

The Cafe - Former

Official Organ of *The Society for the Defense of Tradition in Pyrotechny*

I.: O.: O.: J.:

“Magna est Veritas et prævalebit.” – I. *Esdras*, iij: 41.

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OXYMURIATE VINDICATED FROM THE SAFETY-FAKERS

The mischief a secret any of them know, above the consuming of coals and drawing of usquebaugh! howsoever they may pretend. . . to commit miracles in art and treason against nature! . . . See, they begin to muster again, and draw their forces out against me! The genius of the place defend me!

—BEN JONSON,

Mercury Vindicated from the Alchemists

I found myself wandering aimlessly on a strange and forbidding landscape. How I came to be there I do not know, but I felt as though I had been reduced in stature almost to the vanishing point, indeed as though space and time itself had lost their usual fixed delineations. Rocks of peculiar shapes and hues dotted the ground, while the only sign of life was something flying far above – whether a gnat or an eagle I cannot say. So disoriented was I that this could have been a vast alien desert, or it could have been the humble floor of my own laboratory.

After stumbling over the rough terrain for hours, I sat down to rest near a most unusual rock. It appeared to be a perfect crystal, colorless and larger than any of the other miscellaneous fragments strewn about. Despite its beauty it gave me a vague sense of uneasiness, so rather than try to handle it I merely gazed at it in fascination. After a period of time I fancied that its sharp edges began to soften and that a mist rose ever so gradually from its surface. I rubbed my weary eyes, certain I was beginning to hallucinate, yet even as I fought to deny this vapour it grew thicker and broader and taller until it towered above me.

As I sat speechless with astonishment the apparition developed limbs, then a head, complete with mouth and eyes. Fortunately it did not seem hostile, for I was completely unable to move and could not have run away if I tried. This dreadful

suspense was shattered when the spirit made a hideous moan and began to speak:

Woe is me, yes, WOE is me! Is there not one who will defend my honour from those who would ruin me? Must I die not only prematurely, but in disgrace? I have given you, yes YOU, and your colleagues excellent service for lo, these many years. Certainly I can be fractious and high-spirited, and intolerant of bungling, but these same peccadilloes are quietly overlooked in others. I am openly snubbed and slandered, while my poor cousin de Bario is so persecuted he is rarely seen in public. Some will not receive him in private, this despite the fact that his work is never surpassed and seldom equalled. We are forced into the shadow of this languid newcomer who reeks of hartshorn and who, like certain “Bohemian” artists, requires dubious company to deliver an adequate performance. My cousins and I are not allowed to keep such company and are constantly put on the defensive. Yet we are discreetly employed, often through foreign agents, by some who pretend to despise us. I cannot abide such ignominy any longer, and would sooner depart with the proverbial blaze of glory. I shall visit my old acquaintances once again, and we shall make our voices heard. Remember my name and fear it for I am

CLORATO DI POTASSIO

Having delivered this remarkable soliloquy, the spirit vanished in a clap of thunder – deep and forceful, yet pleasingly sharp around the edges.

The author found himself in his own bed, and was just beginning to reflect on his singular dream when he realized that smoke still lingered in the room! Let no one judge too hastily, much less suggest an overdose of Jack Daniel’s or other powerful medicaments. We are not living in the “Age of Reason”; this is the late twentieth century and supernatural events are apparently quite common. Even so sensible a businessman as the author’s great un-

cle Ebenezer (how the government could have used his skills these past three decades!) was troubled by ghosts on one occasion. Far more fashionable observers have reported spooks, specters, out-of-body experiences, indeed visitors from other planets* who defy the laws of physics! Besides, if inanimate objects did not have minds of their own, we would not need the DEA and the BATF to protect us from them.

It may have been just such a visitation which inspired Ben Jonson to write *Mercury Vindicated from the Alchemists*. As we all know, many of the alchemists were mountebanks or charlatans who extracted their gold from gullible patrons, while contriving to stay in the good graces of political poohbahs. Others were perfectly sincere and set the highest goals for themselves, but their command of practical chemistry was unfortunately tenuous. Today it is the *safety-fakers* who accuse our venerable old friend Chlorate of doing both more and less than it really can. This bodes ill indeed, for in many technical fields the safety-fakers are already the predominant force and sometimes their word is law.

In medicine, for example, a few legitimate breakthroughs seem to have inspired a host of foolish bugbears and fables about older methods. There is a widespread notion that anything can be rendered idiot-proof if only enough research and development is done, a notion which is extremely profitable to those able to exploit it. Thus we find that

*FOOTNOTE.: *It would appear that our completely innocent use of the word "saucers" in an earlier article has revived a longstanding controversy over mysterious luminosities in the firmament. Consultation with the learned Herr Pfantodt, together with the words of Dulcamara, inspired further research which has led to most interesting conclusions.*

While their speculations about government secrets were thought-provoking and quite plausible, what we know about the Federal government is quite frightening enough. Especially significant are the strange experimental aircraft designed in the 1950's and '60's, some of which are now declassified. Uncounted millions were squandered on machines which bore a striking resemblance to the popular conception of an alien spacecraft, or vice versa. Just which group of space-cadets came first may be irrelevant and is difficult to ascertain at this late date.

Also to be considered is the issue of conspiracies and cover-ups which, while seen readily by some, probably do exist. It appears that certain self-appointed experts, although addepleted, have no intent to deceive; they merely jumble their facts in a haphazard manner. When this happens it is possible to reach conclusions which are almost exactly opposite from the truth. Some claim the government suppresses information about U.F.O.s. To this author it seems clear that our bureaucrats have attempted to suppress information about fireworks, while attempting to construct UFOs.

T.B.B.

every new tranquilizer in the past fifty years has been touted as "less addictive". The latest ones are so very refined that countless loyal patients take them for years and refuse to give them up. Chloroform was known to be more toxic than ether from the very beginning; then its sinister reputation was enhanced by those promoting patented anaesthetics such as halothane. Today there are newer derivatives which purport to be improvements on halothane. Chloroform has been abandoned by all except television kidnapers; it is so dreaded that even a trace in a throat lozenge is now taboo. Yet, *mirabile dictu*, recent mortality rates from anaesthesia are almost exactly the same as they were from chloroform in the 1860's.

Our readers are doubtless aware of the German car which was said to jump into gear and run through walls all by itself. Before that the "Corvair" was driven from the market, although it is not drastically different from other rear-engined automobiles. For the almighty television camera, a pickup truck believed to explode in accidents was rigged so that it did, in fact, ignite when hit from the side. Even horse-and-buggy thinkers should note the broader implications of such trends.

To embrace a substance for its desirable properties while ignoring inherent undesirable properties could be regarded as "treason against nature". It is not sensible to believe one can inhale chlorinated hydrocarbons without any danger to the heart or liver. Nor is it likely that easily ignited, high-energy mixtures can ever be handled, as Weingart said, like so much sand or cement.

When investing considerable time and money in colored star shells, one may wish to avoid materials which decrease performance, or which require specialized priming methods, toxic catalysts, goeey binders and noxious solvents. In the vast majority of cases one can enjoy the full and glorious performance of chlorates without the unseemly addition of sulphur or sulphides. Some of the cautions about "deathmix" appear to be well founded; the author placed a fist-sized mass of the green version in a plastic bag over two summer days, and found that it turned brown and filled the bag with gas. Obviously one should never leave it dampened, but the same is true without the chlorate. Since we do recognize such practical safety precautions, might we not have a modicum of sport with them? This could serve several purposes: it would horrify the safety-fakers as well as being another good excuse to make bombs. Best of all, it would help point out that the margin of safety with ordinary chlorate/resin compositions is really quite good.

With these goals in mind, the author proposes a PGI seminar and demonstration to be entitled *Oxymuriate Vindicated from the Safety-Fakers*. It would consist of wilful and premeditated use of chlorate in practically every application where it is not "sup-

posed" to be employed. Perchlorates would be banned outright, while black powder would be confined to propelling, bursting and priming functions. All colors, reports, streamers and special effects would have a mandatory chlorate content, perhaps 30%, while most would contain sulphur or metal powders as well.

It is interesting to note that the highly-regarded Japanese still use chlorate and sulphur colors in their best chrysanthemum shells which they retain for their own use. Chlorate/magnesium stars are most impressive. Perhaps we should avoid Kentish's realgar star mixtures, although even these might be tried in a small rocket. Picric acid colors, while offering few if any advantages, should be included for the sake of completeness. Sodium chlorate can be used for amber and orange stars; it generally gives a moderate burning rate and is not as exciting as some published accounts suggest. Somewhat less forgiving is a Maltese green flash composition containing barium chlorate, German black aluminum, sulphur, and antimony trisulphide.

Chlorate fountains are surprisingly reliable, as are Roman candles using the old sulphur colors, and even chlorate rockets are not out of the question. Of course the main attraction would be the aerial bombs; especially important is a sufficiency of reports and bottom shots, both plain and fancy.

Needless to say, the utmost care will be required in such an endeavor. While we will be observing *real* safety rules, such as being a long way away from the buried mortars, any accident could result in terminal embarrassment. Flowerpots and detonations are common enough in PGI competition, not to mention professional displays, but even one in the chlorate exhibition would certainly be blamed on the composition. Bearing this in mind, the display might well include:

- Chlorate fountains and other tube items
- Chlorate whistles in shells
- Chlorate twinklers (??) in a rocket or shell
- 4" and larger peonies with chlorate/sulphur stars
- 5" Lampblack w/blue sättnes and colored bottom shot
- 3" or larger Magnesium colors with reports
- 5" Shell-of-Shells to Silver spider or electric spreader crossettes
- Dark reports or dark sättnes in various combinations
- Green rosettes with red bottom shot
- 6" Green "deathmix" chrysanthemum(s)

For the finale, a prominent Teutonic member has suggested a volley of six-inch double-ring rosette shells with full sized chlorate, aluminum and sulphur bottom shots. The author has been dreaming

of an eight-inch eleven timed reports as the final shell, but as this presentation is only in the planning stage, there is ample time for suggestions. If other members should desire a 10" or 12" chlorate report, we must consider it with all the gravity inherent in an educational public service. ☞

T. BABINGTON BRIMSTONE



HAPPINESS, LONGEVITY, PROSPERITY

Harry Fong and I were chatting in the open dining area of his famous Red Lantern Restaurant in Fargo. I treat myself to a plate of his delicious Gold Dragon Chops each year after the PGII convention. Harry is 78 but still lots of fun.

"Great chow Harry, I..."

An unusual staccato sound turned my head towards a sunlit corner where a pall of white smoke hung over a table occupied by two grand old Chinese dowagers.

"What's the funny noise, Harry?"

Now I smelled something strangely familiar.

"Just my two great aunts shooting their old incense tea crackers" Harry said.

My mind immediately went into a label-collecting mode. I've told Harry about my hobby many times, but he only giggles.

"They must have brought over a supply when they came over from the old country last month."

"I didn't know you still had relatives over there, Harry."

"Yeah, plenty, but not too many of these old Cantonese nobility from the Fushan district."

My heart began to pound and my throat dried up immediately.

"Would you please ask one of your great aunts if they might spare me a package of those crackers they are shooting?" I faintly croaked. "Tell them I'll give any favor or pay any amount."

"Sure, and I'll introduce you too" said a smiling Harry as he took me over to their elegant, ivory-topped table. "Horst, this is my great aunt Mei Lei and my other great aunt Yin. Yin and Mei Lei, Horst."

I studied the old ladies carefully. Dressed in ancient silk clothes and with huge jeweled hairdos and tightly bound feet, they each wore a strange, heavy gold finger ring with a peculiar hook on the bottom for hanging the long strings of tiny crackers.

"Very nice to meet you." I said.

But before they could reply, Harry leaned over and whispered something to Yin. Without hesitation, she smiled and reached into an ornate gold-

and-red box and handed him an object about the size of those boxes that windshield wiper blades come in. Harry nonchalantly flipped the narrow package into my shaking hand.

"Let's finish eating and not bother these ladies anymore."

Flustered, I thanked them as best I could. Then we both bowed and left.

I wolfed down the rest of the meal, but was so nervous I damn near spilled my plum wine on the gorgeous pack of old crackers.

"I've got to go, Harry," I stammered, "but I'll definitely call you tomorrow."

I drove home like a maniac to look carefully at my prize. The package was about a foot long and about 1/2 inch square at the ends. The wrapper was of the thinnest glassine ricepaper impressed in-taglio with tiny lions. The 13-colored label, by far the most detailed and ornate I have ever seen, said "Baby Lotuses Brand" and "Yut Shing Quality Fushan" at the bottom. A scrolled dragon tail contained the tiny numbers 10/400. I carefully pried open just enough glue to peek at the crackers. Never in all my days of collecting have I seen anything like them. Yes, 10 strings of 400 braided crackers that each measured only 3/16 inch long and 1/32 inch wide. Each cracker had an outer wrap of finest gold leaf and was tied on both ends with silk string as fine as human hair!

I couldn't resist. With the aid of a magnifying glass, I carefully picked one of the tiny crackers loose from the middle of a string and touched the tiny fuse with a glowing wire. There was a soft, but still sharply discernable "pop" and a tiny puff of smoke rose from the tiny pile of red paper. My God! How do they lace that gunpowder with incense! Unbelievable!

I called Harry immediately and asked if the old empresses would mind if I interviewed them the next day about their unusual crackers and how and when they acquired them.

"Why ask them? Why not ask great uncle Yut? He's the one who brought them over here when he had to move his business out of the district because of the new city regulations."

"Uncle Yut?" I stammered. "What does he do?"

"Well, I thought you of all people should know, with your goofy hobby and all. He is Yut Shing."

Harry must have sensed my shock as I stammered "Y-Y-Yut Shing?" I faintly hissed. "He is here?"

"Yeah, even though the old geezer is 102, he made me let him set up a temporary shop here in the basement. You know, Chinese respect for the elders and all that crap."

"Could I possibly meet him?" I groaned.

"Sure, I'll let him know you're coming tomorrow."

Needless to say, I couldn't sleep at all that night.

I kept repeating the name of the famous old fireworker that no collector except myself must know was alive. I dreamt about getting a complete interview with Yut, maybe some old pictures of his many factories from back in the 1920's, and writing an article that would make my old buddy Nivolo's eyes bug out more than mine did when he showed me his collection. I got up about 20 times to write down more questions and carefully took some of my oldest Yut Shing material out of my collection.

It still seems like a dream, but at 9 a.m. Harry said "Just go downstairs and knock. He always gets his girls working by 5 a.m."

I knocked and a pretty young girl answered the door.

"Yes?"

"I would like to see Mr. Shing if he isn't too busy."

After a minute a thin but spry old man in a long robe appeared. He was carrying a long staff and his wispy beard draped over a huge pomegranate held under one arm. Several bats fluttered momentarily, then quickly landed back on the crook of the staff before hanging upside down. Yut clapped his hands and the young girl scrambled off for tea.

"Young Harry say you like planty firecracker!" he laughed. "O.K. you come in I show."

The large basement smelled of incense, exotic dyes, and hot tea. Dozens of young girls labored over low tables filled with paper and little piles of gray powder. Some worked long crescent-shaped knives suspended from frames while others labored over ancient printing presses and paper cutters. Middle-aged women boiled the fine dyes while others crushed and sifted gunpowder through 12,000-mesh screens made of the finest panda hair. Two of the oldest women used a sense of touch only attained through 70 years experience to roll the fine powder into threadlike fuses.

Yut guided me to a table where a young girl took the pomegranate and sliced it so we could eat it with our tea.

I told Yut that I had been collecting firecrackers for many years because I thought the manufacturing process was ingenious and the labels were among the world's finest examples of folk art. I showed him some of his gorgeous labels from my collection. He seemed mildly interested. I asked him how he got started in the business.

"I now make firecrackers many 86 years see my Lion tredemork. Watch for pecuriar people imitate but not genu wine."

"I see. Why did you decide to come to Fargo, North Dakota of all places?"

"No can more shoot firecracker in Canton and purucrats like much too paperwork and want people buy cheap goods from state-own Horse and Link Triad."

What are you making here now?"

"I make all 84 lightning firecrackers registered brands from 1919 beware all imitations. On July 1st I commence using labels but bring many labels from 1903 to 1911 and old all lithograph stone to print and proof Lion trademark. You want see old label?"

"Y-Y-Yes" I stammered "and I would like to buy as many different packs and labels as you have for my collection."

"O.K., you come."

Yut had constructed new label bins from empty Campbell's soup boxes. He had glued a label to each slot and also marked each bin in Chinese with the brand, year of first use, and the cracker size and content. True to his word, he had brought perhaps 350-500 of each label. Lithograph plates were stored in an ancient cabinet, and wall shelves held stacks of finished crackers of all the different brands.

"I got big problem no one recognize my Lion trademark and no 50 milligram D.O.T. sticker for fast-lead fuse do not hold in hand since I sell no firecrackers U.S. since 1937."

"Do not worry about that Yut, I'll be able to sell lots of your firecrackers and labels to fellow collectors while you get your new labels ready."

Yut gave me a broad, beaming smile.

"O.K. you come tomorrow. I get 100, that 48 packages our count, of every brand ready you sell and keep 10 percent money. You want extra label?"

"That would be great. Twenty five of each brand should do it."

"O.K." said Yut brightly, "That make 12 of each our count."

To my everlasting disappointment and frustration, that was the last I ever saw of Yut. The next morning all that remained of his little shop were blackened basement walls and a floor scattered with a few broken lithographic plates. A customer at the Red Lantern, a retiree from the Consumer Product Safety Commission, now an official with the National Fire Prevention Association and a volunteer worker with the Citizens for Handgun Control, had smelled what he thought was gunpowder and noticed bits of charred red paper near one of the dining tables. He immediately phoned in an anonymous tip about a possible underground bomb factory.

At 2 a.m. the following day, and with no warrant of any kind, eighty-five B.A.T.F. agents in full body armor burst into the shop. Withering automatic rifle fire, nerve gas, and special incendiary fragmentation grenades instantly killed everyone inside and consumed most flammable materials. At exactly 2:02 the agents retreated and the high-pressure nozzles for the jelled hexane/magnesium/permanaganate deployers inserted through the ventilation system were opened. Thirty seconds later the

ultrasound generators fired and all substances containing calcium instantly disassociated to a fine amorphous powder.

In a brief press release that alluded to tons of high explosive materials and a plot to destroy democracy, John Smith, B.A.T.F. assistant deputy to the acting secretary for interim affair operations and event protocol, stated "Although we found no evidence that the basement was occupied, traces of nitrate bomb materials were found in several areas. The operation, although extremely complex, went very smoothly. Citizen input such as displayed in this sinister conspiracy increases our job effectiveness and saves valuable tax money that our Bureau sorely needs for staff increases and equipment modernization."

HORST KNALLKÖRPER



A BAD CASE OF GAS

It has long been known that gasoline and related petroleum distillates, when properly oxygenated, have considerable work potential. This can be used gradually, as in an internal combustion engine, or more suddenly, as employed by fuel-air explosive devices, which our R&D department is now looking into. The ultimate potential of volatile liquids when properly oxygenated may be yet to be discovered, yet a series of experiments conducted by this author, as well as his ne'er-do-well assistants, should elucidate the general degree to which the process of oxygenation contributes to the detonation potential of volatile liquids.

The Beginnings: In my younger days I had a penchant for racing about in go-carts. Not your average putt-putt, mind you, but the kind that used chain-saw engines and would accelerate to seventy in the wink of the eye. It used a mixture of oil and gasoline, being a two-stroke engine, and after I'd mis-mixed a couple gallons of fuel that I'd had to discard down the sewer, I learned my first lesson.

Friend and fellow black-sheep Tom Sawyer (his real name, no kidding), was along that day, hoping to get a ride. Disappointed, and being a firebug by nature, Tommy flipped a match into the sewer grate. Great tongues of flame, garnished by towers of black smoke, licked at the utility wires above, and so we did the only sensible thing - we ran like hell. Mind you, this was not an explosion, but merely a lowly sewer fire. A deflagration and nothing more, although mildly amusing.

I've never understood Sawyer's preoccupation with fires, nor he mine with explosions, but we had a

common passion for advanced juvenile delinquency; an agreeable symbiosis. Sawyer always carried a pocketfull of strike-anywhere matches with him, a term he took at face value. You'd never know where or when his next conflagration would turn up. Take your eyes off Tommy for a moment, and you'd be smelling smoke and running like hell the next.

In the Autumn, a resplendent yet bittersweet season for New Englanders, citizens raked their leaves into towering piles, all to be collected by huge vacuum trucks. Not to be outdone by city trucks, Tom and I rode bicycles about the town, Tom tossing a trusty wooden match into a large leaf cache periodically. When we'd set several blazes, we'd adjourn to the top of Elephant Rock and smoke a joint, savoring the chaos. If only Tommy had a fiddle His eyes gleamed in a way that worried even me. Yet still a mere fire.

I was beginning to think I might convert Tommy to a powderhead one evening after we'd just watched Sergeant Saunders cremate a Kraut tank with a Molotov Cocktail. Great show: *Combat*. There are several forms of Molotov Cocktail, and against my urgings, Tom decided to emulate Sgt. Saunders, and stuff a rag in a bottle of gasoline and throw it. I had felt that the fuse should be attached to the outside, so as to ignite the device only when it breaks. We should've done it my way. Tom and I took the "Backyard Express", our way of travelling at night without being detected from the road, where Officer Maccini drove his prowler car, to our target for the evening, Bates School, where we had suffered our elementary years.

Sawyer lit his Molotov, brought his left leg up high, cocking his right arm back to the throwing position, the target being the Bates gymnasium. As the bottle followed his cocking arm, the gasoline sloshed backwards, dislodging the burning rag and showering Tom with gasoline. The burning rag fell to his hip, where it started him afire. Tommy danced a blazing, screeching jig, leaping high into the air and hopping and whirling furiously, all the time tearing at his Levi jacket, the whole spectacle illuminating the neighborhood nicely. Lights came on. Astonished neighbors peered out their doors and windows at what to them must have seemed a Buddhist Monk running amok in flames. Sawyer finally ripped his jacket off and sprinted onto a dewy lawn, extinguishing himself and ending his fiery fandango.

He emerged from the wet grass relatively intact, all considered. Unfortunately, his shoulder-length hair was reduced to a stubby stench on the right side of his head. I suppose today such a coiffing might be considered fashionable, but at the time it was awkward to say the least. Tom took to wearing odd hats to cover his blistered right ear and neck, and had he not been such an accomplished

and dreaded street-fighter, he would certainly have taken considerable disparagement from his peers. And however painfully amusing, again, all we had created was a damned fire. Just not enough fuel-air intimacy of mixture, luckily for Tommy, but things were about to change.

After considerable healing and mending on Tom's part from our Molotov, we once again set about our work. Tom's sweet and romantic memory of our sewer fire had led us to dedicate the evening to an even more robust and majestic recreation of same. We prowled the neighborhood like cats in the night, stealing gasoline cans for lawnmowers, snowblowers, etc., until we had a BUNCH, pouring it all down one sewer grate. We pillaged every garage we could open, and threw the empty cans over a lilac hedge. We had to stop when we couldn't throw another can over for it clanging against another can. Too much noise.

Tom looked at me with something like fear, withdrawing a wooden match from his pocket. Obviously, it was just too much gas and we'd gone way too far. Yet to desert such an inviting inferno would be unthinkable.

We took several steps back and Tom started throwing matches at the sewer grate. The matches clinked to one or another side of the grate and went out without fail. Although it was late fall, we poured sweat and cringed between each match toss. Tom was down to his last match. He lit it and threw it at the grate, where it danced and died defiantly.

Our shoulders fell. What now? Had we more sense, we'd have left it alone and gone home. Call it sewer pollution, what the hell. But that's never been our way, and Tom vanished into the woods, towards his house, to fetch more matches. I blended into the shadows and waited. I'd guess it took Tom a good ten minutes, probably closer to fifteen, to return with a pack of matches. Tom wondered if the gas was still down there. We couldn't smell it, but I knew it had to be. Tom wasn't convinced. He sauntered up to the grate, casually flicking a match toward it, seemingly daring it to ignite. It did better than that. The match bounced once and fell into the abyss, and Hell followed with it.

Colossal columns of flame leapt high into the night sky as our bones were shaken, ankle to skull, by the heaving explosion in the road beneath us. Trying to regain our balance, we looked around wildly and saw gouts of flame spring from every sewer in sight, the blast racketting through the neighborhood. Manhole covers and sewer grates took flight in streams of fire. Then the streetlights expired, which was about when all the awful clanging began. The heavy, dull, metallic thuds were the sewer grates and manhole covers descending out of the night sky that we'd sent them to. No way to

see them or dodge them, and so our sweat poured until their echoes died out. And then we ran. Not a trot, mind you. We broke into terrified sprints back to our houses. I shinnied up the gutter pipe and into bed with not a moment to spare. My father, already thoroughly disgusted with my interests, lumbered in to question me about the blast. I shrugged and offered that a transformer on a utility pole had blown and caused the blackout.

More than that had blown. Tom and I had inadvertently created the greatest carburetor in the world. By serendipitously allowing the gasoline to vaporize and permeate the sewer systems of Pilgrim and Rutgers Roads, we'd flooded the systems with not merely combustible liquids, but explosive gasses.

The effects were far-reaching. The electricity died for blocks, the water lines burst, but most exquisitely of all, the overpressures in the sewer system sent the sewer contents back along the line to their sources. Kevin McKinney told me that his Dad was literally thrown from the throne when it happened. He was showered with high-pressure sewage of a frightful nature while simultaneously being plunged into darkness by the power failure. Mr. McKinney's bellows brought Kevin, with a flashlight, only to find Mr. Mac sitting on the tile floor, sodden with newspaper in hand, clad in only an old undershirt, mired in excrement that continued to drip down on him from the ceiling. Mr. Mac was unhappy. Unhappier still to discover the water mains broke. No way to wash up. Kevin's epic struggles against both gorge and laughter at seeing his father in such a state were ultimately lost, which was good eventually for one ticket to the woodshed. I've always wondered how widespread the overpressure effect was, and how many people shared Mr. Mac's fate.

Tom and I lived in terror for days, realizing we had caused a major neighborhood catastrophe, and dreaded the visit of Officer Maccini, which we knew would come sooner or later. We tried to tell ourselves that they'd just think it was a natural gas leak gone bad, but we realized that sooner or later someone would glance over that lilac hedge and discover the real cause. Yet Maccini never showed up at all. After all, why should he? We had long ago learned, as Milano has counseled, "Never tell a copper nothin'." And Paul Maccini had run out of scams. We had learned that no matter how many witnesses he claimed, no matter how many false fingerprints, whatever interrogation techniques used, that we would always survive by operating on the assumption that the police are lying to you. A sad commentary, but true. After all, I'm still a free man, and I oughtn't be, not by a long shot.

Remember, laws are only for those that get caught.

EDUARDO TELLERINI

ALLOCATION OF THE RT. VEN. EDUARDO TELLERINI, G.:C.:

My good friends and companions of the I.O.O.J., it is my pleasure to address you for the first time as President of our order, my having been sworn in, in due and ancient form, by the Rt. Venerable Bianco Gasolini.

I am pleased to report that the state of the I.O.O.J. is good. We have inducted many new companions, all Fireworks People; folks with knowledge of and skill with pyrotechnic endeavor.

To those that would wish us away, I bear sad news. The I.O.O.J. is growing, healthy, and meaner than ever. Our ranks swell with those true practitioners of fireworks. We leave behind and amuse ourselves with you, our detractors: the ignorant, the bombastic, the iconoclastic, and the parasitic.

To those who would see us scattered to the winds, I would counsel to tread carefully, for we *are* the winds. We walk in your midst, though you may not recognize us, and we laugh at your befuddlement. Tread carefully, Dear Foes, for the Case Former of Damocles looms large above you.

As we grow, so do our capabilities. We now have an address to which our companions, and anyone else that might learn it, may write us (No letter-bombs, please; besides, they wouldn't work. We're much better at them than you are).

Our address is: I.O.O.J.
 P.O. Box 600393
 St. Paul, MN

We welcome and answer your communications, and solicit informative or amusing articles to pass on to our Companions via *The Case-Former*.

Also, as many of you may know by now, the works of our editorial staff are being offered to the general public for the first time entitled, "The Best of *The Case-Former*", available for \$7.50 by writing our P.O. Box. The proceeds will be used for our Grand Manifestations and for the general bedevilment and torment of our detractors.

I wish formally to greet and laud the additions of Companions T. Babington Brimstone and Antonio Gianslavi to our editorial staff, both being fine writers as well as pyrotechnists.

It was a pleasure to induct so many fine new people into our Order at our Fargo ceremony. As usual, the affair was highlighted by free-wheeling fireworks (nobody was injured), copious gunfire, abundant food and drink, and general merriment, with not an orange vest to be found.

Special thanks go to Companions Giustiziare and Angelina Fiammante, who generously hosted our party, as well as to Cam Starr, for hosting the P.G.I.I. convention and announcing the founding of the N.F.A., a badly needed influence in the fire-

works industry, which has the complete support of the I.O.O.J. (if you think it'll help, Cam).

Despite the mosquitoes, Fargo was a success for the P.G.I.I. We owe much more than most know to Pete Cermak, Irv Haman, Randy Pritchard, Ed Vanasek, Steve Coman, and so many more whose tireless efforts got the show in the air.

The Hop Kee demonstration, of course, was one of the highlights of Fargo. Fireworks have been shot slowly by themselves, in unison, and synched electronically to music, but the application of chaos mathematical theory to fireworks was a stroke of genius.

I was beginning to despair of the Safety Committee's rejection of unorthodox display techniques, but they have at last redeemed themselves. Under their dedicated and vigilant auspices, lift powder was poured into the bottoms of mortars with loose-fitting end plugs, from which it promptly spilled through to the ground, and the short-lifted shells were allowed to be shot in this configuration. It is gratifying to see the Safety Committee attaining the same exemplary professionalism as the B.A.T.F. or D.O.T, harping on the picayune and shrugging vapidly at the terrifying.* We miss you, Mr. Sprague.

In closing, I believe we can look forward to an active year, and I wish to thank all of you who make up our Order for your dedicated support. We all know one another, even if we've never met, by our reverence for, and dedication to, the art of fireworks. You are the people that keep fireworks alive in their truest spirit, and though ours is a light-hearted assemblage, I pledge solemnly to you that I will work constantly to further our cause, and to provide, in the I.O.O.J., a home for those that share our passion for shaking the earth and painting the sky with fire. ♪

EDUARDO TELLERINI

* *Welcome to the new P.G.I.I.!*



THE WHISTLING BITCH

All of us have heard someone whistle before, but how does the pyrotechnic whistle work? Imagine a strobe pulsing between 600 and 16,000 times a second. The sound produced by this oscillation would be high-pitched but would also vary in frequency because a strobe does not have a steady beat, and neither does a whistle. The sound of the whistle is made when air is moved as the composition burns on and off causing a vibrating effect. We interpret this as noise or sound. Because the frequency at which it oscillates varies so greatly, a

whistle can work in tubes which are different in diameter and length.

Is there an upper and lower pitch limit? Make a very small one and ask your dog if he (she or it) heard it, because we as humans can hear only a limited range of sounds. While bats and small rodents hear very high sounds, animals such as elephants and most large birds are able to hear sounds so low, that we need sophisticated electronic equipment to detect those sounds even though such sounds might be very loud. I don't have that kind of equipment to detect those sounds so what the hell do I know? I can say that different types of whistle mix will probably yield different results. Which type do I prefer? If it's dangerous and pisses people off, I probably use it. My favorite whistle mix is potassium chlorate and sodium benzoate, with 4 percent additional fine titanium sponge and 1 percent additional red iron oxide. In the particular size tube I use (1 inch i.d.), it's the loudest whistling bitch around.

If you have a rodent problem or an ugly dog, try using potassium picrate or gallic acid. If you are not a member of the I.O.O.J. you're probably used to using large amounts of Vaseline (ask anyone from Iowa).

Please use caution when making any kind of whistle because certain ones are more sensitive than others. I use all wooden tools when I hand-ram mine, however, a good hydraulic press is in the planning. With the help of *Shaggy's* brother *Darrell*, I now have the ability to make 3 inch diameter whistles using a mortar (not a cheap plastic one either). It's best to bury these in the ground to keep the vibration to a limit or else the composition will fragmentate and there goes six pounds of good hooter as a salute.

How big can we make them? I have yet to find that out. Maybe *Milano* can be talked into building an 8 inch ram for me. I think I'll ask him next time we meet. After all, whoever said "size should have limit" sure ain't no *Tellerini*, only a *jiggery-pokery*. ♪

PAUL VERONNE



REMODELING BOY SCOUT CAMP

(ED. NOTE: With this issue The Case Former is pleased to welcome as a contributor Antonio Gianslavi, the promising son of our illustrious 'Malevolent Artificer,' Milano Gianslavi. A true chip off the old blockbuster!)

Every summer my good friend Guido Omerta and I have the opportunity to spend a week camp-

ing with the local boy scout troop. The daily activities are for the most part enjoyable, with a variety of merit badges and the like that can be earned. However, it is the night games we live for. Almost every night, we challenge some other troop to play war games, usually capture the flag. For many years our troop have gone undefeated in the games, causing much jealousy from other troops. We are in fact so good that other troops have resorted to cheating and occasionally physical violence upon the younger scouts to gain a victory.

After one such an evening, Guido and I were sitting by the dying campfire thinking of ways to get revenge upon those who so desperately deserve it.

"Wouldn't it be great," Guido suggested, "to blow up their latrine?"

As soon as he suggested the idea, I knew it would be perfect. The latrine was the center of life at camp. It was a small square building with four wooden walls, a plastic roof, a wooden floor, and the pit below to hold what was left of the unidentified stuff we ate in the mess hall. Over the years, we had pulled a number of practical jokes, but this would put the icing on the cake and give revenge a whole new meaning.

That night, Guido and I prepared ourselves for the adventure. We donned our completely black military fatigues, face masks, and gloves. A short while later, we were on our way to the enemy campsite with a book of matches, a candle, and a couple pounds of carbide from the quartermaster's supply tent. We sneaked quietly into the campsite, located the latrine, and made sure that there was no one around. We had decided earlier that Guido would stand watch and I would do the dirty work. I went into the latrine, down to the farthest stall, and dropped all the carbide we had into the farthest stall. A soft bubbling noise told me that I had hit liquid and acetylene gas was being produced. Moving back to the nearest stall, I set the candle in a good spot and lit it. We hoped that by the time the acetylene reached the candle, the entire pit would be full of it, and that the gas would blow the thing sky-high. As soon as I was done, we went back to camp as fast as we could without being noticed, for we wanted to be in our tent when it went off. Our only concern was that some scout might get up, wonder what the burning candle was for, and blow it out. Soon after we were in our tents, we were rewarded with a soft boom echoing through camp. As I fell asleep, I could still hear Guido softly chuckling in the darkness.

The next morning, in the mess hall, our success was confirmed by the absence of the entire troop whose campsite we had hit. Nothing was said for the rest of the week, and neither Guido nor I were

brave or stupid enough to go investigate the damage we had caused. We left camp wondering how well our prank had actually worked.

Although we thought it was over, our true reward came the next year. Our troop was assigned to that campsite, and when Guido and I first arrived in camp, we found, among many other things, a brand new latrine.

ANTONIO GIANSLAVI

SYMPATHETIC DETONATIONS

News Notes From All Around

It has been rumored that the following advertisement appeared recently in "The Predawn Leftist," China's favorite scandal rag:

WANTED: Locket expert. Must have high degree, or velly smart, or think smart, or say smart. Must not be razy, must work hard, razy person not wanted. Do not want browhead, or windbag, or ballage barroon with mouth sewn on. We need locket expert, make BIG locket, have big tube. GOOD PAY, rotza lice, and flied or loast lat. Apply by post to Locket Ministry, 666 Rirry Rorry Pop Rane, Peking.

Gee, I wonder who they got?

MILANO

It has been learned that the KSI has been dispatched to Singapore, its mission the training of Defense Ministry Personnel. This piece of highly unlikely news led us to place calls of inquiry to an I.O.O.J. agent highly placed in western military intelligence circles. He was able to confirm for us that this is actually a covert CIA mission to hopelessly cripple the strategic thermonuclear Saturn missile battery program of Singapore. Moreover, it has been learned that KSI has been training for such missions for some time, and is known to the CIA formally as KSIMF, or Klutz Sabotage Impossible Mission Force.

While the State Department expressed reserve over a possible international incident, if not an actual thermonuclear exchange between the U.S. and Singapore, CIA is confident that with KSI there to help them, no Singapore missile could conceivably reach our shores, even if shipped.

As usual, if any of the KSIMF should be caught or killed, the Secretary will disavow any knowledge of their actions, if he can keep a straight face.

We are saddened to learn of the death of Dennis Manochio after a long illness. A New York na-

tive, Dennis moved to California, where his business was gourmet foods.

Perhaps best noted as an historian, researcher, and collector of Fireworks, Manochio founded the Fourth of July Americana and Fireworks Museum, which we all hope will survive him.

We regret the delay in the announcement of Dennis' passing, but it co-incided almost exactly with the issuance of the previous *Case-Former*. Hopefully no inference is to be drawn from the fact. ❧

THE MALEVOLENT ARTIFICER

"By their works ye shall know them."

—JESUS

Now and then Milano thinks, "there really isn't anybody so dumb as to try some of the things I write about, is there?" Well, I think I may have an answer. There must be a group of people, who not having as prestigious a publication as the *Case-Former* in which to share their expertise, that insist on trying to bewilder the tyro pyrotechnician with demonstrations of their skill.

At the last convention we witnessed a demonstration of the coveted muzzle break shell. This was done only to give the viewing audience something of which to be envious. Milano himself overheard some of the natives in attendance say "Gollee, lookit that will-ya boy, hell, anybody can shoot them things uppin the air, it takes skill to make-em blow up like them fellas."

It was now crystal clear — never instruct as Milano does, just give sterling performances and let the envious wallow in self pity and ignorance.

This scheme might have worked, but for the fact Milano is too good a mechanic and saw through their now previously unknown technique.

I have decided to name this "the IDIOTS OUT WALKING AROUND" muzzle bursting mortar" in honor of some present at its premiere.

Directions are as follows: cut some steel pipe four inches inside diameter to a length of thirty inches. Next bend a piece of one half inch iron rod as follows: measure off twelve inches and bend a right angle four and a quarter inches and bend parallel to the other leg; cut the leg equal to the first; you should now have a long U shaped piece. This piece is now placed over the end of the tube so the legs lay alongside the tube about four inches or so and this is welded in place; this should leave an eight inch gap from the muzzle to the crossbar.

Next cut a piece of half inch plate four inches square and weld to the crossbar parallel to the muzzle. This can also be welded at a forty-five degree

angle to give a fan effect that can be aimed. Now you have it; the secret's out; you too can hold your head high with the best of the best.

Some of you may be thinking "Milano's slipped a gear, there's no bottom to this mortar." Get this—you don't need one; just put it in a hole, pack well, throw in a handful of powder, drop in an unlifted shell, more powder, and fire with the dross of a fusee. ❧

MILANO GIANSLAVI

PLUMBING WITH GUNPOWDER II: OR, THE ANTI-SEPTIC EXPLOSIONS

Recently I read in *The Case Former* an article about plumbing with gunpowder, and the marvelous results of this new drain-cleaner. While I have never tried this, I did see some remarkable results in clearing my septic systems. May I say, they had rather explosive results.

The first attempt was by my crazy commie neighbor. Let me explain, years ago when he was constructing his house, he had a hill created by using landfill — read *junk* — and bulldozing dirt on top of it. One of the items that was buried was an old septic tank three-quarters filled with waste. Here it sat, peacefully rotting into oblivion, until that fateful day my pinko neighbor had lost the prime on his well and needed to drill another one. He decided that if had his adopted Chinese son do slave labor with a shovel it would save him money. After all, he figured, for every foot this kid dug it was one less foot he would have to pay for, so make the kid dig!

He rigged up a windlass and had the kid start digging. I often wondered if he might have been Vietnamese, as this kid loved to tunnel. Well, the young gook resisted getting the bends and started to dig. About five hours later he called up that he had hit bedrock and could not go any further. Now what to do?

Well, Joe Commie had served in Korea, and had brought home some souvenirs. He had rifles, blankets, and even a surplus military ambulance — but above all, he had hand grenades. He got the great idea of putting a gallon of gasoline down the hole and detonating it with a grenade. Now, as it is well known, when human waste ferments it gives off methane gas, and this tank was very, very full and ready to go. A crowd gathered to watch — after all, this was a grenade. Joe lowered the gas and prepared to drop the grenade. The resulting explosion rumbled out of the hole and a small amount of white vapor rose from it. Joe stuck his head over the hole to see what had happened. The next

sound was like the noise of an oncoming freight train. Half-fermented sewage blew out of the well and knocked old Joc on his ass. One local wag was heard to call out, "thar she blows!" It rained down on Joe, soaking every pore of his body. For weeks we could tell when he was coming even before we saw him, if the wind was right.

The next time I saw someone use some dynamite was to clear a drainage field and plumb again with gunpowder. It was when I visited a friend's cabin one summer weekend. A neighbor wanted to sell his house and so was fixing it up - new gutters, fresh white paint, a little fix here, a little fix there. One of the things he did was to pump the septic tank, and the water drains out after a settling period. The water drained into a ditched field to settle. Lots of times these become blocked and need to be cleaned out. Two methods are used - the first is with a shovel, and the second is with dynamite. The local experts chose the second. They got two cases of ditching dynamite and proceeded to blow holes in the ground. Around the settled pond that had formed the edge of the tank they spaced out about a case and a half. This was serious overkill, as they only needed a small amount. Many fuses were lit, and the resulting explosion was deafening. Our heroes were showered with mud and goo. But the worst part was that the side of the house was covered with waste and blue water, giving rise to a novel sort of exterior decoration. As the fellow who owned this house was unloved locally, the house was known by a special designation for years thereafter; as in, "you want to find the store? Go down to the shit-covered house and turn left." It took ten coats of paint before the blue water was covered enough not to bleed through, and the house never did sell.

The final experience of plumbing with gunpowder was after a friend moved his outhouse, the trench being full. That night we were having one of our bottle rocket wars when Todd announced that he had to use the privy. "It's over there," I said, forgetting it had been moved. Todd ran off in the direction of the house, and Tim (that sick jerk) fired a rocket that hit Todd square in the pratt. Todd jumped and fell face-down in the open trench, covering himself. He started to scream and rage - but none of us could help him, since we were laughing too hard. A long soak in the icy waters of a northern Minnesota lake with a bar of Lava soap removed the smell and fecal matter - but to Todd's annoyance, we continued to shoot rockets at him.

Well, as you can see, plumbing and septic systems go well with powder and we hope others will try this soon, as it is a wonderfully entertaining time.

PAOLO DA GIRO

CALIFORNIA DREAMING

"All the leaves are brown, and the sky is grey - I went for a walk on a winter's day." Well, actually, I got on an airplane - destination: Lake Havasu and the Western Winter Blast. On a cold winter's day our discussion over whether we were going ended. We decided to go. As always when I travel for fireworks, I write a review of the gathering. Usually, this is a real easy task - the only organization that has more clowns than the P.G.I.I. is Ringling Brothers, Barnum & Bailey, and the Guild is catching up quickly. You take pen in hand and jab at the soft underbelly of the craft. A few bad jokes, and a moral or two. *Voilà*, another article in print!

I had a real problem with the W.W.B. I was not angry at anyone. I didn't feel sorry for the rank and file. What would I write about?

The W.W.B. was a gathering of the old guard. I saw people there I had not seen in years. It felt good to be amongst friends. I knew I would have a good time. The W.P.A. had its stuff together and was trying to run a class act. They even kept safety-fakery to a minimum. Little did they know how safe they were one night when several members of the I.O.O.J. *were* the safety committee.

I arrived on a cloudy Friday. The weather service was predicting rain. I knew it wouldn't rain during the show. After all, the fix was in. Registration was its normal chaotic mess. The buzz floating around was that *The Best of the Case-Former* would be on sale here for the first time. I was overjoyed and eager. Who cares if someone in the W.P.A. thinks we are "red-necked and racist." As the old spinach-eater said, "I yam what I yam." We are the best, we keep the traditions, we push the flap of the envelope, and we just want to have fun.

Witness Dr. Bourbonini's seminar on Groundage Effects on the Ignition of Common Class C Devices. The turnout was excellent, but more on this later.

The first night's activities were highlighted by the appearance of some leather-jacketed hoodlums. J.D.'s on a spree, water mains bursting joyfully, cracker strings on the fence. "Did you set off that string that broke the pipe?" they were asked. "No, it wasn't us, honest, trust me!" claimed the leader. "Yes, it was. I saw you leather-jacketed hoodlums." "No, lady, it wasn't us, it was one of those bums from Solon," chorused the smallest hood. "Yes, it was - I saw you do it! Great fireworks, by the way."

The first night's activity also included a great steak served by a gorgeous waitress. Yes, even the women in Lake Havasu are good-looking.

Saturday brought lectures, lunch and good times. Everywhere in the flea market people were discussing some aspect of fireworks. It was great and

I felt good. Lunch was a gathering of friends, with Lino collecting jokes. Thank you, Lino, for the laughter. That afternoon we attended the lectures. I enjoyed the talks on single and multiple break construction. They were given by people who care about what they do, and do not just repeat what a high-school chemistry text tells them. That night, while exhibitors demonstrated that even small groups of newcomers under adverse conditions (from California, with its billy-be-damned laws) could put on a good show, we assembled the Box!

Dr. Bourbonini in consultation with the other learned companions decided to lecture on the effects of groundage in Class C, confinement of same, and of course the Bourbonini method of igniting Class C. A quick consultation with the Duck Hunter yielded large numbers of display strings and other items to be included in the Box.

Sunday was a day of morons. I attended one and a half lectures. One was given by a fuse-cutter with high-school text book and his roll of degrees from the Rauchmantl Schüle – the two-ply kind. This is a new danger to the craft – knowledge without experience, worthless and overbearing. Later that night I watched a fuse-cutter transfixed watching

a morning-glory burning. He reminded me of a child staring at a wrapped package, intense and unwavering. "What are you doing?" I asked. "Looking at the sparks. This has three examples of sparks, small, large, and then small again," he said. "Yes, it's a great item," I said, "did you ever try a dozen at once?" "No, it's not the firework, it's the spark. It's a perfect example." "What are you talking about?" I asked. "I help teach the safety-faker responsibility class at the Rauchmantl Institute for Pyrotechnic Ineptitude. We need sparks to show people proper fireworks." I couldn't listen to him any more and just walked away.

That night come two fine displays. First, before the public display, with total approval of the safety committee, we ignited the Box. A can of good Brazilian powder was added and the resulting fireball scorched the earth. After this, we were witness to the W.P.A. Public Display. They did a fine job of aerial and ground work. What else do you need in Lake Havasu but beautiful women and fireworks? Well, maybe a Lust Bombe or a beer-drinking Lincoln Continental. ♣

PAOLO DA GIRO



VERONNE'S TOP TEN LISTS

Top ten reasons to attend this year's convention in New Castle. . .

10. If you act stupid in front of anyone, all they will say is "How is everything back in Iowa?"
9. It's more fun getting drunk with the eastern safety committee.
8. To vote down the flood attire dress code.
7. To hand out lake-party mystery fire trophy.
6. Fewer mosquitoes?
5. Dago food!
4. To see if anyone remembers the last I.O.O.J. party.
3. To see who wins the most bets on dumb officer predictions.
2. Fewer consultants and more people who have actually done things.
1. Anything is better than the LaCrosse convention!!

Top ten reasons for not attending this year's convention in New Castle. . .

10. Still too much Chinese shit.
9. Orange vest means "wouldn't you like to be an asshole too?"
8. Lighting class "C" items, one at a time.
7. Their accent is fake anyway.
6. Nothing could top the class "B" ground display in Fargo.
5. Dago farts!
4. Seminar by expert witness leaves you even more confused.
3. Big sale on blenders for making rocket composition.
2. Flaming clays are not on competition list.
1. Seen one super-string, you've seen them all.

Whether you decide to go or not, you know the I.O.O.J. party always welcomes fun and good times (not necessarily something to write home to mother about).

Top ten categories that should be in competition. . .

10. Fuse cutting and lighting.
9. Flaming clays and Barts.
8. Strobe wheels that chase safety fakers.

7. Best rocket composition made in a blender.
6. Mystery fire competition.
5. Best wheel made of steel wool on the end of string swung by hand (oogle oogle).
4. Best large flaming ego.
3. Dusterwinkle candle mine.
2. Worst nomination for 1st V.P.
1. Ready box mine competition.

Top ten best reasons to become a safety official. . .

10. Like to order little kids around.
9. Treat everyone like little kids.
8. The place to find the best WEED.
7. People think you work hard because you look like road construction workers. (Forgot the shovels, so we'll have to lean on each other).
6. To feel important at least one day during the year.
5. Look mom, my own golf cart!
4. So you can put your signature on any shell you want.
3. Sucking up to officers is what you do best.
2. Easier way of getting your picture in the bulletin because you can't make anything.
1. Wearing a hard hat is the best way to protect your large ego.

Top ten favorite memories of the I.O.O.J. . .

10. Making examples out of idiots (publicly).
9. The "Go Getter" Mystery fire suddenly snuffed by big salute.
8. Jack Daniels and powdered sugar donuts.
7. The "oogle oogle" story.
6. Pissing in the fruit cocktail before the afterglows. (Just kidding, but I still prefer the home brew.)
5. Expert witness no longer expert business man.
4. Green-fused firecrackers that stay lit even when dropped in friend's beer glass.
3. Pin the tie on the Mountebank.
2. Charlatan tarred and feathered piñata filled with bullshit.
1. Witless guy wins broken case-former award.



TELLERINI'S CULINARY CORNER



During the sweltering summer months, and of course the fireworks season, a Coke just doesn't make it. As an alternative that is not only relaxing but refreshing, try my martini concoction.

Martini Tellerini

First, find a ripe, sweet watermelon, cut it up, and de-seed the sweetest red heart. Put the watermelon in a blender and blend, until you have a purée that is almost entirely liquid. To this, add as much vodka as you wish, or alternatively, gin or grain alcohol. Add ice. Now relax and set up a display, or shoot some fireworks.

Of course, at all too many pyrotechnic events you will encounter the ScrewPeople, those small people with big mouths, usually equipped with badges or vests, who will see you having fun. They will, of course try to put an end to this. To foil them, simply take a 60 c.c. syringe and an I.V. hypodermic needle, and inject the watermelon with vodka or grain alcohol. You'll be surprised how much a melon will absorb. And who would dream of stopping anyone from eating such a politically correct fruit? Eat it normally, and marvel at how your mood improves as you enjoy your fireworks activities.

This recipe for barbecue sauce comes from my cousin, James Tucker, of Lafayette, Alabama. He is one of the best outdoor chefs I've met, and here is his sauce for chicken.

Cousin James's Chicken BBQ Sauce

Ingredients:

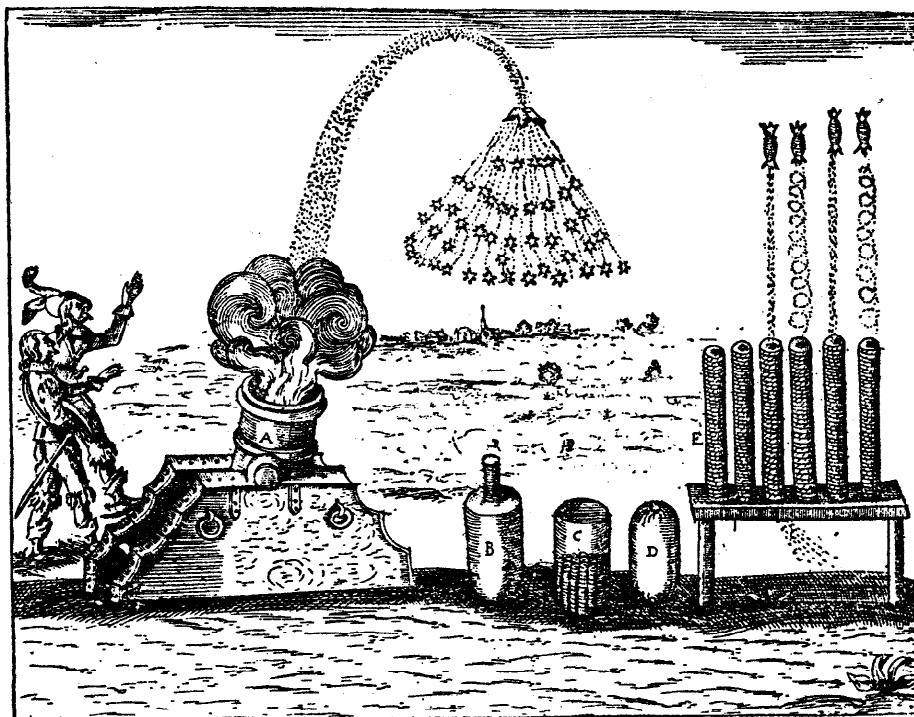
- 4 oz. vegetable oil
- 8 oz. apple cider vinegar
- 2 tablespoons poultry seasoning
- 1 tablespoon black pepper
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 1/4 stick butter

Directions:

This must all be heated in a saucepan and brushed or mopped onto the chicken continuously during covered cooking over a medium charcoal fire. Cook for as long as the coals last. It will be all the more tender and flavorful the longer it is cooked, and it cannot be overcooked.

Give it a try on a relaxed summer evening, shoot some class C, and enjoy a taste of the deep South.

EDUARDO



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For the Pyro Nut

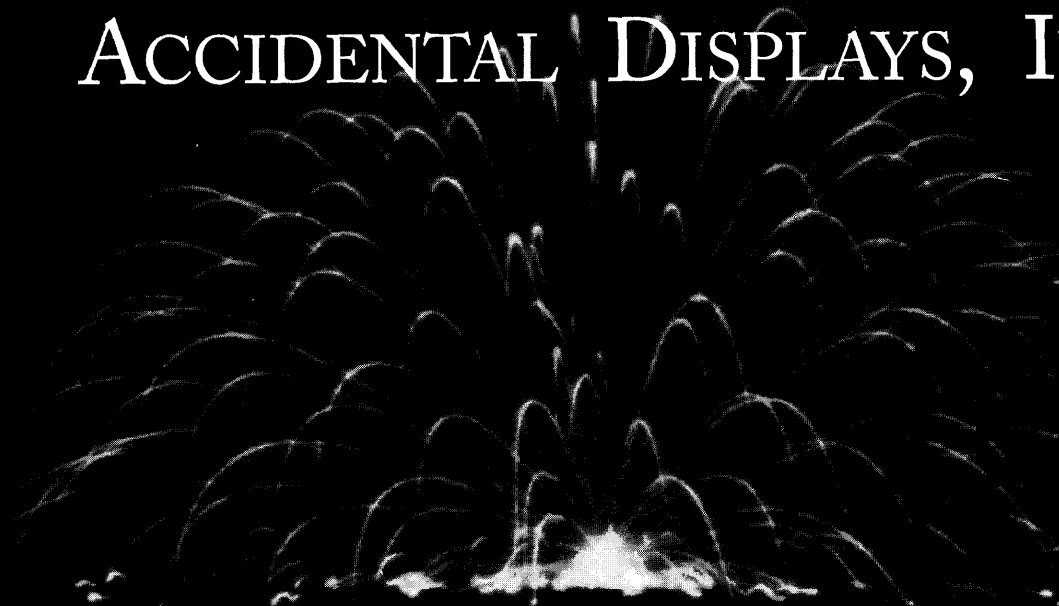
- Complete line of Energetic chemicals
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