

## THE GOLDEN CARRIAGE TRADE [Draft]

“Do you have any dog on the menu today for my friend here?” The question was asked at lunchtime in the Golden Carriage Restaurant. You will have to wait a few minutes for the answer and its aftermath. In the meantime, you might learn a bit about the Golden Carriage and its importance to the young Evergreen.

The restaurant, so named through the Seventies, stands between the Carriage Inn motel and Plum Street, just beyond the City Center off-ramp of I-5. Among other things, it served in the evening as what has been called euphemistically a “watering hole” for out-of-towners visiting Olympia to conduct business with the Legislature or with some of the many government agencies. These businessmen often consorted in the lounge of the restaurant young and not-so-young ladies of the Olympia area, who tended to come in pairs but rarely left that way. According to a musician colleague who played in the lounge band, the come-on-line of choice, after visiting-businessman and Olympia-area-lady had danced a few dances and drunk a few drinks, was: “Would you like to have breakfast with me, Honey?” (i.e., go to bed with me and stay together through breakfast).

For quite another sort of breakfast tradition, which lasted for the early years of Evergreen, the Golden Carriage was the place for weekly meetings during the academic year of the deans and directors. Though the collaboration within program-teams and within staff-units was proceeding well, it became apparent early after our opening to students in 1971 that the channels of communication among units were getting clogged up. If one of the academic deans needed to communicate officially with another dean or director working with another of the vice presidents, things could get complicated. For example, one of my dean’s “desks” involved liaison work with Perrin Smith, the Registrar. In those days before voice-mail and e-mail, the official method would involve a memo from me to Dave Barry, the Provost and Academic Vice President, who would then communicate with Joe Shoben, Executive Vice President, who would communicate with Perrin Smith. Such a process consumed time which we did not have and could foster territorial feuding and divisiveness. Something had to be done, and fast.

It was from Ken Winkley, Finance Officer,[CHECK OFFICIAL TITLE] that I heard of plans among the deans and directors to hold weekly breakfast meetings off campus, to which the President and Vice Presidents were not invited. No votes would be taken, no decisions made. But we middle-management people would have the chance to talk things over by ourselves. The Golden Carriage let us use one of its meeting rooms.

We quickly developed a routine which served our needs. In turn, after some small talk and breakfast-eating, each of us would be IT. He would start by describing the issues on which he was working that would have implications for other areas. “Here’s what I have to decide, and here’s what I’m planning to do unless you guys can talk me out of it or come up with a better idea.” (Discussion.) Then the one who was IT would talk about any problems which he was having with people in other areas. Finally, the others would have a chance to say, “And here are the problems which my people and I are having with your people and you.” Then the next dean or director at the table would be IT. No votes, no decisions made at the meetings themselves – but full and active

sharing of information, stimulating further direct communication between units and the swift collaborative solution of problems.

Let me give a specific example. In the first year, the Library Building and the Lecture Halls were all we had. Programs had their own seminar rooms and faculty offices in their own areas. In the absence of voice-mail and e-mail, people in the programs communicated by putting up messages and schedules and posters on the walls of the classrooms and corridors and lounges. Some of the programs also fostered the production of lots of art work, which was also displayed on the walls – our only exhibition spaces. And some students and faculty members had come to me with complaints that members of Don Perry's maintenance staff had been tearing down and throwing away some of the messages and schedules and posters and artwork. So at the next Golden Carriage breakfast meeting, I told Don Perry and Jerry Schillinger about the problem. Don rightly responded that it was the job of his maintenance people to keep the building neat and clean, and they had just been doing that job. What we had was not a failure of communication but a collision of legitimate purposes and interests. Don and I agreed to talk further that afternoon.

Within the next two weeks we had arrived at a simple solution. On Don Perry's recommendation, Jerry Schillinger ordered and had mounted on the walls a number of large wood-framed cork-boards, suitable for posting papers and artwork with push-pins. In return, I met with faculty and student representatives of *Space, Time, and Form, Man and Art*, and several other programs which had made the complaints. With the help of Don Perry and others from Facilities, we came up with our first Poster Policy. People would display the messages and artwork only on the cork-boards. Memos and schedules and other messages would have "pull" dates on them. When the dates had passed, or when an event advertised on a poster had been held, either the person who had posted the material or the maintenance staff would remove and discard the paper. Exhibits of artwork would be for set periods of time and would be carefully taken down thereafter. On this issue, peace reigned. We could go on to other problems.

Only once did the deans and directors invite the President and Vice Presidents to the Golden Carriage breakfast (1) to diminish any paranoia they might have about what we were saying behind their backs and (2) to let them hear (strength in numbers) some of the complaints we had about them. Would Evergreen have survived the stresses and strains of the first few years without the Golden Carriage breakfasts? Probably – but not as well, not with the camaraderie which we developed. Interdisciplinary collaboration took place not just in the academic pursuits of the college but across the board. The joking and witty exchanges at the breakfasts helped.

As promised, however, I conclude with another exchange at the Golden Carriage, this time at a working luncheon. On this day in 1971, four of us met to talk about how Evergreen might develop curricula for Native American students in ways which would connect with some of the programs taking place in the K-12 system and the community college. Elmer Clausen and Emmett Peterson – a Nisqually – came from the office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Cal Dupre – a Sioux -- represented the Washington State Board of Community Colleges. (What a Sioux was doing in WSBC, like the case of the elephant in Groucho Marx's pajamas, is one of those things we'll never know.)

We had seated ourselves, and a pleasant young woman server came up to hand us menus. But before we could open them, Emmett Peterson, the Nisqually asked in a matter-of-fact voice, "Do you have any dog on the menu today for my friend here?" The young woman turned red and mumbled, "We don't usually ...I don't believe ... not in season ... I'll have to go ask ... in the kitchen." And fled. I'm sure that when she reached the kitchen, she broke into hysterics, either crying or giggling, or perhaps both. We four in the dining room quietly looked at our menus. In a few minutes, another server appeared – an older, battle-scarred, top-sergeant kind of no-nonsense waitress. She didn't say outright. "What did you do to that poor girl," but she glowered at us and demanded to know what we were going to eat. We told her; she left; Elmer Clausen and I looked at our hands and waited for what was going to come next.

Cal Dupre looked thoughtfully off into the middle distance, with a face just as calm and straight as that of his Nisqually colleague. And said: "Well, it's true that from time to time my people did raise dogs for food. But on the whole I prefer their lifestyle to one where if you do something really bad, they tie you to a tree and pelt you with smoked salmon until you die of boredom." .

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