



The Case of the Disappearing People

Description

In the last couple of days, I have noticed something interesting. Lots and lots of people are disappearing. Let me explain.



A day or two ago I went to the WalMart to buy a few things. I went to checkout and in place of checkout counters with real people, there were self checkout stations: lots and *lots* of self checkout stations. Now I have to admit they were pretty neat and very fast. You pushed your cart up to the sign that said “put your cart here” and then you swept everything past the scanner. The thing that interested me though was that there were probably 10-15 stations on *each* side of the 4 or 5 regular manned (or womanned) check out counters. I guess fewer checkout people mean fewer salaries for WalMart to pay which keeps the price of my grits down.

Then I stopped at McDonalds for a quick McNugget fix and there was no one manning the ordering counter. I waited for a few minutes. Finally someone came out and directed me to the order kiosk. She seemed a little put out that I did not immediately understand this new technology but I am sure that

anyone under 10 could whiz right through it.

I tried to pay with my debit card, but that was refused. I have been traveling a bit lately and the credit card people wanted to make sure it was me using my card, so they put a hold on it. And that's fine with me. Better safe than cashless. But in any event, I had to call an 800 number to get my card up and working. Again, there was no one there. I went through an automated thingy that verified who I was. I had to enter my birthdate, my mother's high school nickname and my shoe size. The machine finally said I was who I said I was and my card started working again.

I just thought it was interesting that in three transactions in a row were people-less. It got me thinking about some other people that I would like to get rid of.

Now I would not mind it if they eliminated my neighbor Carl. He is just a grumpy old man who shakes his fist at you if you drive by his house a little too fast. Maybe they could replace him with a nice scarecrow looking guy that would just smile and wave and tell you to have a nice day.

And what about that mean lady at the post office? They could replace her with some kind of automatic mail-a-bot that would give you your stamps and not make you feel guilty for asking for them.

I also get annoyed by the lady behind the 3-inch thick plastic window at the gas station. Yes, I know that she is putting her life in danger by coming to work every day, but you would think she could crack an occasional smile. Especially when I tell her one of my great jokes.



But still, there is a long list of people that I hope are never replaced or disappeared. Like that nice bartender who slips you an extra half-shot in your gin and tonic. Or the pretty bank teller who gives you a warm smile and means it. And the nice dog trainer who says you have the best dog in the world

when you know she is stretching the truth.

And I hope that they never replace the nice man at the Mom and Pop store who tells you that he really appreciates your business and you know he is telling the truth.

I understand for business sake that they have to eliminate some people in order to make payroll, but I just would like to have a vote in the matter. Maybe they could issue me a can of yellow spray paint and I could just mark the ones I want to get rid of with a big yellow X.

MEET THE AUTHOR ??

Fellow Whisper Creeker Greg Stangl comes to us from the great state of Wisconsin. He and his wife Colleen spend summers on Lake Wisconsin and enjoy the leisurely winter months here in our little paradise together with their beautiful Springer Spaniels Isabella Rosalini and Sophia Loren.

Greg is a professional photographer, speaker and writer who not only owned a photography studio for 40 years, but also taught college courses and lectured on the subject in 35 states and 7 countries.

Greg's other passion is writing. He has published works in 10 national magazines and also authored workbooks employed in photography and marketing. Whisper Creeker News is both honored and excited for Greg to share his creative writing talents with us as well!

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