuban, the first name on my list (Taylor Swift) reappeared in my mind, as perhaps being more reachable, caring and ideal for this. In the back of my mind, I remember reading somewhere that Taylor's fiancé Travis Kelce, already has a charity that helps inner-city school kids. Hmmm.

Most recently, the inspirational imagery I use to feed my mind, "going forward" (marketing gateway springboard?) that seems most lucid and real to me, is something colorful and fun and while the grand plan itself probably sounds like the Pollyanna-minded long shot was one that involved Sierra Nevada Brewing Company, but inspired by a competitor. Ha.

Fat Tire amber ale is brewed by the New Belgium Brewing Company in Fort Collins, CO. Back when they were employee-owned, they were one of my favorite companies. I heard they even had a nice gym for employees. They once donated six cases of Fat Tire as a sponsor for my one-man play in 2001 at Zuzi's Theatre in Tucson for a clever product placement. Actually, it was not even product placement, but product mention. The scene mentioned an iced bucket of Fat Tire, via one of my characters; Horst Herzikoff, a quirky, fastidious, foreign Hotel GM (inspired in part by *Shutters on the Beach* GM, Klaus Mennekes — along with a dollop of Boris Badenov from *Bullwinkle*) and a VIP guest named Lady Makula.

Also, in Australia, another six cases of Southwark White Ale, for that same scene in the 2002 Adelaide Fringe Festival. Not to mention, the twenty cases that scene got me from Red Hook in 1999, at the Powerhouse Theatre in Santa Monica. Product placement. One

scene in three different solo theatre shows netted me a total of 32 cases of good beer.

Going back a quarter-century, I was always impressed with the Fat Tire Cruiser bike that has become almost synonymous with the marketing of their flagship beverage, Fat Tire Amber Ale. I even went so far to do some research to see who made the actual bike.

Sadly, I did not discover the fact that Detroit Bikes was the manufacturer of the Fat Tire cruiser bike until years later, after New Belgium had already sold out and ceased to be employee-owned. But when I recently tried to contact key decision-makers at Detroit Bikes myself, my efforts fell flat.

Anyway, thanks in large part to the inspiration of Fat Tire featured with the Red Cruiser Bicycle, I thought of adding to the idea with different brands and possibilities and other layers.

For direct marketing companies that have TV ads, the two that jump out are X-Chair and Thuma, the wooden bed frame company that uses Japanese style joinery. Duluth Trading Company's appealing and catchy marketing folks too. Especially the deep voice. The direct antithesis of the annoying BK ad jingle.

Same with the huge Utah company that incl., ICON, NordicTrack, etc… In the early 2000's, somehow, I was able to fast talk the person that answered the phone to connect

me to their head of new product development. I got an answering machine with a deep voice that said: "Dalebout." I think I left a message telling him of a website where he could see a clip, along with a phone number. Not the way to contact ICON Fitness with a pitch. That was around 2002, a few years ago I tried with my newest patent but was never able to get connected with any R&D people. The C-Suite? Ha. Forget it.

Going forward, it feels so right to go backward. By backward, I mean, a good old school proposal in an envelope, sent via USPS.

No Google or Yahoo paraphrasing my personalized words with insta-bot-summaries from AI-scanned email contents.

Imagine seeing this summary knowing how the main gist got needlessly changed from my intended first thought.

"Inventor with a recently issued utility patent, looking for investor or partner."

My first line as written:

"IF my recently issued utility patent became your all-time favorite home cardio workout, would you be inspired to be a fitness pioneer and help bring to market?"

The one thing that many creative people fear that I have come to welcome and even embrace? Rejection or snubs.

[Actually the former is less irksome and disrespectful because a rejection is a quick peek at your works & wares, but no thanks. A snub is one letter off from snob, which to me,

means, I do not care to even have a single word of dialogue with you. Who you are speaks so loud, I cannot hear a word you are saying.]

Both of them serve as stepping stones that lead to the desired end game.

Burning bridges are fun (even though an ego byproduct) but surprisingly, they still come in a close second. Wait. How can burning bridges be equated to anything close to fun?! Because both of them serve as stepping stones that lead to the end result. Like a to-do checklist. Once I began thinking of snubs and rejections as necessary as Babe Ruth's numerous strike-outs (1.86 strikeouts for every HR ratio) it was like an auto shift to a healthier, more optimistic mindset. With that being said, SoulCycle can kiss my ass.



The Hansen family; Oct., 1971, the same month I smoked my first joint of cannabis.

Check them off. Check. Despite Crunch Gyms no longer being on my list of possibilities for offering an exclusive CycleClimbing deal to, I was still impressed with how the place looked and and greeted me as total stranger walking in to talk to someone. At least as a random gym to walk into, Crunch was nice. Admittedly, it is strange after all these years, I still have zero desire to be part of any gym. For me, home fitness feels a gazillion times more right. No rules. No competition. Just giving ones all in the quiet mornings (but with headphones blasting mostly 70s guitar rock) in the privacy of ones's home.

I have enormous respect for personal trainers, but I do not see them as being exclusive only to commercial corporate gyms. In fact, personal trainers might be the most sensible of all the many options for distribution that I've been considering. ClimbROCKER LLC could be an employee-owned company, and the personal trainers could get straight commissions, like say 39% for every unit sold, but the caveat is that they'd have to deliver and set up the machine and give the user the first introductory (complimentary) lesson to learn proper technique, esp.., ideal cadence and height and resistance settings, to find that optimum yet comfortable synergistic rhythm that the springy bounce on every stroke helps you find quickly, instinctively, without even having to think. Much quicker than before the bounce.

Random remembrances, rejections & regrets

Despite my disappointing discovery how the Southwestern Book Company (renamed Southwestern Advantage) was a far right-wing company, in retrospect, I still felt good that I always gave my 100% best and I worked my ass off. I was in my teens, and I really bought into their grueling cult-like commitment, which, at the time, meant working six days a week, 13 ½ to 14 hours a day. From 8AM to 9:30 or 10PM. Straight commission. That equates to getting rejected 80+ hours a week, or over roughly 1,200 different people each week. That kind of bookselling bootcamp was brutal on the psyche, but that experience really does make other people's opinion of you irrelevant, or at the very least; no big deal. The ego shrivels up like a scared turtle. Heh-heh. A good thing, yes?

Because the hours are long and there were so many college kids selling these books in so many homes across America, I chose to overlook the extreme political ideologies that their senior management was so indoctrinated by. Besides, I was apolitical my entire life, until the early 2000s when I first saw the video on You Tube that showed a candid scene from "the Corporation" that pretty much made me an activist overnight. I knew that Monsanto and friends had clout within our government, but I was exceedingly naive as to full extent of it. How else does one corporation get their way over 90% of all Americans like the Dark Act?

Here in 2025, I am embarrassed that I have something in common with some of these creepy far right goons. Both Jeff Sessions and Marsha Blackburn sold books for the Southwestern Company too. Same with ex-Texas Governor Rick Perry. That is where they learned to bullshit people.

When I recruited my best friend at the time to sell books with me in my second summer (1979 in Eastern Virginia) there were no guarantees, but usually close friends could be roommates, if requested.

Not only was I not Pete's roommate, Southwestern deliberately paired him with a bratty and sassy alcoholic punk roommate with emotional problems that he knew from his parochial grade school. Pete had just received an early inheritance from his grandmother. In 1979, $5,000 for a wild kid like Pete, was a nice chunk of cash. The inheritance money made him less hungry to knock on doors. So, this punk kid from grade school fast-talked Pete into quitting before his two week commitment was even up, even though Southwestern makes everyone commit to giving their best for at least two weeks, when they cross the line (literally a line) and shake the sales manager's hands.

This kid talked Pete into squandering all that inheritance cash in Nashville on the way home. There are a lot of kids that quit the Southwestern summer program. Knocking on doors, facing daily rejection is not for everyone. I would never do this horrid job now. But in the week long sales school in Nashville, they really make it clear that people are losers if they cannot fulfill their two-week commitment. So… that kind of hard-core programming can make some kids feel less confident, going forward in life.

Fast forward to my 3rd and final summer selling books. I think it was around the 5th week, I had just finished my best week ever. I called my parents that Saturday night, June 25, 1981. As soon as my mom picked up the phone, I knew something was up. Something bad had happened. She was holding back emotion as she said to me that my dad needs to talk with me about something. Oh no. I felt something bad.

I was immediately scared. My first thought was that my brother got in some kind of accident. No. It wasn't that. My dad did not hold back at anytime to tell me what he had he had to tell me. He was choked up, Something bad. I could feel it. He finally blurted it out.

"Pete Ochs blew his brains out."

Wow. I was stunned. So much for my excess jubilation at having a great week selling books. This stung. I was numb. Pete was my best bud since 1973, along with Esposito

who introduced me to him. He blew his brains out at the short end of Alvernon, in the Rillito Wash River bed (the first place I got drunk with all of these guys) with his mom's 1959 Buick Invicta nearby. Evidently, at 4 or 5AM, he did not want to go to his warehouse job at IBM, a job that my dad told him about and put in a good word for. IBM was a good employer for Tucson in 1981.

It didn't help that Pete felt like a loser, which is how Southwestern's sales school makes a person feel, if God-forbid, they should discover that 80 hours of in-face rejection on countless stranger's doorsteps, is simply not for them, so any and all quitters were made to feel like losers upon deciding to head back home.

To this day, I really feel that if me and Pete had been roommates that summer, it might have been different. For sales territory, they gave him Virginia Beach, which is brutal for a rookie because of the snooty affluent homes are always the hardest to sell in. I did see how Southwestern was bringing in more more conservative Bible-toting recruits. I mean Southwestern's earliest roots incl., selling Bibles shortly after the Civil War in 1868.

Sadly, Pete was not the only close friend of mind, to take his own life, thus taking away the extreme joy of a peak high. Fast forward to October 1983, one of my peak highs ever. I got cast as Pablo Gonzalez in Arizona Theatre Company's "A Streetcar Named Desire" the part of Pablo. My big line was:

"Why doesn't someone go the Chinaman's and pick up a load of chop suey?"

Exactly one quarter-century later, I married a China woman. Irony? Evidently so. Ha.

So, one Sunday, a few days before Streetcar was going to open in Tucson, I rode my funky Honda MB5 motor bike to the home of Mike Perino who I hadn't seen a while. I

wanted to catch up and I really wanted him to come see me in the play as Pablo. Mike was both a singer and guitarist, so he loved the arts.

I remember he seemed preoccupied, thus unsure if he could make it. But the weirdest thing I ever could have imagined, upon mentioning Pete to him was about to happen. He said:

"That little shit. I wish he was here right now, so I could kick his ass. For doing something so stupid."

Then he peered strangely deep into my eyes and he said, "Hey Mark. Wanna see something cool? Check this out."

He began spinning the knob on a big boxy safe he had bought. He opened up the door of the safe, and he pulled out a small flip-box, like when you buy a ring for a mate. I said, "Oh a ring? That's nice, for Sherry?"

He opened the little flip box and he pulled out a small cellophane like you get off a pack of cigarettes. The suspense was killing me. As he pulled out the cellophane, I could see a small white chip. He handed it to me to examine. I said, "Oh? What's this?"

"Pete's skull."

"Huh?"

"Pete's skull."

One of the law enforcement officers who found Pete's mess (or responded to the call that some kids called in) was one of the ones that had to perform the awful task of cleaning the mess off the hood of the '59 Invicta. Evidently, Mike was able to obtain a morbid souvenir of Pete, who attended St. Peter & Paul with him and Esposito too, who was his best bud all through grade school. It was reported that Pete walked around the Invicta again and again, before mustering up the nerve to pull the trigger to the sawed-off shotgun.



RIP to my old high school friends; Pete Ochs, Mike Perino, Mike Esposito.

I thought that was beyond morbid, as he again reiterated how mad he was that Pete took his own life. Lo' and behold, two weeks later, Mike did the same thing, but he used a .22 caliber gun not a shotgun as Pete did.

Many years later, both Pete and Mike's younger brothers also took their lives, as did Esposito's older brother in 1999. When I added it all up, I knew of four different sets of brothers (all within a mile of Campbell & Grant — all of them went to St. Pete's) affected by suicides in Tucson. That's too many.

Perino's suicide in 1983 took the joy off my first stint in professional theatre, just as Pete's suicide in 1981, ruined my best week of book selling. Their timing sucked.

Back to the Southwestern Company. I'd kept in touch with Dan Moore, the sales manager who first recruited me to sell books over the years. I was grateful he gave me permission to insert a scene showing a Southwestern Company like sales school in my one-man plays.

Actually, the actor who played Stanley Kowalski in ATC's Streetcar Named Desire was the esteemed Casey Biggs who studied at Juilliard. In rehearsals, it was Casey who planted the seed in me, that staging the door-to-door sales school might make for some compelling theatre. I agreed and I never forgot.

So… Dan Moore, who was now in charge of marketing and sales school, gave me permission to do a sales school scene in my one-man play. I was grateful.

Over the years, I wondered how in the hell, the Southwestern Company ever stayed in business. We all have the internet now, that unlike printed reference books, do not get outdated. Of course, their sales force shrunk. So I figured, I have another one of my ideas for CycleClimber!! Why not plant a seed to Dan Moore to have the Southwestern Bookmen demo and sell a fitness machine too? At the time, I thought my wild idea could help them from failing, more than me. But this time, I also sent Dan a video clip of

a Markomentary video trailer that showed some highlights of my inventor's journey. BUT! I forgot there was a scene in it, that showed me indirectly praising the benefits of cannabis usage, which probably did not go over well, with the conservative Southwestern Advantage boardroom ilk. Even to this day, I never heard back from Dan, who I was informed, finally retired after 49 years with the same company.

But I lost whatever lingering traces of respect for Southwestern for sure, after finding out that Texas Governor Rick Perry and that Ken Starr clown too, were Southwestern alums. Geez, I feel like a fool. I am truly ashamed that I have anything in common with these horrible people. But I was made a stronger person as a result.

The realization grew in me, that as deplorable as it sounds, some ultra-conservative companies are exceedingly cliquish and they only respect and help their own tribe. I still think if Dan allowed me and Pete to be roommates, I would have helped him survive the summer to feel good enough to not kill himself, when the going got tough.

Speaking of me offering other companies a chance to sell my fitness machine as a way to avoid sinking profits, I also wrote Peloton a third time when they were on the their 3rd CEO. I had written the first two as well, to which I received no answer. Of course.

The second Peloton CEO McCarthy received a total compensation in 2022 worth a reported 168 million. Yet, also in 2022, Peloton's revenue was down 10% compared to 2021 and their net net losses exceeded $2 billion. Hmmm… I just heard the voice of Forrest Gump in my head! He said:

"I don't know much, but a CEO receiving a total compensation package of 168 million, the same year the company reported net losses of over 2 billion dollars does not sound like good business. But I am not a smart man."

A Peloton representative from current CEO Peter Stern, finally returned an email of mine with an actual polite reply. It was a rejection, but seeing that that was the only email reply that I received out of the three CEOs that Peloton has had, I am hoping that the current CEO does well. He should His background with Apple fitness was more

impressive that their first two CEOs. Good luck turning Peloton around.

The one rejection I had realistic and high hopes for was this program called Rev Ithaca.

For sure the biggest regret in my 33 year journey trying my damndest to bring CycleClimber to market, was the REV Ithaca Start-Up Works Hardware Accelerator. I felt prepared, I thought I filled out the forms with intelligent answers, and I have several machines that I wanted to experiment on the spring-based oscillating platform.

To apply, I had to answer several questions. I thought I did okay. See below:

What benefit or solution does your product provide?

The most noteworthy and dramatic benefit of using CycleClimber is the exceeding fast results in far less time. A person can maintain a high level of fitness in the least amount of time. CycleClimber is for the results-driven person, not the trend-driven or image-driven or sedentary folks.

Dual flywheels enables the user to make quantum leaps in cardio training in a very short time. For those who want results, but also have some degree of athletic acumen and like to raise the bar on their fitness goals, with regularity.

Who has this problem?

Stay at home parents and health conscious executives who never have enough time. For the stay-at-home parent, while his or her time is not as big of an issue, maintaining an exceedingly high-level of fitness is, without access to a gym, is. The time-conscious executive might have time for a short run, or a bike-ride, but what about his or her upper body? Working the upper and lower body out together in one intense 20-minute is just smart.

Who are your competitors?

VersaClimber, CLIMBR, Steel Climber, Sole CC81 Cardio Climber, Sole Fitness Stepper SC 200, Spirit CVC-800, Ropeflex RX4400, ProForm Pro HIIT H14, Bowflex M6 MaxTrainer, Jacobs Ladder, etc...

[None of these competitors have an upper flywheel for the upper body. The synergy and inertia generated by dual-individual flywheels cannot be ignored. It is a huge. This is what makes you want to go longer (and on and on) at the 17 minute mark, and beyond The bounce!]

So, I was given a time and link to set up a conference call with the main guy. Of course, Murphy's Law got me good. WHERE ARE MY READING GLASSES? Tick tock. My Google Meeting was a few minutes away. I ran downstairs and asked my wife:

"Dear! I can't find my reading glasses! May I borrow yours?"

"Okay dear, I will find them and bring them to you."

A few minutes later, Yihua comes running in and hands me her glasses. They were lavender colored! They looked so effeminate. Oh well. Too late. Do what I must do. I am secure in who I am. I put on my wife's glasses and clicked the Google Meet up link.

Oh. My. God. The head dude, who was a Cornell professor was on my monitor. And he too, had reading glasses with an effeminate pastel color. I forget which color. But his glasses looked more like women's reading glasses more than my wife's did!

I really had to contain myself. I usually laugh very easily and it is hard to NOT laugh if I see something funny. But he was frowning, as if I planned this. As if I knew he was wearing lady-like reading glasses and I wore my wife's as a joke. It was not a joke.

From selling books door to door, I was trained to establish a rapport. I forget now, what prompted me to bring up Scranton and Binghamton, but I did. I said to him:

“I know this might sound strange, but I have always thought that Scranton and Binghamton would both be ideal cities for a start up fitness manufacturing company.”

I mean, “Made in Scranton” and “Binghamton-Built” both sound like commercial grade terms for a fitness machine manufacturer. He paused (as if feigning to ponder my strange unsolicited random quip) and half-shrugged his shoulders, with a generic, “eh.”

Gulp. I knew I had my work cut out for myself. I felt loose and more myself, after a few minutes, but I had the strong feeling that the white-bearded professor could care less what I was saying. Just a serious and perfunctory demeanor. He was not rude though, he just appeared that he already had his mind made up and no matter what I did or said, would not change what appeared to be a rigid, preconceived mindset.

I did not expect a callback. I did not get one. Several years earlier around 2018, I went to some of the REV Ithaca Start-Up mixers. Almost all of the kids I spoke with were bright, tech-savvy, and they went to Cornell or Ithaca College, and high tech app gadgetry seemed to be what they liked and talked about. I came across (then in 2018) like an old geezer, lacking technology. But my You Tube videos did not have any additional views, after this, so that was a bad sign. You’d think that one member from the Ithaca Rev Starter program could have taken a look at a ½ minute video clip or reel.

This is partly what makes my biggest regret feel so bad. Back in January 2023, I was in a program that I was chosen for. It was far more impressive and ideal for me, more than anything, I had heard of. It was program sponsored by AARP, called *Bridge to Billions*. After filling out a questionnaire (similar to the one I did for the Rev Ithaca Accelerator a short time later) I was chosen. I could not have asked for a better mentor. In fact, he chose me, because he was impressed with the technology behind CycleClimber.

It was a challenge for me to keep up. I was doing great. But in January 2023, here at the motel, we had our all-time worst tenant. A squatter wannabe. A real con man, and a truly disgusting person. We have low weekly rates. Our tenants know and appreciate this. But sometimes, our rates can also attract the lowest, seediest slime and or Riffraff.

I became overwhelmed with all the paperwork, just to get this smug jackass slob evicted. ASAP. Even when you're in the right and you have all the right paperwork, things still take time. I finally had to drop out of the Bridge to Billions program They were all top-notch, friendly, fantastic people. It still stings to this day. Much like something very similar that happened to me in a Chinese (Mandarin) class I took about a dozen years ago at Pima College. The classes were three-hours long. I was doing fine, all the way into mid-October. But then I missed one class. That was it. I was toast. There would be no way I could play catch-up.

That is how it felt with the AARP program. Once I fell a tad behind, when all of this hold over tenant stress was peaking and taking way too much of my time, I was toast. A few months ago, I saw that the low-life got caught trying to choke a teenage girl to death in a motel room, and the cops came, but he was already gone. But they ended up arresting him. Great. Good job Schuyler County Sheriffs!

But the AARP program was easily my BIGGEST REGRET.

I was also chosen for *the Blox,* an online entrepreneurial show that has many different elements to pitching one's product than Shark Tank. It was probably more suited to me. The worst part was that I would have had to fly to Oklahoma and stay for a week. With just one wife and 9 indoor cats (at the time) it was simply too much of a hardship.

Maybe if I reconnect with *the Blox*, I still have a chance. They also have an option to NOT be on the show, but they still help start-ups get going. All they get in the end, is percentages off the first million. It sounds okay to me.

But now? I promise here and now, I'd give my 110% best if I were given a shot to box Mark Zuckerberg. I know Zuckerberg wanted to fight Elon Musk. But they're friends. Who would want to see that? I'm hungry with something to prove and I have an 80-inch-reach. Despite being 68 years old, I'd still bet on myself.

I'd WIN! When I first thought of this (the 3rd time is a charm?) I wanted to share the stipulation, If Zuck loses, he has to share Marianne Williamson's Whole Health Plan



CycleClimber? Or ClimbROCKER?

(great shit!) that he's been shadow-banning. Hey, a fella can dream, can't he?

But now? See caption in the picture below. Ha. Why not?



Bring it on Zuckerberg. Save all that toxic faux-macho energy that you've been pining to display. Musk couldn't make it. So why not a 68-year-old vegan pothead instead?

A FIGHT to UNITE? Let's do it! If you're too scared, how about Elon Musk or No-Sanity Hannity? Either of you three environment haters works for me. I know y'all would love to shut me up.

Our country is currently going through a very rough and polarizing time. I think a FIGHT TO UNITE is just what our country needs for closure, to heal. I promise, I'd give my absolute 111% all.

Zuckerberg's billions give him easy access to steroids, high-priced personal trainers, high-end supplements like creatine and other amino acids too. He could call his buddy Hannity up, and ask to have Hannity's trainer, Chuck Liddell in his corner if he wants.

Myself? I just need my ClimbROCKER and a heavy bag to beat on. I know I can stick my long piston-like jab in Zuck's forehead, all night long. My late father taught me the importance of a great jab , as far back as 1969.

HEY! Election Eve Monday (Nov. 2, 2026) works! How about on TNT at 8:08 PM?

[It does not hurt to try. Of course, it is a bigger long shot to ever get this opportunity. But at the very worst? I got in the best cardio condition of my life at age 68. Okay! That is fine by me. In my 60s, I have yet to get sick, need a prescription, and my every limb and joint, feel young. NO pain anywhere.]

YOU CAN go home again! But Murphy's Law is real.

The final wrap for now. It would be my last week before going to Tucson for the first time for two *Class of 76* high school reunions, since my brother passed in 2019. Everything went wrong. From SSL glitches and my new domain email being disabled because of a some setting change. So now my website that has unprofessional videos (that are embedded in the *Zuck Boxing Challenge)* was a real mess!

Then? On the Friday I flew to my reunion, I had three different, stress-inducing flight delays, the first two flights, were too close to grab a quick bite. All I ate on the last Friday, Sept., 25, 2026 was one organic Amy's Rice & Bean burrito that I wolfed down in record time, as my wife drove me to Ithaca airport. I was lucky to think to put half-dozen NOCOW bars in my backpack. The last flight delay on the Atlanta to Tucson flight, we were all boarded and ready for take-off, then every one had to get out and go on another airplane. I barely made to Tucson in time to rent the car.. Then? I called a friend the next morning to have breakfast to help me fix the mess.with me. I was hungry! I was craving Wendy's jackfruit tacos! They were everything I thought they'd be and more! MMM!!!

I went to the Catalina Reunion Friday event at the Javelina Cantina, but my RayBan Meta glasses did not work because the phone associated with it, was still in *airplane mode?!* Then? I discovered that I lost $130 cash, at the first reunion. This is still allowing for my two draft lagers, a beer for a friend, and a quick token tequila shot, and a disposable razor at Walgreens. I did not even have a drink at the second reunion event at the District. I left my fancy Mac mouse on the Delta airplane. Then? The following morning, I was hungry and ready to have my first restaurant meal in 3 years! I went to Tucson's best eatery! ***Tumerico***. I lost the RayBan Meta RayBan glasses walking to the car. I was going use them TONIGHT AT THE SALPOINTE REUNION. IT IS NOW 6:45 PM. IT BEGAN AT 6PM. I am already way late. I still have to jump in the shower! There is still ample time for me to dance-dance-dance and forget all about fun gadgets and other trendy hi-tech crap that can be replaced! I got this special memory to live! You only get one 50th HS Class Reunion! I want my *Tiny host link!* I wanted to share with a few of my old classmates, esp., Allan "the Bull" Bentkowski.

In high school, Allan was Salpointe's star running back for our year. At 5'8" and a solid chiseled 170 pounds, Allan ran over people, but sometimes, he'd fake 'em out too. Like a flashy stutter-step here and there. While his numbers were not mind-blowing, like recent Salpointe alum and NFL star RB like Bijan Robinson on the Atlanta Falcons, he did lead all rushers for the 1975-76 season for Class AAA (in 1989 the AIA renamed Class AAA to 5A) with 1,000+ yards. So I thought. Evidently a holding penalty took away his 1,000 yard season. The guy who was nailed with the penalty, is now a respected athlete trainer with over 36 years of experience providing orthopedic in a small midwest college. How I wish I could pick his brain! But he was Class of 77.

At a previous reunion, Allan used one of my CycleClimber machines for a couple of months, and he dropped a lot of weight, Being a retired CPA, his notations on his daily progress were exact and professional. He lost over 30 pounds! A good dude, I 'm hoping I can schmooze with. It might be awkward knowing that some of my classmates know about my Zuck Challenge, and my spontaneous monologue, how it is the Dem Socialist of fitness machines and WHY. But… *what others think of me is none of my business.* TIME FOR SOME FUN! Reunion time! Yeah!. Rock on! ***The end is nothing. The road is all.***

Optional Epilogue

Remembering Larry: The cold & senseless murder of a Santa Monica landlord

Even though technically, Larry Jirucha once owned several homes in Santa Monica, I will always remember him as one of Venice Beach's most offbeat and eccentric characters. Right around the end of the 1980s, I would see Larry out and about, rollerblading on the Venice Boardwalk. What a wild looking beach character he was back then! Lean and fit, always donning a reddened working man's suntan. On Sunday afternoon, he would rollerblade as far as Redondo Beach, as fast as he could, then he'd turn around and sprint back to Venice Beach. No easy feat.

I first met Larry in early 1987, soon after I began working for Bear Stearns, back when they leased the top 4 and a half floors (73,000 sq. feet) in the old Northrop Corporate Headquarters, at 1800 Century Park East. By this time, Northrop had already moved next door to 1840 Century Park East.

Every time Bear Stearns hired a big producing stockbroker (or promoted an in-house broker to a private office) they had to have varying degrees of construction modifications performed to suit their specific office needs. Larry's brother owned a construction company, so they got to do most of the in-house remodel jobs during this time.

Larry had his own company (Jirucha Construction) but Bear Stearns had enough work for his brother, that sometimes Larry's perfectionist finish carpenter skills were in

demand and he often needed to be called in. This is when I initially got to know Larry. I worked on the 12th floor elevator lobby, initially from 8AM to 7PM, but I eventually got my dream 6AM to 2PM shift, for the same pay, with full Bear Stearns benefits, A position they created for me. Once elevator access keys were given to employees, I took over the front desk reception and PBX switchboard duties, upon my return from my 4-month leave of absence in a cabin in Lakeside in Arizona's White Mountains in January 1990.

Ironically, for me to get that 4-month leave of absence, I began a petition, and I got all 19 managing and senior managing directors to sign it on my behalf. Less than a month earlier, the Bear Stearns CEO, Ace Greenberg said no more leave of absences.

In 1987, Ace Greenberg was Donald Trump's personal stockbroker, according to his "Art of the Deal" book. So, Trump's personal broker once read a 17-page letter of mine, upon my exit. Ace even told me, "I read your book." Ha!

I was seated closest to the 12th floor elevator so that I saw and talked with everyone that came and went to Bear Stearns. In order for anyone to go above the 12th floor, they all (even employees) had to go through me and my special master elevator key. Yes, even Johnny Carson, Grey Davis, Donna Mills, Sidney Pottier, etc…

Somehow, Michael Douglas bypassed me, because by fluke, someone on the 15th floor had called up an elevator, and he happened to be on it, so it went right by the 12th floor. Oops. The lone flaw in their system.

I remember one late Friday afternoon, I saw Sidney Pottier standing there, waiting for his elevator to leave. I spoke out to him: "Take care sir. Have a nice weekend."

He slowly spun around 270 degrees, and he peered straight into me (to see who spoke) and he said:

"You too, have a good afternoon."

His theatre-trained voice had such resonance!

I was the human pinball in the 12th floor elevator lobby, bouncing quickly to each of the six elevators, a sight to see as they sometimes rang 1,2,3 in rapid succession. The freight elevator was number 6. Part of my job entailed ensuring that contractors (like Larry) stayed out of the passenger elevators.

Until he got to know someone, Larry was usually introverted. Then, soon after, once he felt comfortable with someone, he became inquisitive and chatty.

Once when he was waiting for elevator 6, he overheard me telling a co-worker I lived in Venice Beach. He was quick to invite me to join him and his crew for drinks on any Friday afternoon, after 4:30 at the Sidewalk Cafe on the boardwalk.

I soon took him up on his invitation. I walked the five-minute, quarter-mile journey along the little alley more commonly known as Speedway Avenue (faster than Ocean Front Walk for hyper always-in-a-hurry ADHD types!) and I joined him. Whoa! Lo' and behold, there he was. Sure enough, Larry was buying unlimited beer and drinks for his entire work crew of about a half-dozen working dudes. He barely knew me but upon seeing and greeting me, he was quick to tell the bartender to put all of my drinks on his tab as well.

I had a fun time and I kept in touch with Larry from that point on. I recall a couple of years later, his two main helpers both happened to have the last names, Fuller and Brush! I'd see him on Venice Beach and I'd say, "Hey crazy Larry, where are your sidekicks, 'Fuller-Brush?'"

The one irksome trait about Larry (I told him so too) was that he was a cheesy name-dropper, esp., if he thought he could score some points with a girl — as a means to impress her. Even the way he introduced his friends to one another seemed so pretentious and shallow because he put people into his own labeled box with a light subtext as if to impress and put on airs.

When he first introduced me to Zona, the only lady that he seemed really close to, or even referred to on occasion as his girlfriend (she disagreed about this) was one night at the Daily Pint in Santa Monica.

It went like this. I walked in and I saw the two of them. Once he saw me walk in, he was quick to speak.

"Hey Mark, how's it going? I want ya to meet my psychologist friend, Zona. Zona, this is Mark, he's my buddy that works at Bear Stearns and get this; he is from AriZONA."

He found it overly funny that her name was Zona and I am from AriZONA so he accentuated the Zona. At the most, me and Zona thought it barely warranted a polite, "Oh? Heh-heh," as if to acknowledge Larry's lame attempt at break-the-ice humor.

[Many old-school Tucsonans and Wildcat fans loathe the term, "Zona" for "Arizona."]

Zona blushed and spoke up, "Larry, I am just taking a few psychology classes at Santa Monica College." Then she turned, winked at me, and whispered an aside my way: "I am not really a psychologist."

I chimed in, "Nice to meet ya Zona. I hear ya. Same with me, I'm really more of a glorified elevator man (than the in-house Security Relations Director for a Wall Street firm) that happens to man the 12th floor elevator lobby at the Hamburger Hamlet building in Century City. In other words, I am not a stockbroker or investment banker."

Zona laughed, "Hamburger Hamlet? Ha ha."

"Hey, that is a really popular place. I've even saw Chuck Connors and Don Knotts coming outta there fairly recently."

"Together? Really? Are they an item?"

“No. Ha ha. I mean I did not see Lucas and Barney together, oops, I mean Chuck and Don. Heh-heh. Nooo. I meant I saw ‘em at different times. For the record, each one had lovely female dining companions with them when I saw them.”

That was the end of the 1980s, when Bear Stearns occupied the top 4 and a half floors (73,000 square feet) at the old Northrop Corporate Headquarters at 1800 CPE. Times were different back then. In fact, looking back, I recall feeling and loving and cherishing the role of office clown. Like a mascot. Once in late September 1988, my 4th month employed by Bear Stearns, I told a very off-color joke. One that might get someone fired today. But on this day, I got more multiple mileage than it was worthy of. It was already well known news that the Gold Medal winning Canadian sprinter Ben Johnson (initially awarded the Gold Medal for the 100 meters) was sent home on an airplane from the Seoul Olympics for taking steroids. So, a delivery driver (he was black) told me the joke which I managed to get shared in the entire LA office of Bear Stearns, inside of three hours. So I began:

“Did you hear about the Canadian sprinter, Ben Johnson being sent home from the Olympics? What did he say when he got off the airplane? I DINT TAKE NO STEREO!”

For some reason, I don’t know if because of the punchline or my characterization of Ben Johnson, but I got more unexpected, laugh out loud laughter from that corny joke than anything I ever uttered. I even told the main boss of the office, we’ll call him Mars “Hell Raiser” Heller. Ha. Ol’ Mars laughed so hard and loved the joke so much, he even opened up the sales meeting after lunch with that joke. But no one laughed! By then, EVERYONE had already heard that joke that I first shared at 10:37AM, less than three hours earlier. Oops. My bad.

Back to Larry. A few days later, when I told Larry that joke? His response? “Who’s Ben Johnson? Why should anyone care if he took a stereo?” Larry must have been the only dude that never heard of Ben Jonson in 1988! Ha. I later explained the joke to Larry but he was more fascinated after hearing that the Bear Stearns boss man opened up the sales meeting with the same joke and it bombed, in large part because of my excessive joke saturation in the office. Ha ha.

By the time the 90s arrived, things were rapidly changing. By then, I had already relocated to Playa del Rey, then Tucson, then to Salem Oregon, then Portland, then Santa Monica, then Venice Beach again. I'd keep in touch with Larry off and on but he was exceedingly busy playing Santa Monica landlord at a very rundown property at 643 Raymond Avenue that he owned and lived in and allowed a myriad of misfit characters to call home.

It was here that he got himself into trouble and probably brought more unwanted attention his way than he'd ever imagined or wanted. Because of his handyman and finish carpenter skills, it was so easy for him to just build another room here and there to add on to his Raymond Avenue property and meet the growing demand for rooms to rent.

But in Santa Monica, you can't do that. You need to file actual building permits and all kinds of other paperwork crap and annoying fees too. Oops.

As years went by, I could tell that some of the lower income tenants that once helped him prosper were now suddenly flaking out on him, and paying him late or not at all. The colorful working class tenants that he once praised and even referred to as family, were now becoming an increasingly serious, growing pain in the ass for him. Same with the added stress from the code enforcement folks. His drinking escalated and his demeanor changed. He went from having frequent laughs and snarky retorts and chatting it up with buddies having a couple of beers at various Venice Beach watering holes, to slipping into an odd and isolated destructive drinking routine on his back porch.

[Behind where the ladder is in the picture below.]

Like clockwork, right at that exact second that the sun officially went down he'd pull out a brown paper bag from next to his chair, and he'd crack open a brand new 375 ml bottle of Myer's Dark Jamaican Rum and pour it into a glass and he'd sip on it his porch until he finished the bottle or fell asleep. Usually both.

Larry was a mellow and kind guy, so the brash, hard, fast-talking self-serving manipulative Alpha brat types all could see that he was an easy mark to take advantage of. Of course it is stressful to get dissed and taken advantage of. It stings. He took it hard. I could tell. He had big aspirations. I remember once when he was sitting around trying to think of an email name and a new AOL alias that defines him. He broke from his concentration gaze at a wall, and he looked up at me, "Hey Mark I'm trying to think of a cool email and screen name for my AOL too… you got any ideas?"

I blurted out, "Ha. What about Coast Mogul?"

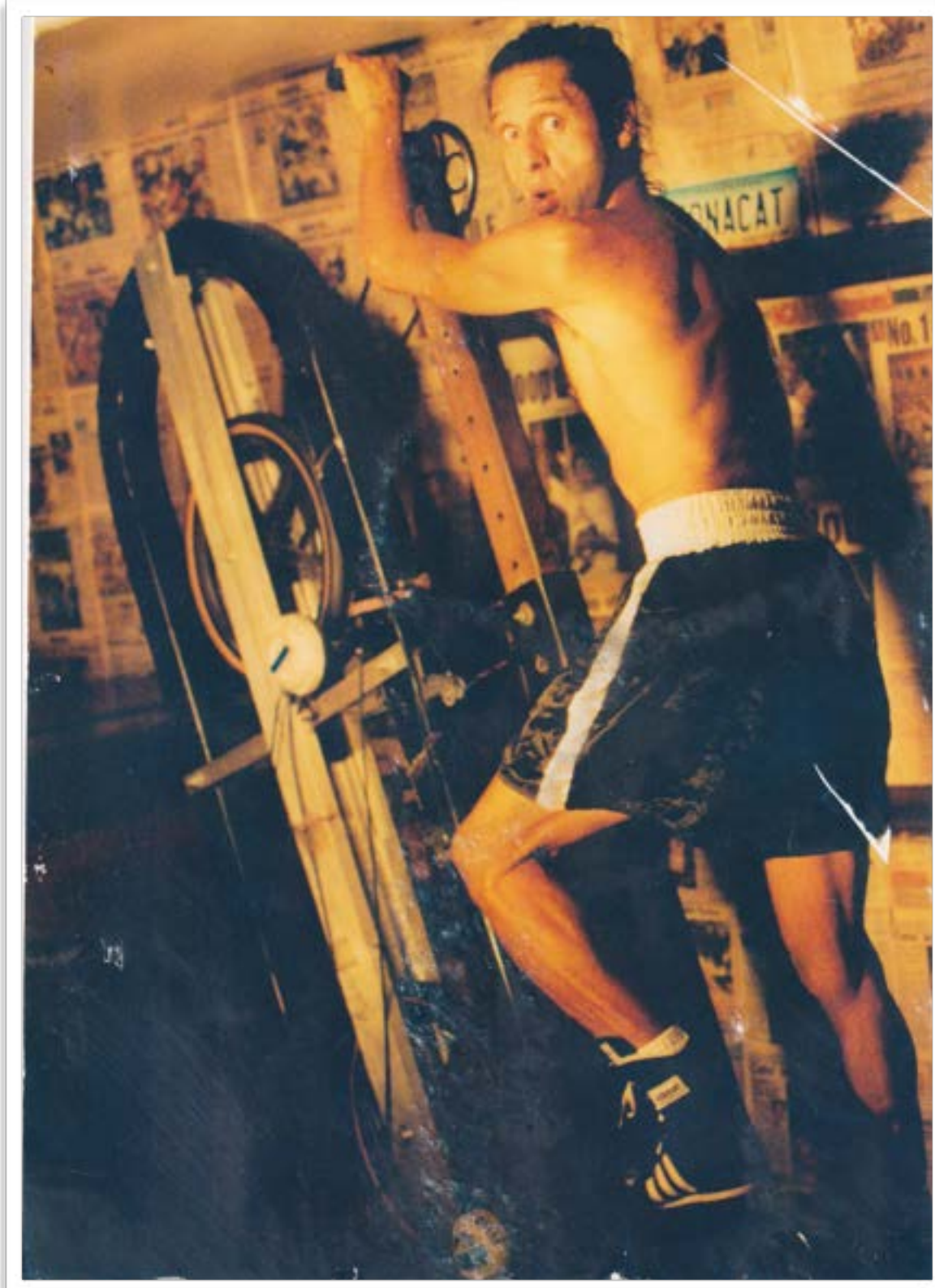
Ha ha. He loved it! I forget if he was just Coast Mogul or Coast Mogul 2, but I cracked up that my random instant answer resonated with him as he was usually slow to react to any of his friend's ideas — even if he was the one who solicited the request!

Partly because of my massive 400 pound gorilla prototype, I told Larry I was now open to joining his *Raymond Zoo* of offbeat characters. But only if somehow I could get the two-car garage (that was out in the far back of the property) thrown in the deal somehow. He actually had two two-car garages, next to each other as well as a smaller one car garage to the far left side. What a deal I made. Because I agreed to rent a room in the house too, he gave me a break on the garage. He charged me $350 total for the room in the downstairs house and $275 for the two-car garage. In my view, a decent deal for a nice neighborhood in the late 1990s, in Santa Monica that was a short brisk walk to Main Street Santa Monica.

It wasn't quite the deal as my Venice Beach bachelor pad (even though it had three TVs & three cordless phones all within reach of the king mattress on the floor) at 36 Brooks Ave., unit C, which was the last unit before entering the sun deck, hence the best view. If my door was open I could see the Pacific Ocean. That was $450. A month. It was $1,850 last I heard! Whoa.

Ironically, right around this same time I was given the news that I always wanted and that I had long given up even thinking about. I was approved for an apartment in the apartment building at the end of Rose Avenue on the boardwalk. I think it is called

Venice Air today. It was a non-ocean view room. But for $700? Lovely. I was very tempted. But I had already concocted big plans to turn that two-car garage in the back of Larry's house on Raymond into my ultimate creativity center, workshop, and sports bar playroom. A place to post my front pages of countless old sports pages, mostly Arizona Wildcat sports moments, while I work out. I believe that being surrounded by iconic sports moments can make me workout a little bit harder.



The bedroom I rented at Jirucha's downstairs was small and basic but clean and freshly painted, and right next to the bathroom and the downstairs kitchen was rarely used or occupied, so that was nice. Everyone living in the downstairs almost always stayed private in their room. I'd see the wiry white-haired surfer dude come home on his loud motorcycle, about 5:30 always looking beat red. Almost *beet red*. He always had a wicked scowl and he really didn't like anybody, but Dan Gilmer was always cordial and respectful to me. His face would be reddened from doing construction labor. Once inside, clouds of weed smoke oozed into the hallway, from his room to outside the bathroom. I joked about it to him one day:

"Dan I think you blow the good and tasty weed smoke into the hallway out your keyhole to make the others envious. Ha."

By then, he was stoned with no more scowl, so his reply to me was more sincere.

"Heh-heh. Nah. I don't need to do that. I mean look."

Then he opened his door for a sec, and sure enough, a cloud of weed smoke blew into the hallway, thanks in part to a small electric fan, he had clipped onto an old dresser.

One of my wild Santa Monica Pier concert dancing lady friends, we'll call her Ange, really wanted the big studio room with the private door that opened at the driveway. It was $600 a month. I put in a good word for her to Larry. She was okay for several months. But eventually, she got her off-and-on boyfriend to buy her cocaine a couple of times. He was a small mellow dude that adored Ange and he always had the best intentions and cannabis too. The best. But, like me, he hated coke, meth and pills. But with Ange nudging him, he eventually caved.

Eventually the little eight-ball of toot on Friday nights she'd talk him into, become more and more. Of course, not a surprise to me. Ange and her fights with her boyfriend, running low on cash, became stress and drama and more headaches for Larry. I felt bad I recommended her to Larry. She changed and became less laid back after she slept

with my beer drinking buddy J, I knew from Shutters, an simple artless ex-bellman armed with smooth pick-up lines, endless free time and an odd propensity for boredom.

Just a few years prior, things were so fun at Raymond.

The smartest of the lot was a guy that did not even live there. He rented the one-car garage from Larry for $400 a month. He was a short, young, pudgy pale white kid that looked a lot like a young Van Morrison, like from the days of Brown Eyed Girl. Vax worked alone, and he worked hard. He was a glass-blower. He had a means to sell as many glass pipes as he could make. On a twelve-hour day, he could net $600! He got paid $5, $6 and $7 for small, medium and large pipes. He'd wrap them in newspaper and ship them off to some faraway wholesaler. Maybe in Kentucky? One box.

Vax didn't mind shooting the shit talking with people if they didn't mind watching him work while conversing. Vax was so amusing to me cause that little Hare Krishna dude knew what seemed like everyone in Venice Beach. I never knew how he knew every Tom, Dick and Harry and Who's Who too, on the boardwalk, but he did. So Vax would share the latest gossip about colorful and notorious Venice Beach boardwalk characters, and I would share with him, the latest drama at the Raymond House. He'd laugh with howling laughter upon hearing me share recent tales with him how these regressive toxic Alpha dudes, got to Larry's patience and breaking point.

Then, there were the two big blonde twins. Big angry blonde twins, and they loved to start arguments with any and everyone and get in fights. Larry would reluctantly allow them to hang out for a bit and have a few beers, but he'd warn them, "Okay you guys. But no trouble tonight."

Ha. These guys were MAGA-like before the term MAGA even existed. They did not seem like Santa Monicans. No. They were more like oversized faux-macho Okie rube laborers that simply could not hold their alcohol. Goober cliches. They were big strong dudes, but when it came to alcohol, they were bona fide light weights.

Last, in the back, upstairs, was Larry's longest tenant. Mikey, an aspiring screenwriter

that was working on the same sci-fi screenplay (about a stunning robotic A.I. gal) for years and years. His mother would send Larry the rent checks. I also got to know meet and chat with Larry's mother as well. She was elderly and shy and she truly cared and worried about Larry. She began visiting often there for a while in the late 90s.

Anyway, upon my return from performing in the Melbourne Fringe Festival in October 2000, I was ready to leave the *Raymond Zoo*, and return to Tucson. I recruited my old friend from junior high and 10th grade, Mike Brennan to help me move and get everything out. Larry was sad that was the end of my dependable, on time $625 a month.

As years went by, Larry got in more and more trouble with liens and code-enforcement paperwork and court dates, extraneous crap that makes it hard to ever catch-up. On one of my trips back to LA, I talked to Larry's brother who told me how Larry had fallen on hard times, and it was even rumored that he was homeless now, as he was seen on Lincoln Blvd., then later on Skid Row in downtown LA.

His phone number was long out of order, so I tried emailing him a few times over the years but to no avail. Even in recent years, I tried finding him as I thought he'd be great to have here at our Green Satori Inn in Cayuta. I was ready and willing to offer him a room (for even less than the per month rent he charged me in 2000) in exchange for him advising me and my wife on our annual DIY motel renovation projects.

But that was not to be. Two years ago, in June 2023, on one of my online searches, I came across this news release from the Houston TX POLICE DEPARTMENT.

Suspect Arrested In Man's Death At 400 Franklin Street

June 15, 2023 - A suspect charged and wanted in the death of a man found at 400 Franklin Street about 6:30 a.m. on June 3 is in custody. The suspect, Richard Denton Needham, 39, is charged with murder in the 184th State District Court. A booking photo of Needham is attached to this news release.

The victim is identified as Lawrence Jirucha, 66. HPD Homicide Division Sergeant C. Duncan and Detective L. Lovelace reported: HPD patrol officers responded to the above address after a passing motorist found a man unresponsive. It appears the victim, believed to be homeless, had suffered severe trauma. Responding Houston Fire Department paramedics pronounced him deceased at the scene.

An autopsy by the Harris County Institute of Forensic Sciences identified the victim as Mr. Jirucha and determined his cause of death to be from blunt force trauma. At that time, there was no known suspect(s).

Further investigation identified Needham as the suspect in this case and, on Tuesday (June 7), he was charged for his role in the incident.

On Wednesday (June 14), Needham was arrested by METRO police officers without incident.

A short time later, I phoned Larry's brother to offer my condolences and ask him what happened. It was obviously a big shock to him as it was for me. Evidently, Larry was new to Houston, asleep in his sleeping bag in a downtown Houston Park (somewhere a block or two from the Amtrak Station) and some crazy 39-year-old who was yelling crazy shit (possibly relating to a Knights of Templar cult?) beat him to death while he was asleep in a sleeping bag, with a stick for no apparent reason. Yet, not one word in any California news publication.

I do not care that Larry did things his own way and that he was non-conforming. In fact, I found it somewhat amusing that Larry was probably vexing to deal with, esp., for the Santa Monica realtor and code-enforcement establishment types. He also had rental properties on 34th Street and 17th Street too. He deserved better. He had over $500 cash in his possession, so he was not beaten to death for money. It was just random, senseless violence that suddenly seems par for the course in many metro MAGA urban bastions.

There was nary one instance that I ever saw Larry tempted to take any drugs when he was offered, and he never cared for taking even a puff of cannabis even though he said he tried it once and it just made him sleepy. Nor did he ever show a trace of violence towards anybody.

I found out that Larry's brother tried to help him around 2018 or 2019 in Northern California, as someone up there, at that time was sincerely trying to help him get back on his feet. But Larry was both proud and stubborn. He declined.

In the past decade, I already lost both my parents 60 days apart, my lone sibling two years later, the last of my closest 9 friends from junior high and high school in late 2019, Jirucha also died. I certainly did not need to hear this. Larry might have been the ***most disrespected landlord in Santa Monica,*** but just like me as an inventor, the disrespect was and is for all for the wrong reasons. When I asked Larry's brother to sum up what happened with his properties, Steve Jirucha was concise. He said: "I told Larry that having equity is fine and all, but he never could quite understood the importance of cash-flow."

Sad. RIP Larry. Cheers to a true westside renegade,.The only coast mogul I ever knew.



RIP Lawrence Jirucha 1957-2023



Looking at the back of 643 Raymond Ave., from the two-car garage that the cover pic was taken from.

An AI generated image depicting how 68-year-old Marko Hansen's vision of his proposed Election Eve Monday boxing exhibition with Mark Zuckerberg would look after Round One. Hansen believes his narrative shows he is worthy of boxing Zuckerberg as an underdog fill-in for Elon Musk, in a charity fundraiser boxing exhibition which Hansen believes would serve as bona fide proof, the true worth of his patented invention. He would be willing to bet his labor of love which has consumed 34 of his 68 years, as his *'skin in the game'* to show he is serious. Why the robot? He needs someone to wipe the sweat off his brow and hand him water.



Marko Hansen



Marko Hansen is a native Tucsonan who spent a dozen years in California and Oregon before travel extensively throughout Australia and Asia. As a University of Arizona student, he got his first taste o professional theatre as he was cast as Pablo Gonzalez in the 1983 Arizona Theatre Company produ "A Streetcar Named Desire." He later appeared in two game shows including Bob Eubanks' "Infatuat performed multi-character one-man plays at both the 2000 Melbourne Fringe Festival and the 2002 Adelaide Fringe Festival. Marko has always enjoyed challenging fitness quests such as a 49-mile G Canyon rim-to-rim-to-rim hike in 24 hours, boxing in the 1987 Diamondback Invitational Tournament running in the 1989 LA Marathon, jogging the 50 miles from Redington to Benson in under 12 hours. He is a strict vegan wh occasionally blogs on the repercussions of unlabeled GMOs pervading our food supply. Even though he got married in 2008 50th birthday, he was actually 49 at the time of his wedding because of the 15-hour time difference between Tucson and Ka China. He was granted his second US utility patent in December 2023, over 29 years after his first patent, also for a dual-flyv vertically-disposed, stationary climbing bike. Currently, he is the owner/innkeeper of the Green Satori Inn, just 20 minutes so Ithaca NY, in the Finger Lakes region of NY, with his wife, and 10 cats.