

OPINION

The MONTANA STANDARD

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GUEST VIEW

Great engine rots away

Engine No. 25 was “saved” by the Butte Jaycees and presented to the children of Butte on July 3, 1958. This 125-ton “Big Hill Hog” is on display outside of Butte’s Civic Center. It is one of 13 built in 1899 by Schenectady Locomotive Works in Schenectady, New York. This class of engine was used on the Butte Mountain between Butte and Whitehall.

The Northern Pacific was the first railroad in North America to use the 2-8-2 “Mikado” wheel arrangement, and the first anywhere to use the 4-8-4 type, to which it gave the popular name “Northern.” Examples of a NP Mikado and NP-designed Northerns survive due to the cities of Spokane, Portland & Seattle, and Butte. Butte’s Y-1 2-8-0 No. 25 is the only eight-coupled engine used by Northern Pacific.

I feel honored growing up knowing about this piece of Butte history. I grew up hearing the stories of Butte’s steam engines and mighty roundhouse my father worked in.

I wish BSB could see its historic value and give more effort to preserving it. It’s a shame that we proudly display a piece of history as it sits rusting and rotting away.

Butte can impose countless rules, and guidelines that must be upheld by property owners in the preservation of buildings in the National Historic District of Uptown Butte. Yet we watch this historic monument slowly disappear. Can’t BSB make an effort to preserve this unique piece of Butte’s history? If this engine would have been covered years ago it would be in such better condition. The cab would not be rotting and caving in, the boiler would not have rusted out from 60 years of rain and snow.

My father was the last Northern Pacific Railroad Engineer to run this magnificent piece of history. He knocked the last fire out of its fire box before it was retired from service as the new diesel engines took over. My father purchased a brass steam-engine bell years before his death and always wanted to replace the bell that had been stolen off engine #25 shortly after it was set on display.

Years before his death my father was asked by a group to look at this engine to see what the possibilities would be to take this engine and restore it to running order and use it as a tourist train between Butte and Anaconda. He was excited about the possibility this engine could be reconditioned and put once again to use.

After an inspection of its condition years ago it was decided that Engine 25 was too far gone to be worth reconditioning. Unfortunately, at the time this engine was set on display no measures were taken to weatherize and preserve the engine.

My father was heartbroken because when they parked Engine 25 it had just been rebuilt by NP railroad and was in like-new condition. My father said that Engine 25 after its rebuild never even left NP roundhouse. At that time one of my father’s duties as an engineer for NP was to keep the fire boxes hot on the steam engines kept in the roundhouse. The roundhouse was located near what is now the Montana Resources concentrator. My father shared many memories of operating Engine 25 as a helper engine pushing freight trains over the pass to Whitehall.

After my father’s death in November 2014, I went to the courthouse to meet with the chief executive about donating his brass bell that I now own. I wanted to add something to that piece of history that my father would have been proud to be a part of.

The day I asked to see the chief executive he was far too busy to meet with me and his secretary referred me to someone who could help me. After meeting with this person, I was directed to see the fire chief because he was the person in charge of all BSB’s engines. I tried to explain that Engine 25 was the steam engine that is driven by daily by hundreds of people next to the civic center, That person apologized and referred me to a second person who could help me, again I was told I would have to speak to the fire chief concerning any fire-engine concerns. After explaining a second time what Engine 25 was, I was told to contact the director of the civic center, which I did and never heard back from again.

I am saddened every time I drive by this landmark and see it slowly deteriorate into rotting wood and rust. This was set on display in 1958 to the children of Butte and someday my grandchildren will see nothing but a rusty piece of iron.

I was lucky enough to be able to grow up knowing the history of this display and its importance to Butte in the early years.

It’s sad others who live and grew up here, and drive by it daily, do not have any idea of its importance to Butte’s history.

Al Hess, a Butte native, is facilities foreman for NorthWestern Energy and was a volunteer firefighter in the Boulevard VFD for 22 years. His father was the last engineer to operate Engine No. 25.

was tested by the state crime lab and the results were returned in just over 30 days (not the 90 days he claimed). The actual time was far less than the national average turnaround time of 60-70 days.

Montana’s crime lab is an integral part of our criminal justice system. The lab worked this case with thoroughness and professionalism and did so in an appropriately timely manner.

John Barnes. AG’s office, Montana Department of Justice



Quid pro — oh, whatever

WASHINGTON — Et tu, Mulvaney?

Three weeks ago, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi unveiled the impeachment inquiry with a Latin phrase spoken by Julius Caesar when he crossed



DANA MILBANK

No this for that.

Enter Mick Mulvaney, deus ex machina, to destroy Trump’s defense. The president’s (still) acting chief of staff briefed reporters Thursday and, in flagrante delicto, admitted Trump committed the sine qua non of a quid pro quo.

Mulvaney said there was “no question” that one of the reasons Trump withheld military aid to Ukraine was to force Ukraine to investigate “corruption” related to the Democratic Party. “And that is absolutely appropriate,” Mulvaney argued. “We do that all the time with foreign policy.”

Thus did the White House admit — ipso facto — to the exact crime Trump is accused of in the impeachment inquiry. “No quid pro quo” became “quid pro quo — so?” (a.k.a., quid apropos).

Mulvaney’s modus operandi is clear enough: The White House must be in extremis realizing that depositions to Congress by administration officials are proving a de facto quid pro quo. Trump needs a new defense.

To be fair, Mulvaney didn’t admit a quid pro Joe (trading military aid for dirt on the Democratic front-runner) but

a quid pro down-low (trading military aid for dirt supporting a conspiracy theory about Democrats). Still, the transcript of Trump’s call with the Ukrainian president makes clear it was a quid pro combo.

In a sense, Mulvaney is correct when he says “we do that all the time.” Trump’s tenure has been one big quid pro. He decreed Thursday (before backtracking Saturday) that next year’s Group of Seven gathering of world leaders must be at the Doral resort he owns in a clear quid pro cash flow for the Trump Organization. His funneling of government business to Mar-a-Lago has been a quid pro chateau. Having the U.S. military patronize his Scotland property is a quid pro Glasgow, and Vice President Pence’s hawking of Trump’s Ireland property is a blatant quid pro brogue. Trump’s Washington hotel rakes in lobbyists’ and foreign governments’ cash in a quid pro dough, and government funds paid to his New York and New Jersey properties complete the quid pro portfolio.

This benefits not only Trump but his sons, in what might be called a quid pro slow (or a quid pro I dunno). Donald Trump Jr.’s protests about Biden family nepotism this week, while ignoring his own, can only be termed a quid pro bozo. Trump’s national security adviser, Robert O’Brien, last week floated a quid pro whistleblower: He’s clearing out career professionals (prospective whistleblowers) by slashing the NSC staff. The administration also tried to block cooperation with the inquiry, in a quid pro Pompeo. And then there’s Trump’s decision to let Rudolph Giuliani take over U.S. foreign policy: a quid pro schmoie.

Mulvaney, in his appearance

Thursday, attempted a quid pro John Doe, pretending that he didn’t know the names of the officials testifying to Congress. The attorney general, William Barr, has trashed his principles to give Trump a quid pro ego.

Trump has been doing this sort of thing since a quid pro big toe kept him out of Vietnam. He abandoned gun-safety plans after meeting with the NRA, a quid pro ammo. His voter-suppression efforts are a quid pro Jim Crow. Evangelical Christians tolerate his immorality in exchange for his judicial nominees, a quid pro Roe. Much of his presidency has been a quid pro Moscow.

He trades in false claims (quid pro Pinocchio) and plugs for friendly Fox News hosts (quid pro puppet show). And his requiring of constant flattery from underlings (quid pro braggadocio) has turned the West Wing into a quid pro freak show.

Because impeachment has made us all Latin speakers, I asked my longtime classics consultant, Vanessa, to translate into genuine Latin some of Trump’s trade-offs:

- Quid pro impendio (this for payment).
- Quid pro deverticulo (this for a resort).
- Quid pro luto (this for dirt).
- Quid pro vitio (this for a crime).
- Quid pro reo (this for a sinner).
- Quid pro imperio (this for power).

Giving Giuliani responsibility for anything? A blatant quid pro asino (this for a fool). But that’s pro forma for a president who sold his soul (quid pro animo) and made his office a quid pro mimo: this for a farce.

Follow Dana Milbank on Twitter @Milbank.

GUESTVIEW

Criticism is off base

I do not feel that the reader was properly informed by the guest column written by Mr. Werner. He questions the leadership of



DEAN PETERSON

Wildlife Services. Mr. Werner makes the case that the lethal removal of a pack of seven wolves near the Centennial Valley was not reasonable. He states this was done because the wolves killed a longtime sheep herder’s livestock guard dog and suggests the rancher did not take proper care of his dog. I disagree with his assessment of Wildlife Services and the situation. Unfortunately, Mr. Werner didn’t tell the whole story.

Between early June and mid August it was confirmed by two separate Wildlife Services agents that this pack of seven wolves killed two guard dogs, five calves and one cow. They also injured

a third guard dog that was taken to the vet, spent the remainder of the summer recuperating, and may not be usable as a guard dog again. At this point Wildlife Services lethally removed the whole pack.

Guard dogs are an effective means of non-lethal control of predators. The guard dogs live with the livestock and are often in a harmful situation. They are loyal to the cattle or sheep and not necessarily to people. This makes them much more effective in protecting the livestock since they are with the livestock day and night. The herder or rancher feeds the dogs and keeps them among the livestock. This is not a case of poor animal husbandry. Wildlife Services properly and legally removed a pack of wolves that were too habituated to livestock and people.

I have worked with Wildlife

Services on many occasions, participating in their non-lethal seminars and have asked them to lethally remove wolves at times. They have always acted professionally when performing a difficult job. They often get scrutinized by the rancher and preservationist because of too little or too much lethal control.

Wildlife Services has always supported non-lethal measures such as range riders, guard dogs and carcass removal. The management of wolves is done by using all the tools in the toolbox. Some of those tools are various means of non-lethal control, hunting, trapping and sometimes the lethal removal by Wildlife Services. There is no lack of leadership — just a lack of facts.

Dean Peterson is a fourth-generation rancher in the Big Hole Valley.

READERS SPEAK

Error about crime lab

Unfortunately, a recent letter to The Montana Standard from Dean Barten about the tragic loss of two relatives contained an error.

I am deeply sorry for the family’s loss. Losing loved ones is always painful, but even more so when their lives are taken in a suspected DUI situation.

It appears someone gave Mr. Barten false information. The DUI suspect’s blood sample