

FRESH INK

NORTH EDITION

WEDNESDAY, JULY 4, 2012

CHILD OF PARENTS WHO MET AT
FLYING W DESCRIBES NIGHT OF FIREMORGAN DAKOTA SPERRY
Special to Fresh+Ink

It is 1:29 p.m. on June 27, as I write this, and fires are burning all along the hillside as far as I can see. I missed the kickoff, the start of the fire, but I am here for it's attack on Colorado Springs now that it is done with the innocent land.

I had not really heard much about the fire until I had already started heading to Colorado Springs to visit my nana for the week. As we drove from Flagler, we saw some huge looming clouds in the sky but as we neared Colorado Springs, these were not clouds, they were coming from the top of the mountain, not like a volcano though, producing abundant amounts of smoke and the closer I got, the harder it was for me to breathe, no thanks to my asthma.

Once we got close to the city, the sky started turning yellow and once we got into town, we could no longer see the bright blue sky, it's now just yellow smoke all over,

and even the sun has disappeared into sickly, yellow, gloomy darkness.

The sky looks like the Hollywood stereotypical Armageddon, an Apocalypse, or in short terms: all Hell is breaking loose. Looking out the window or driving along you sometimes cannot even see the end of blocks or across the road. The closer we drew to my nana's house the more yellow it got and the more the ashes were raining down.

After we arrived, we went inside and the smoky smell was not as evident with the air conditioning on. We waited about 30 minutes and it started to clear up, or at least the wind shifted the smoke in a different direction and from one angle of the house we could occasional catch glimpses of the murky blue sky still polluted with smoke.

Then things "really started heating up," or even more terrifying, the sun started heading down and occasionally you could catch a

glimpse of it but the smoke messed with one's vision so badly that when it was visible you could stare straight at the sun and not blink or have your eyes water, the sun was so dim, and the color, was one of the deepest blood reds ever. Seeing a sun like that comes once in a life time.

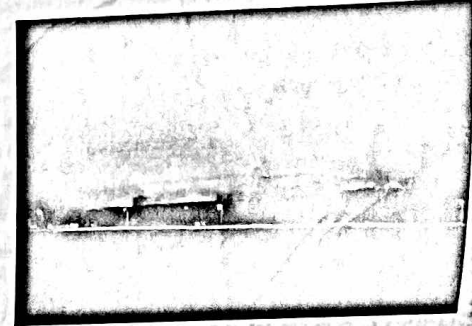
Then it got dark enough that the mountain behind the house became visible, the hill where the fire was running down. A thin film of fire all the way across the mountain and then smoke all above and as we did periodical checks on the fire it crept closer and closer to the city but the damage could not be assessed, just the thin line of fire getting lower and lower. Then the news reported houses burning and the Flying W Ranch gone, where my parents met and worked.

Once it got close enough, I got my video camera out and could zoom up to 60x on it so we could some on the flames leaping and watch them blaze higher and high-

er. As the night dawned and the sun drifted behind the mountains, I could fully see the terror of what is happening, building after building burning, fire jumping from house to house and it just crumbles all down. I could not hear anything from our vantage point but images started appearing in our heads, the screams of pain and fear as fire burned houses, the emotions running high, the firefighters' stress and physical endurance all on edge, all because of one little fire turned into a monster starting to engulf an entire town.

It is later now, you can go up to the window and smell the smoke but across the city the fire is not visible, for now it has escaped my line of sight, hiding behind the trees blocking my view.

What will tomorrow bring, a town in the ruins, a partially ruined town? The fire at my door step, or people going to work like normal? I can't tell you until tomorrow. Good night.

PHOTO CONTEST WINNER
RALPH CLARK

Ralph Clark is last week's winner for "Waldo Fire" with this photo of taken during the height of the fire. Clark wins four tickets to StarGazers Theatre. This week's theme is "Independence Day." Make sure you send us your related photos to win.

The Corner Mechanic

In the spirit of partnership with FRESH+INK

The 4th of July: A Celebration of Freedom and Independence

I love this country! Yes, you'll hear me griping about our politicians, our unbridled government spending and the slow erosion of our forefathers' faithfulness to the Constitution. Notwithstanding, I still love this country and the opportunities it continues to provide each and every one of us. Self-sufficiency comes to mind: the ability to fend for one's self and rising to the occasion and dealing with unanticipated problems and challenges ... just like the Minutemen of centuries past.

We have become so spoiled with our modern conveniences and (mostly) trouble-free living that we fail to prepare for emergencies and unanticipated events (aka vehicle breakdowns).

Here's your wake-up call ... how would you fare at 11 p.m., in January, in the country, with a dead battery? For 95 percent of us, it would not be pretty. Here's what you need to do ... put together a "Minute Man" preparedness kit that will allow you to rise to the occasion if (and when) your car breaks down or leaves you stranded.

- Flashlight (LED pref-

erable)

- Blanket(s), coat, hat, gloves, socks, and boots (more than one each if you travel with others)

- Jumper cables or fully-charged booster box

- Shovel, basic hand tools, windshield scraper

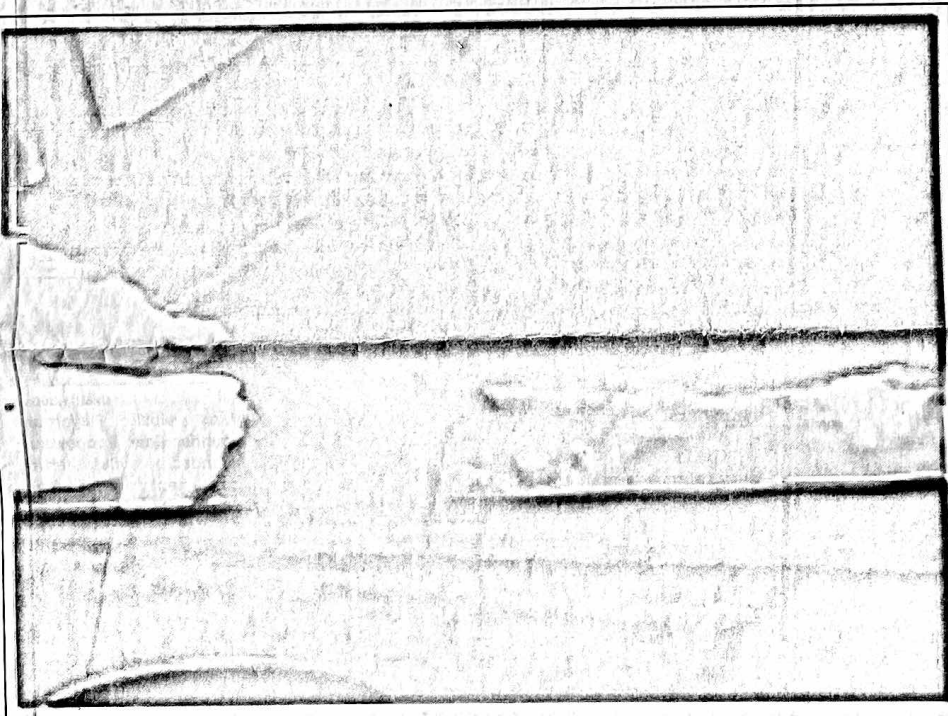
- Starting fluid, anti-freeze (50/50 mix), and engine oil

- Auto owner's manual
- Confirm your spare tire/lug wrench/car jack operable

Although this is a small list, it may be the difference between inconvenience and catastrophe. As always, if you have any questions, give your honest accurate auto technician a call ... you'll be glad you did.

Send your car care questions to
info@honestaccurateauto.com.

Honest Accurate Auto Service has two locations.
426 Nevada Mesa View, 598-6306; and the East location at 3605 Tutt Blvd., 638-1800.
Visit the website at HonestAccurateAuto.com. We service Honda/Acura, Subaru and Toyota/Lexus vehicles.



The plume from the Waldo Canyon firestorm.

MORGAN DAKOTA SPERRY