

Jerry McKelvy's
SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

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The husband asked his wife, “Honey, where did you put the Pe-ru-na? I think I may need it.” What was the husband talking about? (see the article on page 2 for the answer)

Occasionally we hear a story about someone waking up from a coma after a very long time surprising their family and the doctors. I hope that none of us ever have to experience that and I can only imagine what it would be like to suddenly wake up after being in a coma for many years.

One of the most talked about stories from the old days concerned a woman named Clara Runnels who lived in White Pine, Tennessee. She had contracted a mild case of encephalitis and had gone into a coma in 1936. Twelve years later she woke up from her deep sleep--sort of a female version of Rip Van Winkle. Her amazing story circulated in many newspapers across the country. Here is the story as published in the *Prescott Daily Mail* in May, 1948.

WOMAN “RIP VAN WINKLE” AWAKES
(from the 5-6-1948 issue of *The Prescott Daily Mail*)

White Pine, Tenn.—Folks in this Smoky Mountain community marveled today at the constant youth of a modern feminine “Rip Van Winkle” and wondered whether 12 years’ sleep could do the same for them.

The object of their wonder is 52-year-old Mrs. Clara Runnels. She lapsed into sleeping sickness a dozen years ago and woke for the first time a few weeks ago.

But it was not until last week that the story of the “White Pine miracle” leaked out of this foothills settlement of 600. Since then, the white frame combination home-funeral parlor where she slept through the New Deal, Pearl Harbor, and the advent of the atomic bomb has become a Mecca for the curious.

The atomic bomb still is with us. But it, like the talk of another war, is unknown to Mrs. Runnels, a gracious, white-haired lady who remembers little of her long slumber and cares even less to recall the life she knew before. In fact, the only difference she has noticed between the world of 1936 and 1948 is that “the young girls seem to have more freedom nowadays and, my, how White Pine has grown.”

“We figure the world is so up-side-down, we don’t read the ‘heavy’ news to her, only the bright stories that make her laugh,” said Mrs. Alfred Sartain, a sister-in-law who with her husband, nursed Clara back to life against the “better judgment of their neighbors.

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

It must be the right formula. Clara has a new rosy, school-girl complexion. She plays ball on the front lawn every day with the Sartains' orphaned niece and nephew, Alice, 10, and Johnny, 12. There is a spring in her walk that she lacked before. Still more puzzling, she didn't have to learn to walk again, as do most bed-ridden persons.

Doctors were stumped, too. So were some of the neighbors who said privately the Sartains were wasting their time and money caring for Clara. It's still uncertain whether she'll go back to sleep, Mrs. Sartain said.

On the day of the awakening, Mrs. Sartain went into Clara's room and, because she admittedly likes to talk, asked her usual question: "How are you this morning, Clara?" She hadn't received an answer in 12 years and she didn't expect one today.

"Just fine", Clara's voice said. She was awake, and it stunned Mrs. Sartain. But she recovered sufficiently to seat Clara in her wicker chair next to the window.

"What is that, a tree?" Clara wanted to know.

"Yes," replied Mrs. Sartain. "That elm has been there these 12 years and this is the first time you've noticed it, isn't it?"

Clara confessed it was. She could remember only that she often tried hard to open her eyes but couldn't and that she had a feeling sometimes she was far, far away.

It was a great thing, Clara's recovery. White Pine folks are certainly happy for the Sartains, who spent many hours at Clara's bedside, shocking her face into motion with ice or a wet towel so she could eat.

PE-RU-NA

Pe-ru-na was the name of a patent medicine popular in the late 1800s and early 1900s. This ad appeared in the January 22, 1890 issue of *The Nevada County Picayune*:

When the blistering blasts of winter envelop your body in their icy embraces, and seem to freeze your very marrow; when you shiver and shake with the cold chills that creep over you and pierce you to the very bone; then it is that you will find, if you try it, that there is nothing so comfortably warming and so mildly invigorating as Pe-ru-na. Sending a genial glow through your chilled system, it will start your blood a-coursing through your veins, put new life and vigor into your veins, and make you feel altogether a new man. The effect of Pe-ru-na in this respect is wonderful, and is manifested by no other medicine. As a stomach medicine and tonic, it has no equal, and needs only to be tried to prove its efficacy.

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

Jack Sullivan wrote an article on the history of Pe-ru-na for the magazine called *Bottles and Extras*. He gives a detailed account of the Pe-ru-na story complete with pictures. Some of the information below was taken from his article.

One of the most popular patent medicines was Peruna developed by Dr. Samuel Brubaker Hartman who preferred it to be spelled Pe-ru-na. The good doctor claimed it was good for catarrh of all types. Catarrh actually is defined as bronchitis or excess of mucous, but Dr. Hartman broadly defined it as the cause of almost all known diseases. His Pe-ru-na was supposed to cure catarrh of the liver, catarrh of the lungs, catarrh of the stomach, catarrh of the mouth, and several others.

His concoction was 28% alcohol and as a result of an extensive advertising campaign, his medicine became very popular all over the country. His ads included testimonials from users who praised its healing qualities. A bottle of Pe-ru-na cost \$1.00 which was fairly expensive at the time. He expanded his facilities in Columbus, Ohio to cover two city blocks. Dr. Harman soon became a rich man living in a fancy home and built a fancy hotel/sanitarium in Columbus that was very popular with plenty of Pe-ru-na for the guests/patients.

In 1904, a reporter interviewed Dr. Hartman and the doctor admitted that Pe-ru-na did not actually cure anything, but was a mild stimulant which made people feel better. The Food and Drug Act was passed in 1906 which cracked down on many of the patent medicine suppliers of the day. Many went out of business and some changed their advertising from "cure" to "remedy". Pe-ru-na survived but some changes were made to the ingredients that resulted in the alcohol content being reduced to 18%.

Dr. Hartman was a civic-minded person. He built an elegant theater in Columbus and his large farm became a tourist attraction. He had become a millionaire selling Pe-ru-na. But one day In 1912, he was out in a snowstorm and caught pneumonia and died. His son-in-law continued on with the business. Sales had slacked off in recent years, but with the coming of prohibition, sales began to increase since Pe-ru-na could still be sold over the counter when the country was "dry". Radio advertising also helped revive the company. The American Medical Association tried to get the medicine banned because they claimed people believed the claims in the ads and were refusing to see their doctors.

In the 1930s, students at Southern Methodist University adopted as their fight song a version of "She'll Be Coming Around The Mountain", but their version had "She'll be loaded with Peruna when she comes". The school mascot, a black pony, was named Peruna and even today the pony named Peruna is paraded across the fields at football games when a touchdown is made.

A few more changes were made to the ingredients to improve sales, but other medicines soon became more popular and Pe-ru-na was taken off the market sometime in the 1940s.

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

WHAT DO ALL THOSE COLORS MEAN?

I have heard people visiting Arkansas from other states ask about the painted trees they see along our roads.



You may see trees such as this with an X painted on the tree. These are called “witness trees”. You would find these at property corners. The X on the tree faces where the actual property corner is located. There might be a pipe or a pine knot at the actual corner, but many times there is nothing actually marking the exact corner. When you see a witness tree, you know that the corner is somewhere in that direction. It could be a few feet away or maybe the corner is actually in the middle of a road or highway some distance away.



Polatch Corporation used this system to help their employees locate a certain tract of land. They paint numbers on trees where a property line crosses a road or highway. In this case, it means you are somewhere on Line 29 in Section 30 of Township 11 South, Range 20 West. Every forty line in a section has a number and you would have to have a diagram with you (or a good memory) to figure out where Line 29 is in a section. This photo was taken on a county road in Nevada County.



This ugly purple color in Arkansas means the land is posted and you should not enter the land without the written permission of the owner. Landowners or hunting clubs have a choice of using signs or this purple paint. Most find using the paint is cheaper than having signs made. The paint must be at least an 8 inch vertical swath with the bottom of the paint from three to five feet above ground and must be no more than 100 feet apart. The letters on posted signs must be at least 4 inches high and the signs placed no more than 100 feet apart.

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE



You might also see paint of various colors like this on trees in Arkansas. These painted trees mark the property lines and are used mainly by the various timber companies and the Arkansas Forestry Commission. Individuals can also use paint to mark their property lines, but it can get confusing. Each company has its own color. The most common colors in our area are yellow used by Deltic, orange used by the Forestry Commission and formerly by International Paper, white used by Potlatch, and blue used by Weyerhaeuser. Sometimes companies change colors. IP once used silver paint but switched to a bright orange. Without properly marked boundary lines, a landowner risks the possibility of encroachment by timber cutters on adjoining land. Most consider it a wise investment to protect their property. The lines need to be repainted about every five years.



These trees are marked for cutting. The most common color is blue but other colors could be used. The top mark helps the cutters find the tree and the paint spot at the base of the tree will be left after the tree is cut. This lets the timber owner or inspector verify that that particular tree was marked for cutting after the tree has been removed. If a stump is found with no paint on it, the cutter must explain why the tree was cut and may have to pay for it.

Any signs such as “Keep Out”, “No Trespassing”, “Private Property”, or “Posted” should be taken seriously. It’s always best to let a landowner know why you want to enter private property. If you have a good reason, most landowners will allow you access. I would be extremely cautious when seeing signs such as these:



SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

In the last issue, I asked for suggestions on uses for sweet gum balls. I got a few suggestions and then checked the Internet and found some more.

1. Spray paint them and use for Christmas tree ornaments.
2. Throw them at kids who cross your lawn
3. Put them where animals are digging to deter them
4. Use them in craft projects
5. Chip them and use for mulch
6. Put them in bottom of large planting containers and cover with dirt to improve drainage
7. Paint them white and make a snowman
8. Use for kindling to start fires in wood heaters
9. Put one in someone's shoe or boot just for fun
10. Make a Christmas wreath by overlaying a grape vine with them. You can paint them different colors if desired. Martha Stewart did this on one of her shows.
11. Make a string bird feeder. String them together on a string, cover with peanut butter, and roll them in bird seed.
12. Collect them and sell them to Yankees for craft projects

I found these ads on the Internet. Maybe I need to start selling mine.

I am looking for sweet gum tree balls/seed pods for craft projects, but they are not native to Iowa where I live. Does anyone know of a good source for them?

I have them for sale cheap! My email address is tandomwolf AT gmail.com Send me a webmail with how many you need (they come in quantities of 25, 50, 75, 100 and so on in increments of 25. I sell a bag of 25 for 3.00\$ each.

From Don Hall regarding the Prescott Hardware Co.---

Thanks for the Prescott Hardware Co. article. I worked there in 1965 and 1966. What a great place to work. Mr. Dan Pittman was our boss, Sue Martin and Frances Bailey worked in the office. Mr. Ed Gladden, Mrs. Emma McDaniel, Johnnie Hooks, Milton Stokes, Wallace Purtle, Don Hall, Reese Marks, John Mixon, and Archie Langston worked on Saturdays. The Best people I ever worked for were at the Prescott Hardware Co. As far as I know I'm the only one still living. I still have my check stub from 1965 for Christmas. It was \$75.00. I have the best memories of the store and the people that worked there. Thanks, Jerry

The lion sprang upon the bull and devoured him. After he had feasted, he felt so good that he roared and roared. The noise attracted some hunters and they killed him.

The moral of the tale is that when you are full of bull, you should keep your mouth shut.

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

The Warrior Goes Home – Don Mathis



My father, Daniel Hearnberger Mathis, was born in Fordyce in 1921. Like most men of his era, he joined the military soon after Pearl Harbor. Although peace was declared before he arrived in the Philippines, it was still dangerous. Dad spoke of dead bodies, shoeless, with one toe on the trigger. For some Japanese troops, it was more honorable to commit suicide than to be captured. He said there were holdouts in the boondocks that refused to believe the war was over.



Japanese Lieutenant Hiroo Onoda was one of those holdouts. He was the last soldier in the Philippines to surrender after World War II. He was finally convinced in 1974 that the war was over and he began a life worth living. He reluctantly accepted his back pay, and then donated the entire amount to a shrine for the war dead. After a period of ranching in Brazil, he established a school in

Japan where youth could learn the lessons of nature. Mr. Onoda died in January 2014 at the age of 91. His essence can be summarized in his quotations.

*Lieutenant Onoda, Sir, reporting for orders.
I will do as you say. I will not complain.
Men should never give up. I never do. I would hate to lose.
One must always be civic-minded.
People cannot live completely by themselves.
Life is not fair and people are not equal.
Some dreams are best not to wake up from.*

SANDYLAND CHRONICLE

The Ballad of Hiroo Onoda – Haiku by Don Mathis

Hiroo Onoda
Inducted in the army
Under August Moon

Japanese Army
Taught him guerrilla
warfare
Spring graduation

1944
Sent to Philippine
island
December orders

Never surrender
And never Hari Kari
Live on coconuts

Another August
Another and another
Unit gone, war
finished

Onoda lived on
He ate bananas when
ripe
Killed cow now and
then

He never believed
The fight was done, peace declared
Until a spring day

Honorable soldier
Recalled 30 years of
war
With a storm of grief

Received a pardon
Hiroo was hailed a
hero
Still battled dark
thoughts

Japan had
transformed
He bought a Brazilian
farm
But crops gave no
balm

Back to his homeland
A life to help young
sprouts grow
Gave him fulfillment

Yet the Philippines
Stayed rooted in
memory
He must revisit

So in '96
He made a pilgrimage
back
Palms swayed,
conscience cleared

Now, 2014
The harvest is finally
done
The warrior goes
home