

## Bushwacked, Bamboozled And Filmflammed: A Case Of Skyway Robbery

BY TOBIN BARNES

We were bushwacked, I tell you, bamboozled and filmflammed.

It was a travesty of justice! It was skyway robbery! It was....

Wait. I never really like to appear too grumpy to my readers because...because...oh, what the heck? Who am I kidding? I'm a grump, and I'm going to enjoy being grumpy today.

That's because I've got a bone to pick and an axe to grind. So here goes:

I like being in other places, but I don't like getting there, see.

And the means of travel that I dislike even more than flying is driving. I know, some people enjoy driving, driving long miles to get somewhere. Not me. I don't. People who enjoy long road trips have never seen the humor in the Clark Griswold character.

When I drive hours on end, I feel like my life is seeping out my ears.

But I hate flying almost as much. It's only the lesser of the two evils because it's quicker.

They used to claim that it was fun to fly. My memory doesn't go back that far. It's never been "fun" for me, and it's gotten less so with each passing trip.

The whole process from parking fees to what to pack and what not to pack, from standing in lines to delays and cancellations, from lost luggage to being eyed and examined and suspected has all become torturous enough.

But on our last flight, we encountered a fresh new circle of airline hell. It's the carry-on-baggage "sizer."

And what's that? Wait my unsuspecting little babes-in-the-woods-like-me, and you shall see.

They've been charging for non-carry-on baggage for some time now. That's nothing new. You've got to roll with the punches—especially when you see them coming—because there's going to be a lot of punches. We adjusted by packing lighter and putting everything into two carry-on bags, one for each of us.

We even bought two new "carry-ons" that we thought fit the bill because they were called, appropriately enough, "carry-on" baggage. Besides, they were pretty darned spiffy. We used those bags without incident on two prior trips that we had taken.

But then came the recent trip when we got bushwacked by the bean counters of corporate America. The name of this so-called "discount" airline I'll leave to your imagination. Just realize that this new contagion will probably spread to other



Barnes

airlines given the current culture.

Anyway, there we were standing in line and merrily rolling our spiffy bags up to the ticket counter when these people

behind us piped up and virtually destroyed our pre-trip reverie.

"Maybe they'll let your bags go through," one of them said, "but last time they charged us for bags that size."

Now what could that mean? Must be some crank. I try not to talk to strangers, or anyone else for that matter.

"Yeah," said the other, apparently thinking we wanted this information, "we had to go to the toy department to get carry-ons the size they would accept." And there they stood behind us with two little lavender jobbies like I've seen children traveling with.

"Can't really get much into them," the first one said, "but it's better than paying extra."

Sure enough, now that we looked toward the ticket counter, innocent people, like us, were trying to wedge their normal-sized carry-on bags into a ridiculously small, aluminum-barred "sizer" that in the wrong hands could be used in Satanic initiation rites.

The ticket agents stood patiently by as the travelers tried everything but a sledge hammer (because there weren't any handy) to try to squeeze their bags into that measuring box.

You could almost see the ticket agents thinking in a snarky sort of way, "Knock yourself out, buddy, it ain't gonna fit. Do whatever it takes to convince yourself you're going to have to pay us more money to get on that plane."

After watching a number of people go through contortions with bags smaller than ours, we faced the facts: "How much is it going to cost us?"

"Thirty-five dollars...each way...for each bag." That's right, \$140 above and beyond the price of our "discount" tickets. So, yes, we had been bushwacked, bamboozled, and filmflammed. Extortion might not be too strong a word. And why? Purely revenue.

When we got to our seats on the plane, most of the overhead storage bins were empty: More than enough room for our bags and those of our fellow travelers who had also been bushwacked, bamboozled, and filmflammed.

Tobin Barnes, a high school English teacher, gets his skewed viewpoints of life from staring too much at Crow Peak, which looms above his home a few miles outside Spearfish.

## Reader Has A Shock(ing) Weight Issue

BY TOM AND RAY MAGLIOZZI

Dear Tom and Ray:

Hello! My older sister has a 1996 Saturn SC2, and she is constantly yelling at my sister, my mom and myself for supposedly "plopping" into the seat. She claims that because we don't carefully control our muscles while we get into the car, the impact from our weight falling into the seats will harm the shocks. I don't believe this at all. Also, I don't think that I am getting into the car so clumsily. I think she is mistaking the feeling of the car slightly sinking when more weight is added for my being careless when getting into the car. It's at the point now where I regret riding with her after I get in the car. Can you tell me if there is any merit to her claim? Thanks! - April

TOM: There's nothing like family, is there, April?

RAY: You know, there are more direct ways of telling loved ones that they need to lose a few pounds than what she's doing. I mean, look how diplomatically my brother



CLICK & CLACK

handled it. When I cleared 200 pounds, he just started making beeping noises whenever I backed up.

TOM: Your sister's claim has no merit, April. The weight of you guys "plopping" into the car would have no effect on the shocks

at all. If anything, she could argue that it might affect the springs.

RAY: But the springs are designed to hold the weight of the car. So even if you guys are all on the "sturdy" side, you still can't compete with 2,500 pounds of Saturn SC2 that the springs are already supporting!

TOM: More importantly, the bumps and potholes that your sister encounters while driving around are much harder on the springs (and every other part of the suspension) than anything you guys could do by simply entering the car, no matter how hard you land.

RAY: So you can tell your sister that you've checked with the experts - and checked with us, too. And you've all been cleared to land on the seats without further comment.

Got a question about cars? Write to Click and Clack in care of this newspaper, or e-mail them by visiting the Car Talk Web site at [www.cartalk.com](http://www.cartalk.com).

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## Celebrate National Library Week, April 11-17

BY KATHY JACOBS

Yankton Public Library

Libraries are a very important part of a community. During the week of April 11-17, the Yankton Community Library will take part in a nationwide celebration of libraries with the theme "Communities Thrive @ your library." On Tuesday, April 13, at 7 p.m., local author Marilyn Kratz will be our guest and present her thoughts on writing and what it has brought to her life. On Thursday, the library will host a brown bag lunch with staff from South Dakota Magazine informing us about the process involved in sending an issue to press. The presentation will begin at 12:15 p.m. with time for questions after the presentation. On Wednesday, we'll treat our patrons to coffee all day. Join us for a week of activities and fun and make sure you thank your librarians for their service to the community.

During National Library Week, the library is holding the first of their nine focus groups with members of the community. These sessions, which will be facilitated by Eric Ambrosio of District III, are designed to gather community input about the state of the current library services, programs, and facility and what Yankton's library should look like in these three areas in the future. What do



Jacobs

you visualize for our community library in five, ten, fifteen, or twenty years? While some people will be sent invitations, all are welcome and encouraged to attend and give us your thoughts.

There will be an online survey to complete as well. Each session will take ninety minutes to two hours. The focus groups will be divided into the following categories: educators, senior citizens, citizens of Yankton County, Baby Boomers, parents with middle school and/or high school students, parents with elementary/preschool children, business/civic leaders, teens, and young adult/Gen Xers. Please watch and listen for more information as the time draws closer.

Registration for adult computer classes is now open. Internet Basics will be held on April 9, E-mail Basics on April 16, Introduction to Microsoft Word on April 23, and Introduction to Microsoft PowerPoint on April 30. Each session runs from 9-11 a.m. and will be held at Southeast Job Link, 1200 21st Street. The cost of each class is \$5.00 and can be paid at the library. Seating is limited. These classes are a partnership between the library and Southeast

Job Link.

Master Gardener Betts Pulkrabek will present a class on composting on Wednesday, April 14, at 7 p.m. The fee for the evening, which covers the cost of materials, is \$5. Registration now at the library.

Story time has begun again and runs through May 15. During this session, we are focusing on community helpers. Each week, we will highlight a different community helper and have special guests who will read stories and demonstrate what they do in their jobs. All preschool through second grade children and their care providers are welcome to attend. Story times are held each week on Monday at 6:30 p.m., and Wednesday and Thursday at 10:15 a.m.

Readers Anonymous will discuss Me Talk Pretty One Day by David Sedaris on April 13. This club, which is always open to new members, meets the second Tuesday of each month, at 1 p.m.

The evening book club meets the third Tuesday of each month and has changed their time to 5:30 p.m. The book for the April 20 meeting is The Art of Mending by Elizabeth Berg. In this book, "unearthed truths force one seemingly ordinary family to reexamine their lives and ask themselves: Is it too late to mend the hurts of the past?" This

book should stimulate wonderful discussion as almost all families have situations in their pasts that require mending.

Once again, our patrons were extremely generous during our Food for Fines week. We collected 218 containers of Mac and Cheese for the Contact Center in March. Thanks! During the week of April 11-18, we will collect all types of paper products.

We are hosting two after school movies in April. The newly released movie The Blindside will be shown on April 8 and Alvin and the Chipmunks: The Squeakquel will be shown on April 22. All ages are welcome to attend.

Summer reading is quickly approaching and we have lots of exciting programs planned for June and July. We are once again asking for donations from the public. The following items can be brought to the library at any time: paper towel holders, old CDs and baby food jars with lids. Friends of the Library will hold their monthly book sale on Saturday, April 3, from 10-1, in the garage. They continue to accept donations of gently used books to stock their shelves.

You can reach the library at 605-668-5275 or e-mail me at [kjacobs@ydl.net](mailto:kjacobs@ydl.net). View us online at <http://www.yankton.org/yankton/library/index.php>.

### LIFE BRIEFS

#### Presentation On Local Food System Monday

VERMILLION — A presentation on the local food system by Dr. Jerry DeWitt, PhD, will be held at 7 p.m. Monday, March 29, at the Vermillion Public Library. DeWitt will offer an overview of local food system development, with economic impacts and success stories. He will also examine trends, growth and opportunities.

For more information, contact Angela Jackson at 605-624-1966 or e-mail [angela@prairiesunorganics.com](mailto:angela@prairiesunorganics.com).

#### Easter Bunny To Read At Yankton Library

The Easter Bunny will be a guest reader at the Yankton Community Library, 515 Walnut, on Wednesday, March 31, and Thursday, April 1, beginning at 10:15 a.m. both mornings.

She has several bunny stories she will share with us and we'll decorate eggs to put in our baskets. We may even have a few

bunny songs to sing. For more information, contact the library at 668-5275.

#### Financial Education Class At CCCS Office

Consumer Credit Counseling Service (CCCS) of Lutheran Social Services will sponsor a free financial education class at 12:30-1:30 p.m. Monday, March

29, in the CCCS office at 610 W. 23rd St. in the Marne Creek Professional Center in Yankton.

Janette Ellis, a certified credit counselor, will present "Make the Most Of Your Credit," one of a three part financial education series featuring information about budgeting, savings and credit. The class is free and open to the public. For more information or to register for classes, call 888-258-2227.

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Doors Open 4:30pm  
Dinner Served 5:00-6:30pm  
Booths Open 4:30-7:00pm  
Speaker 7:00pm

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