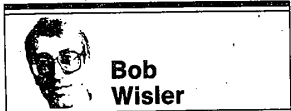


# New alibi: 'The devil FBI brew made me do it'



**Bob Wisler**

sometimes, politicians more of the time, and some politicians all of the time.

Jenrette testified that he was so drunk when he was being offered the bribe that he didn't know he was being offered a bribe. Anybody who doesn't know a bribe when one is being offered, drunk, or sober, shouldn't be in government.

Despite all this, Jenrette said he will run for office again. He isn't even going to give taxpayers a break for the next term, during which he could dry his brain long enough so that in the future he would know when a bribe is being offered.

ALSO PROMISING to make an all-out effort for re-election are Rep. Robert Bauman, R-Md., and former Rep. Mike Myers, D-Pa.

Bauman, who admits to homosexual tendencies, has been charged with soliciting sex from a 16-year-old boy. He also professes alcoholism. I suppose his defense will be that when you're drunk you can't tell anyone's age and when you're in the dark all cats are gray.

Myers, convicted of soliciting and taking a \$50,000 bribe and expelled by a vote of his fellow Congressmen following his conviction, also promises to do his best to have voters return him to the office of public trust.

Myers also blamed drinking for some of his problem, although he averred the outright alcoholism defense. He explained his action in taking a \$50,000

bribe from a supposed Arab sheik by saying that what he was doing was not criminal, merely unethical.

It was left to his friend, Rep. Charles Wilson, D-Calif., to explain to the House of Representatives that Myers was "inebriated" when he took the bribe. Wilson himself was censured by the House less than four months ago for converting nearly \$25,000 in campaign funds to his own use and accepting \$10,500 from a man who had direct interest in legislation.

Wilson asked the House to retain Myers on the public payroll on the theory that Myers was drunk, not dishonest. Myers supposedly told Wilson: "I was drinking FBI bourbon, if you know what that is."

I don't know what FBI bourbon is, but it must contain great doses of gall. Myers, not at all repentant, accused his colleagues of being a "lynch mob" and promises that he will reclaim his seat in forthcoming elections.

I not only wonder what FBI bourbon is, I am beginning to wonder about Congressmen. I don't think that a few bad Congressmen should reflect on the majority. I don't think the majority lie, take bribes, pad payrolls, or get so drunk that they don't know when they are being offered a bribe.

But how many of them are drinking FBI bourbon? And when are they going to stop giving alcoholics a bad name?

WHEN I FIRST began reading about alcoholism as a defense for crimes by Congressmen I couldn't believe it. Charles Diggs should have thought of that one. Just a few years ago, Wilbur Mills, one of the most powerful Congressmen ever, had to leave office because he was an alcoholic. And he didn't even take bribes.

Rep. John Jenrette, D-S.C., was convicted of taking a bribe a few days ago. During his trial he used the defense that he was an "incurable alcoholic."

His lawyer even got a definition of alcoholics worked into the testimony. According to the medical head of the alcoholism unit at Bethesda Naval Hospital, alcoholics "tend to exercise poor judgment and talk about things that a wise and prudent man would keep his mouth shut about."

That isn't a definition of an alcoholic. It comes closer to being a good definition of a Congressman. Heck, it's a definition that could fit most people from office.

# Life in a mobile home is a new experience

Mobile home living is a new experience.

All my life I've lived in a typical suburban home, except for a couple of years in an apartment. We lived in a subdivision, had a basement, garage, a backyard.

Two years ago, my wife, Rose, and I purchased a mobile home in a nice park surrounded by woods and open country.

This is when I learned I had a lot of "treasures" that I didn't really need. Moving from a house with a basement and garage to a mobile home with limited storage space isn't easy.

I spent weeks prior to moving deciding what to keep, what to throw away and what to put on sale for our garage sale.

My problem is I'm a saver. Magazines, newspapers, pieces of lumber, you name it, I'd store it away for future use. One of our daughters, in helping me clean out some of my "treasures" said, "Dad, tell me, what did you ever throw away on trash day?"

We did pretty well in getting rid of some things I'll never need. However, I must admit, I sneaked some of my "useless items" into a couple of boxes that are still stored in the shed behind our mobile home.

Once you have gotten rid of the excess furniture and other items, moving is fairly simple. It doesn't take long to get the new home in shape.

THE NEXT problem we found was getting accustomed to living in a mobile home. Although ours is well-built and, as we learned during last July's terrific wind storms, holds up well, there is a bit of apprehension the first year.

Questions race through our minds. How will it be in the winter? Will it be warm enough? How about the heavy snow?

Comes the spring rains. Will we suffer any leaks? Will the water undermine our house on its concrete foundation?

One of the first things my wife asked me to do was to look under the mobile home.

"It is well supported?" she asked. "Are there any strong beams supporting the floor?" A crawl under the house reassured her we were well supported.

Still, there are new noises to get accustomed to. Since it is covered with aluminum, there are sounds when the metal expands in the heat, contracts in the cold.

It takes a while to get used to the furnace being on the main floor. It seems awfully noisy at first. And the hot water heater doesn't exactly whisper when it is running. All very strange noises.

RAIN AND HAIL are noisy, beating on the aluminum siding and awnings. We found ourselves looking in the closets and cupboards after every heavy rain to see if there were any leaks. Safe again.

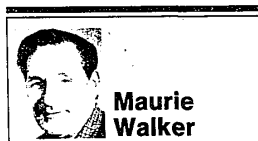
We learned from our neighbors, many of them who had lived in the park for a number of years, that there are several "musts" in preparing for winter.

Since the water pipes are under the house and could freeze and crack, a mobile home owner must have a "heat wire" that keeps the pipes warm. This must be plugged in before freezing weather sets in.

One neighbor said to be certain my crock pot is protected for the winter.

Crock pot? I thought he was kidding, but there really is a crock pot that leads to the sewer line. This must be filled with an antifreeze each winter to protect the line.

SINCE NONE of us have a garage, we all have a



**Maurie Walker**

shed in back of the house. When I first saw the shed I thought, no way will I get everything I have in that space. There is the lawn mower, bike, wheelbarrow, garden tools and a work bench. Plus, my "secret boxes" containing my treasures. But by golly, I made it. I may not have the neatest shed in the park, but I made it, much to the dismay of my wife.

Putting out the trash every week is another different experience in a mobile home park.

It seems the rabbits and raccoons that live in the woods behind our house love to get into garbage bags.

More than once, I've found the plastic bags ripped open and garbage spilled all over the street.

I THOUGHT I had this plan bent when I put the bag in a trash can, closed the cover tight, and kept it in the back of the house. One night I heard a noise outside the bedroom window and discovered the nervous raccoons were lifting the trash can lid, tipping it over, and getting into the plastic garbage bag. This forced me to keep the trash in my overcrowded shed.

I found out early from the neighbors that we don't live in a trailer.

"These are mobile homes or coaches," they told

me. "They are not ordinary trailers." I stood corrected and now correct my friends who ask how I like living in a trailer.

Since we all live in similar type homes, people are friendly in a mobile home park. My wife and I know more of our neighbors, who number more than 400, than we every did in a neighborhood. Of course, there are a lot of gatherings at the club house and during the summer we meet at the pool. Since many of us are senior citizens, we all look out for one another.

IT'S TRULY a new type of living. There are some disadvantages, like having to part with some "treasures."

But I've found the advantages outweigh the disadvantages. There is a lot less work in a mobile home. The walls are all paneled, eliminating the need for decorating.

There are no stairs to climb except from the porch to the sidewalk. Since the mobile home is made of aluminum, there is no outside painting.

The streets are well lighted, and on any given warm evening, you will see persons strolling by, many stopping to chat with neighbors. Bicycles are plentiful in the park, too.

There are no cars racing through the streets, (the speed limit is 15 miles per hour), no motorcycles (prohibited in the park) cruising up and down, and because the park is laid out with winding streets we don't have the feeling of living in a barracks atmosphere.

Mobile home living is fun, comfortable, enjoyable and less expensive than living in a house or apartment.

After two years of this type of living, my wife and I often wonder why we didn't become mobile home owners sooner.

# How can we avoid no-train waits, illegal crossings?

By SHERRY KAHAN



**Sherry Kahan**

There you are in your car, foot on the pedal, trying to get to work on time. Suddenly up ahead red lights begin flashing at the railroad crossing, bells start ringing and gates drop down. You wait. And you wait. Nothing happens. No train rattles by.

Pretty soon drivers start weaving their way past the barricades to cross the tracks. It's illegal, but you do it, too. What can you do? Work awaits you, and there is, after all, no train?

I was part of this scene once again recently, and began to think about it seriously. For one thing I wondered what became of the school bus which had to sit there while the rest of us illegally crossed the border.

What is going on, I wondered. Why is the safety system activated when there is no train in sight? To get answers I called the Chessie System (Chesapeake & Ohio) which owns the tracks that run through Redford Township, Livonia and Plymouth. I was referred to two Livonians, Sam Allison, superintendent of the Detroit district, and Don Guy, regional engineer of signals and communication.

They explained that there is an electrical intercept circuit on the tracks. The arrival of a train interrupts the circuits. This activates lights, bells and barricades. The point at which the train interrupts the circuit can vary according to a standard set by the railroad company.

I learned later that the circuit interrupting point could be down the tracks out of sight.

GUY SAID a rail broken by a sudden temperature change might also kick on the safety system.

"Occasionally vandals damage the signal apparatus. We think if something is wrong with the system it is safer to have the gates down and the lights on than risk an accident."

Allison brought up about the possibility that the train might be out of sight around the bend. He said that the trains using the track usually are making local deliveries along the industrial belt. They go forward and back up a lot. This could activate and reactivate the system.

"As soon as we know there is a mechanical problem," he said, "we get right on it. The police call us all the time about it." Motorist also ring them up.

The Redford police often get calls from irate drivers about the gates down at the Inkster crossing for no apparent reason. Occasionally the police ticket someone trying to slip by. Officer Joseph Przybyz of Redford's traffic division said about five or six tickets are written a year for this.

BUT WHAT HAPPENED to the school bus sitting at the crossing?

Drivers communicate with the school board office by

radio, explained Mike Wagner, transportation supervisor for the Livonia school district. "Then we contact the railroad company," he said.

He believed there is often about a half hour wait. Guy said the wait for the system to be fixed depends on where the maintenance man is when contacted.

Meanwhile parents are beginning to call the school board office to see where their children are. School buses are not allowed to back up unless there is an adult aboard who can watch for cars. If the bus is not boxed in, its driver is permitted to make a U turn and continue its trip on a street with an underpass.

"The situation happens more often than I like," commented Wagner, "once or twice a week."

Nobody seemed to have a solution for the waiting motorists nor the safety system that sometimes kicks on when unneeded. "We may have to make some adjustment on our circuitry to overcome the excessive operation of the safety system."

It would be worth it to keep motorists from habitually disobeying the safety warning and the law. Who knows, the habit might some day prove to be fatal.



Railroad crossings are a problem when drivers ignore the barricades and drive through when no train is in sight. Usually drivers get away with the illegal move, but in this case, the motorist was caught by a police officer. (Staff photo by Art Emanuele)