



Snake River Valley Edition

January 2026

Nuggets of Fun and Nostalgia for Treasure Valley Golden-Agers

He Made the Bank Teller Cry

My 89-year-old father, Frank, made a bank teller cry today. But don't worry. They were good tears.

It started, as most of my stories about Dad do, with a simple errand. It was just after 3 PM at the local credit union. The line snaked back to the doors. You know the scene: a dozen people checking their phones, tapping their feet, sighing loudly, all radiating that "I have better things to do" energy.

I was one of them. Dad, however, was not.

Dad's a Korean War veteran. He's a man who has sat in a foxhole, so a bank line doesn't register as a "hardship." He just watches. He observes the world with a quiet intensity, as if he's waiting for something important to happen.

When we finally shuffled to the counter, the young woman behind the glass looked like she was at the end of the worst shift of her life. Her name tag read "Jasmine." Her eyes were puffy, and her smile was stapled on, stretched thin.

"Afternoon, Jasmine," Dad said, reading her tag. His voice is a little gravelly now, but it still carries. "Tough crowd today."

She just nodded, her eyes not really focusing. "How can I help you, sir?"

"I need to withdraw \$100," he said, sliding his old passbook—yes, he still uses one—under the glass. "And can I have it all in \$5 bills?"

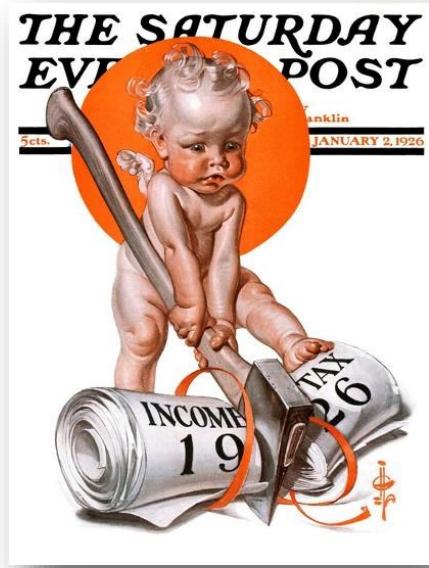
Jasmine blinked. "Sir?" she asked, thrown.

"Twenty \$5 bills, please," he confirmed, politely.

I could feel the collective psychic scream of the thirty people behind us. Jasmine sighed, her forced smile faltering, and turned to her drawer. She counted them out, her hands moving fast, and pushed the stack toward him.

"Thank you, dear," he said. Then he slid two of the \$5 bills back across the counter.

(Continued on page 2)



**Happy New Year
from Senior Goldmine!**

If you go back to early issues of Senior Goldmine you will discover that every January since 2012 we have included the cover of the Saturday Evening Post from 100 years earlier.

Those cover photos always depict the "New Year's baby" in a unique pose. Ironically, the 1926 baby is shown in a "no new taxes" pose. Nothing much has changed in 100 years!



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Cutting It Close

A teenage boy had just passed his driving test and asked his father if they could discuss his use of the family car.

His father said he'd make a deal with his son, "You bring your grades up from a C to a B average, study your Bible a little, and get your hair cut. Then we'll talk about the car."

The boy thought about that for a moment and decided he'd take the offer.



After about six weeks his father said, "Son, you've brought your grades up and I've observed that you have been studying your Bible, but I'm disappointed you haven't had your hair cut."

The boy said, "You know, Dad, I've been thinking about that, and I've noticed in my studies of the Bible that Samson had long hair, John the Baptist had long hair, Moses had long hair, and there's even strong evidence that Jesus had long hair."

Dad replied, "Did you also notice they all walked everywhere they went?"



You know what was more useful than the first telephone? The second telephone!

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(He Made the Bank Teller Cry—Continued from Page 1)

Jasmine looked confused. "Sir, it's all there. It's \$100."

"I know," Dad said, his voice soft. He pushed the two bills closer to her. "This one," he tapped the first \$5, "is for you. And this one," he tapped the second, "is for that gentleman at the back desk who looks like he's managing this whole circus."

"Sir, I... I can't accept this," she stammered.

"Nonsense," Dad said. "Go next door to 'The Sweet Bean' after your shift. Get the biggest, gooiest cinnamon roll they have. Get two. You look like you've earned it."

That's when her dam broke. Her eyes welled up, and a single tear cut a path through her foundation. She put her hand over her mouth, her shoulders shaking.

The manager, a stressed-looking man in a wrinkled suit, had already started walking over, his face a mask of 'customer-service' anxiety. "Is there a problem here, Mr. Hayes?"

"No problem at all, son," Frank said, his voice suddenly loud enough for the whole bank to hear. "I was just telling Jasmine here what a fine, professional job she's doing. You've got a great team. They're handling a tough room with grace."

The manager froze. Jasmine quickly wiped her eyes, and for the first time, her smile was real. It lit up her whole face.

In the car, I finally let out the breath I was holding. "Dad, that was... you're something else. You held up the entire bank just to give a \$10 tip."

He just stared out the window as I pulled into the heavy Friday traffic. He was quiet for a long time. "It was selfish," he finally mumbled.

I laughed, baffled. "Selfish? You just made that girl's day. You made that manager's day. How is that selfish?"

His hand, wrinkled and spotted with age, gripped the door handle.

"I watch the news," he said, his voice suddenly rough with an emotion I rarely hear. "I sit in my chair, and I watch the TV, and it's just... noise. Everyone's yelling. Everyone's angry. They're yelling about Washington. They're telling us that the world is ending and that we should all be afraid of each other."

(Continued on page 5)

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Flying With an Angel

I have to tell you all about the best flight ever. I was upset that I was rerouted to Oregon from LAX to Chicago but I got to share my flight back from Portland with the cutest little girl.



It was her birthday and she just turned five. Her name was Paisley. She was flying by herself and I saw her mom crying as the lady took her to the plane.

We were the first ones on the plane so of course I sat by her. She had a princess dress on a baby doll wrapped in a dirty pink blanket that she said her

mom stole for her. We started talking and she said she had to go spend a long time with her Poppy.

During our 4 hour flight we shared snacks, played video games, watched Mickey Mouse, raised the roof and yelled 'boo yah' a 100 times when she won. I put the baby doll asleep and buckled her in her seat between us. She never got tired and talked to me the entire time.

She needed to wear my sunglasses and said "Oh, I don't think you'll be getting these back." I laughed so hard.

I think her situation is rough but you would never know. She laughed so hard at all the silly things I did and put her head on my arm when we were watching videos.

We got off the plane and she ran right to her Poppy and he hugged her with everything he had. She turned around and said, "See my friend, Tommy."

He thanked me as he teared up hugging his granddaughter, for taking care of her on the flight. I thanked him and her for the best flight ever. I'll never see that little princess again but I will always smile when I think of her laugh. I guess God needed me to go to Portland today to see one of his little angels.



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My wife and I went into town to shop. When we came out of the store, there was a cop writing a parking ticket for parking in a no parking zone.

I went up to him and said, "Come on, man, how about giving a senior citizen a break?"

He just ignored me and kept writing the ticket.

"You're a real piece of work," I sneered at him.



He glared at me and started writing another ticket for having worn-out tires.

Then I made fun of his wrinkled uniform. He finished the second ticket and put it on the windshield with the first. Then he started writing more tickets.

This went on for more than 20 minutes. The more I offended him, the more tickets he wrote.

He finally finished, sneered at us and walked away.

Just then our bus arrived, so we got on it and went home.

Getting old is insane -
I thought I blacked out.
Turns out I just put my
hoodie on backwards!



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Tid-Bits

I miss the old days when the Oldies Radio Station played my parents music instead of mine!

Today I was struggling to get my wife's attention. So I sat down on the couch and looked comfortable. That did the trick!

My wife stopped and said, "You weren't even listening to me, were you?"

I thought to myself, "That's a pretty strange way to start a conver-sation!"

FUN FACT: Women spend more time wondering what men are thinking than men actually spend thinking.

I got my shot for shingles yesterday. So today I got my shot for shakes, too, just in case.

Walking home last night, I passed an apple pie on a bench, a cherry cheesecake on a ledge, and an ice cream sundae on the curb.

I thought to myself, "These streets are strangely desserted!"

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The undercover knight:	Sir Veillance
The knight never killed in battle:	Sir Vivor
The knight exceeding expectations:	Sir Passed
The knight showing up unexpectedly:	Sir Prize
The knight who overcame obstacles:	Sir Mount
The knight performing in three rings:	Sir Cus
The knight who created maps:	Sir Veyor
The knight who drank too much:	Sir Rhosis
The knight who was a former butcher:	Sir Loin
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(He Made the Bank Teller Cry—Continued from page 2)

He turned to look at me, his blue eyes still sharp as tacks..

"They're trying to make me hate my neighbor because he votes different. They're trying to make me afraid of the kid who delivers my paper. I'm 89 years old. I've seen the world tear itself apart and I've seen it put itself back together."

He tapped his cane on the floor mat. "It makes me feel... broken. Helpless. I'm just an old man. I can't fix the big things. I can't stop a war. I can't solve hunger. I can't make people stop shouting at each other on the internet. So, I do the small things," he said. "I buy a cinnamon roll for a tired teller. It's selfish, really."

"Dad, that's not what selfish means."

"Yes, it is," he insisted, his voice firm. "It's just my way of trying to make the world feel a little better for a minute... because it makes me feel a little better. It makes me feel like I'm not as helpless as the men on the TV say I am. I'm just helping create the world I want to live in."

We got home, and as I was helping him with his groceries, I pulled out the extra-large Stouffer's lasagna I'd brought him.

"This looks good," he said, taking the heavy box. And he immediately turned and started walking toward his front door.

"Where are you going?" I asked.

"To the Lopez house," he said, nodding to the house next door. "Rick's been working two jobs ever since the warehouse cut his hours. Maria's trying to juggle three kids. I know they're tired of mac and cheese."

"Dad, that's not selfish. That's just kind," I said, exasperated.

He stopped on his porch and looked back at me. "He brought my trash cans in from the curb last night in that downpour. I'm just paying him back. It's a fair trade. Besides, it makes me feel good."

I tell him time and again, "Dad, you are simply reaping what you have spent a lifetime sowing."

He just waves his hand, a little embarrassed. "It's all selfish, honey. I just want the world to be a little better."

If only we were all that "selfish." If only we all decided to fix our own little broken piece of the world, in whatever small, "selfish" way we can. The world would be a better place.



Getting older is just one body part saying to another body part, "Ha, ha! You think that's bad? Watch this!"



When pressed, the tailor, a material witness in the suit, came apart at the seams. His altered testimony completely unraveled. The tale he had woven had been a complete fabrication.

Husband: The nerve of that doctor! Saying I'm so old he referred me to an archeologist!

Wife: Audiologist, dear. You can't hear a thing!

BREAKING NEWS:

A truck loaded with Vicks VapoRub overturned on the freeway during rush hour.

Amazingly, there was no congestion for 8 hours.

I learned something new today—at least I think I did. I didn't write it down so it's probably gone forever!

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I'm at that age where I ride around and every where I look I say, "I remember when this was all farm land!"

Here Kitty, Kitty!

Little Johnny was making a lot of noise in his backyard.

I poked my nose over the fence and asked him " what are you doing Johnny?

He tearfully replied " My goldfish died, so I am burying him."



"That's a pretty big hole isn't it?" I asked.

As Johnny patted down the top of the hole with his shovel, he replied "That's because he was in your cat!"

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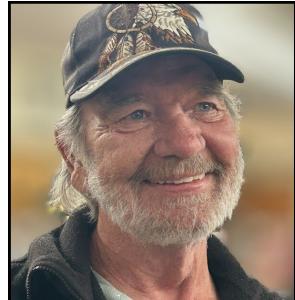
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They say with age comes wisdom, so therefore I don't have wrinkles, I have wise cracks!



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