SENIOR Goldmine

Snake River Valley Edition November 2026

Nuggets of Fun and Nostalgia for Treasure Valley Golden-Agers

Paid In Full

I've been a mechanic for 30 years. My hands are permanently stained with grease, my back is a roadmap of old injuries, and I run my shop with a simple rule: Fix it right. Charge what it's worth. No exceptions.



At 8 a.m., a beat-up Chevy limped into my lot, coughing smoke like it needed last rites. A young woman stepped out — couldn't have been more than 22 — wearing oversized nursing scrubs and exhaustion in her eyes. In the back seat, a baby slept in a car seat, clutching a tiny teddy bear with one ear missing.

"It's making a weird noise," she said quietly. "Please… please tell me it's something small."

I popped the hood. It wasn't small.

It wasn't even medium.

It was a disaster — burst hose, shredded belt, leaking oil, one bad drive away from blowing the engine.

"To fix this right," I told her gently, "you're looking at about a thousand dollars."

She didn't cry. She didn't panic. She just stared at her baby. Then at her phone. Then at the ground.

"I start my new job at the nursing home in an hour," she whispered. "If I'm late… they'll fire me. I don't have anything left in my account. I was going to put water in it and just… try."

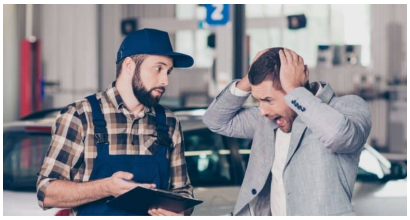
She gently placed a hand on the hood like she was apologizing to the car for being poor.

That did it. Sometimes life gives you a moment where doing the right thing isn't a choice — it's a responsibility.

(Continued on page 2)

Classic Mechanic One-Liners & Replies

- **The "Spare Parts" Line:** Handing the customer a stray bolt or clip and asking, *"Do you want these extra parts back, or are we trying to save weight?"*
- **Fictional Fluid Checks:** Telling a confused or nervous customer that you need to top off their *"blinker fluid", check the "flux capacitor", or replace the "cahooter valve".*



- **The "My Buddy Looked at It" Special:** Responding to a DIY disaster with, *"Ah, so your car was visited by a certified YouTube technician."*



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Facing Your Fears

Since I was a kid, I've always been terrified of someone hiding under my bed at night. The fear got so intense that I finally decided to see a psychiatrist.

"Doctor," I said during my first session, "I can't sleep because I'm convinced there's someone under my bed. I feel like I'm losing my mind."

The psychiatrist nodded thoughtfully and said, "This is a common fear. Let's work through it together. Come see me three times a week for a year, and I'll help you overcome it."

"How much will that cost?" I asked nervously.

"Eighty dollars per session," he replied.

I blinked at him. "That's... a lot. I'll have to think about it."

Six months later, the psychiatrist spotted me walking down the street and stopped me. "You never came back to work on your fear. What happened?"

"Well," I said with a grin, "eighty bucks a session, three times a week, for a whole year? That sounded like a small fortune. So instead, I went to a carpenter who cured me for just $10! I saved so much money, I even bought myself a new SUV."

The psychiatrist raised an eyebrow. "A carpenter cured you? Really? And how did he manage that?"

"Simple," I said with a laugh. "He told me to saw the legs off my bed. Now, there's no way anyone's hiding under there!"

(Paid in Full——Continued from Page 1)

"Give me your keys," I said.

"I can't pay you," she said immediately, panic rising again.

"Did I ask you for money?" I replied.

She blinked at me, unsure.

"The part you need," I said smoothly, "is on national backorder. Two weeks minimum. You can't drive this car."

She looked like she was going to collapse. "Two weeks? How do I—how am I supposed to get to work?"

I pulled my truck keys out of my pocket and held them out. "Take mine."

Her jaw dropped. "Sir… that's your truck."

"I know. Built like a tank. It'll get you to work and back. Bring it back when your car's done."

She stared at me like she couldn't decide whether to cry or hug me.

My shop manager looked at me like I'd lost my mind.

But I've been young and broke. I've been terrified of losing a job. I've been one bill away from falling apart.

So she left safely, in my truck, with her baby strapped in the back.

And her old Chevy stayed in my garage.

There was no backorder. The hose cost $20. But I didn't stop there.

Every lunch break. Every after-hours minute. Every quiet moment in the shop. I rebuilt that car.

Brand new tires. Fixed the belt. Cleaned the engine. Rewired the lights. Replaced the brake pads. Oil change. Detailed the interior.

Tuned the engine until it purred like it hadn't purred in years.

By the time I was done, that 15-year-old junker felt like a brand-new ride.

Two weeks later, she walked back into the shop, my truck keys in hand.

"It drove perfectly," she said softly. "Thank you. Truly. I'm… nervous to see the bill."

I handed her the invoice. TOTAL: $0.00 PAID IN FULL BY FACTORY WARRANTY RECALL.

(Continued on page 5)


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Can I buy it, Honey?

Several men are gathered in the locker room at a golf club when a cellphone sitting on a bench starts ringing. One of the men picks it up, activates the hands-free speaker, and answers.



MAN: "Hello?"
WOMAN: "Hi, sweetheart, it's me. Are you at the club?"
MAN: "Yes, I am."
WOMAN: "I'm at the mall and found this stunning leather coat. It's $2,000—do you mind if I buy it?"
MAN: "Of course, go ahead if you love it."
WOMAN: "Oh, and I stopped by the Lexus dealership. They have a new model I adore."
MAN: "How much is it?"
WOMAN: "$90,000."
MAN: "Go for it, but make sure it's fully loaded."
WOMAN: "You're amazing! One last thing—I found out that the house I've been dreaming about is back on the market. They're asking $980,000."
MAN: "Make an offer of $900,000. If they don't take it, go up to $980,000. I want you to have what makes you happy."
WOMAN: "You're the best! I love you so much!"
MAN: "Love you too. Bye."

The man hangs up the phone. The locker room is silent, every other man staring at him in utter disbelief.

Finally, he looks up, shrugs, and says, "Anyone know whose phone this is?"

Veterans' Day Prayer

Dear Lord,
Today we honor our veterans,
worthy men and women
who gave their best
when they were called upon
to serve and protect their country.

We pray that you will
bless them, Lord,
for their unselfish service
in the continual struggle
to preserve our freedoms,
our safety,
and our country's heritage,
for all of us.

Bless them abundantly
for the hardships they faced,
for the sacrifices they made,
for their many different
contributions
to America's victories
over tyranny and oppression.

We respect them,
we thank them,
we honor them,
we are proud of them,
and we pray that you will
watch over these special people
and bless them
with peace and happiness.
In Jesus' name we pray; Amen.

By Joanna Fuchs

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ATIONS

By Shel Silverstein

If we meet and I say, "Hi,"
That's a salutation.

If you ask me how I feel,
That's consideration.

If we stop and talk awhile,
That's a conversation.

If we understand each other,
That's communication.

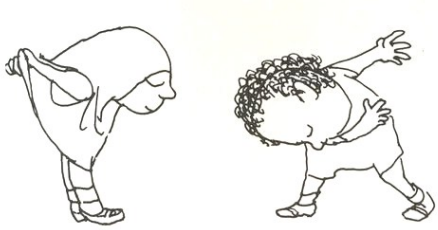
If we argue, scream and fight,
That's an altercation.

If later we apologize,
That's reconciliation.

If we help each other home,
That's cooperation.

And all these ations added up,
Make civilization.

(And if I say this is a wonderful poem, is that exaggeration?)



How men and women record things in their diaries.....

Wife's Diary:



Tonight, I thought my husband was acting weird. We had made plans to meet at a nice restaurant for dinner. I was shopping with my friends all day long, so I thought he was upset at the fact that I was a bit late, but he made no comment on it.

Conversation wasn't flowing, so I suggested that we go somewhere quiet so we could talk. He agreed, but he didn't say much.
I asked him what was wrong; He said, 'Nothing..'

I asked him if it was my fault that he was upset. He said he wasn't upset, that it had nothing to do with me, and not to worry about it.

On the way home, I told him that I loved him. He smiled slightly, and kept driving. I can't explain his behavior. I don't know why he didn't say, 'I love you, too.'

When we got home, I felt as if I had lost him completely, as if he wanted nothing to do with me anymore. He just sat there quietly, and watched TV. He continued to seem distant and absent.

Finally, with silence all around us, I decided to go to bed. About 15 minutes later, he came to bed. But I still felt that he was distracted, and his thoughts were somewhere else. He fell asleep; I cried. I don't know what to do. I'm almost sure that his thoughts are with someone else. My life is a disaster.

Husband's Journal:

A two-foot putt! How in the world do you miss a two-foot putt?

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(Paid In Full—Continued from Page 2)

She stared at the paper. Then at the car. Then at me.

"But… this isn't a new car," she whispered. "There can't be a recall."

"Ma'am," I said, pretending to fuss with paperwork, "You questioning my paperwork accuracy?"

She laughed through tears — that soft, heartbreaking laugh people make when the world finally gives them a break instead of another burden.

"Why would you do all this?" she whispered.

I looked at her sleeping baby in her arms.

"Because you're trying," I said. "And the world doesn't make it easy for people who are trying."

She hugged me. Tight. One of those hugs you feel in your bones.



When she drove away in that bright, reliable Chevy, waving out the window, I stood there a long time… thinking.

About how many times I wished someone would help me when I was young.

About how much difference a little kindness makes.

About how good it feels to make someone feel safe — even for a moment.

People often say, "You can't help everyone." Maybe not. But you can help someone.

And sometimes that someone is exactly who needed it that day.

So yes — I fibbed this morning.

I fibbed to give a young mom a chance.

I fibbed to make sure a baby got to daycare safely.

I fibbed so someone wouldn't lose the job they desperately needed.

And if I had to do it again? I'd fib every single time.

Because the kindness we give away…is the only part of us that lasts.

Not Too Old to Drive

A friend of mine was sitting on a lawn sunning and reading, when he was startled by an old Buick crashing through a hedge and coming to rest on his lawn.



He helped the elderly driver out and sat him on a lawn chair.

"My goodness," he exclaimed. "You are pretty old to be driving, aren't you?"

"Actually," the old man replied. "I am old enough that I don't need a license anymore. The last time I went to my doctor he examined me and asked if I had a driving license. I told him yes and handed it to him."

"He took scissors out of a drawer, cut the license into pieces and threw them in the wastebasket. 'You won't be needing this anymore,' he said."

"So I thanked him and left."

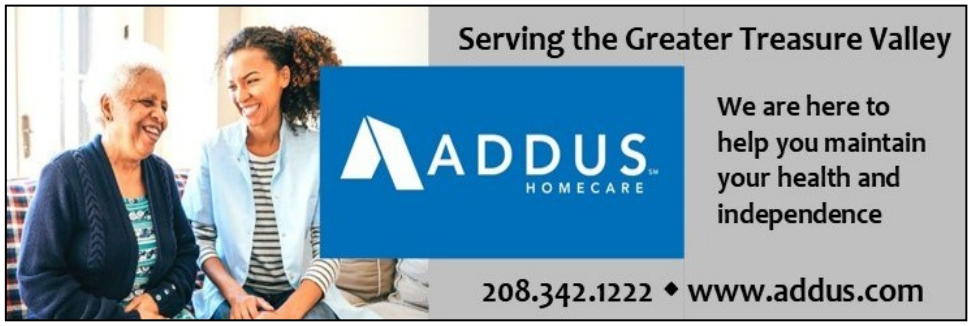

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TO MY GRANDKIDS:



Milestones



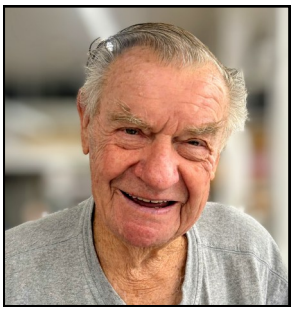
Arlene Turner
Oct 23, 1932—94
Fruitland



Gary Owen
Oct 3, 1936—90 years
Fruitland

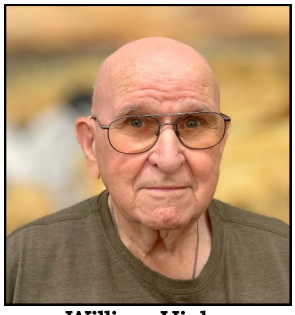


Marilyn Hart
Oct 21, 1936—90 years
Brookdale Ontario



Dick Jenkins
Nov 10, 1936—90 years
Ontario





William Higley
Nov 2 1941—85 years
Payette



Irena Lane
Nov 9, 1941—85 years
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Gayle Puente
Nov 11, 1946—70 years
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