



How (Not) To Hide An Addiction From Your Wife!

A Christmastime Essay – 2016

by

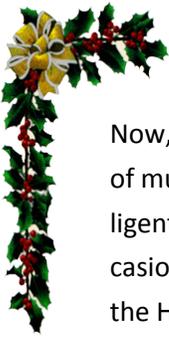
Hon. H. Sage Morgan

a/k/a

Judge Bubba



Some, who knew me back then, would tell you that I entered my marriage encumbered by a number of addictions, or at least maladaptive behaviors. However, I was 29 years of age, at the height of my golden-throated prowess and felt no emotional nor psychological impediments from any issues perceived by others. I drove a 1966 Plymouth Valiant, and it felt good to be me.



Now, after 40 years of marriage and without my awareness, I have been subtly and thoroughly relieved of much of my negative baggage through the constant molding and shaping by my wonderful, highly intelligent and devoutly Christian wife Rhoda. I no longer stay out late from home, rarely gamble and only occasionally have a few drinks. Instead of watching war movies on television, I now watch chick flicks and the House and Garden Network; instead of playing Blackjack or shooting craps in Reno or Vegas, I now play board games and Uno. It's a mystery.

However, I still like to chew tobacco. Even though R.D. disapproves for reasons of my well-being, it is as much a part of me as my Texas accent. After all, it's hard to work around the farm all day on my tractor or to go bass fishing in my boat without a little dip. Oh, for sure, R.D. convinced me to quit for good on two separate occasions, each lasting about 18 months. I was health conscious, but miserable.

When I decided to relapse again, I had two choices. As the man of the house, I could defy Rhoda's concerns, retake my sterling silver snuff lid from the glassed trinket cabinet where she put it and openly start chewing again, or alternatively, I could surreptitiously resume the use of tobacco. I chose to hide it.

I think most men, similarly situated, would agree that I made the right choice, but that path is fraught with danger. Women in general, certainly including my wife, have such inquisitive minds and an uncanny sense of smell that the risk of discovery is great. Because R.D. can smell a good jalapeno/cheddar/sausage-burp from over 50 feet away, she can certainly detect tobacco on my breath when face to face. Therefore, extreme caution must be used when hiding the use of chewing tobacco from your wife. Unfortunately, at my age, I've started making a number of mistakes.

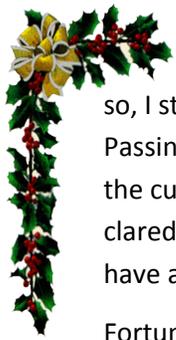
As a warning, when fishing with a buddy in your bass boat, never, I repeat never, have a photo taken of you holding a good fish after inadvertently slipping a can of tobacco into the breast pocket of your tournament shirt. Showing a picture of that fish to your wife could lead to further inquiry and the need to have a "TALK".

Additionally, never bum a chew from anyone unaware of your veil of secrecy. Not long ago, I did so in my barn from one of our farm customers, Darren Phutenmouth, who was considering purchase of some of our hay. A few days later, he returned to buy it, and Rhoda and I met him at our door, whereupon Darren, laughingly blurted, "Seeing you chewing in your barn the other day reminded me of the joke about the farmer . . ." Sigh!! The resulting silence was just like someone asking a barren fat lady when her baby is due. I felt defenseless and alone when R.D. and I needed to have a "TALK".

Sadly, I also learned a few years back that HIPPA protections didn't apply to tobacco use when my new dentist, Dr. Knightrous Oxhide was gathering my medical history. I chuckled with Knightrous about hiding periodic tobacco use from R.D. Several days later, Rhoda went horseback riding with Knightrous's wife Loose' Lipps-Oxhide, who suggested several tobacco cessation classes having good success rates. Wow! Who knew making my dentist laugh would lead to the need to have another "TALK".

Finally, this year I brilliantly solved the dilemma of safely transporting a fresh can of tobacco into the house from my hidden cache by resorting to an old Marine Corps trick. For decades, marines have carried packs of cigarettes inside their socks to avoid improper bulges in the pockets of their uniform . . .





so, I stuck a can of tobacco in my sock and went inside, overlooking how forgetful I have become at my age. Passing by R.D. sitting on the couch not five minutes later, I joined her for a little chat and put my feet up on the cushion, unfortunately lifting the cuff of my jeans. When she simultaneously grabbed my sock and declared, "What's this?!", I became more aggravated at my own dadgum stupidity than the requirement to have another "TALK".

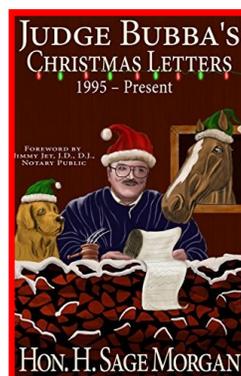
Fortunately, R.D. has stated when I turn 80 years of age, she will no longer worry about my tobacco use. So, I only have 10 more years to hide it.

Happy Holidays to you and your loved ones,

Sage and Rhoda Morgan



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