

80th Anniversary Of World's First Peace Park

Photo in This Spot
Would not transfer

Two Medicine Lake, Glacier NP

Eighty years ago, Rotary played a key role in establishing the world's first peace park. In 1932, Rotarians convinced Canada and the United States to combine Glacier National Park and Waterton Lakes National Park into one International Peace Park. Every year since then, Rotarians from both countries hold a weekend meeting of fellowship and good will to honor the event. Rotarians from over 200 clubs and four districts join in the celebration. DG Leggett of Canadian 5360, also President of the Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park Assoc. said, "When I heard this year's RI theme was about peace, I was thrilled. It fits so well with what our districts have been doing here for the past eighty years."

The assembly alternates between the U. S. and Canada. The 80th meeting was held a week ago in Kalispell, Montana, September 14 - 16, 2012. Rotary youth exchange students from both countries join in the celebration each year. We held the 80th meeting this year, but it will be the youth of these two countries who will make the 100th meeting and beyond possible.

The idea for the peace park originated eight decades ago, when the President of the Rotary Club of Carston, Alberta, heard a speech on international fellowship by a PDG. The club President arranged for a goodwill meeting between Canadian and U. S. Rotary clubs. The

clubs decided to push for designating the two parks as a joint International Peace Park. It worked! Both governments accepted the clubs' proposal. On June 18, 1932. At a ceremony President Herbert Hoover and Canadian Prime minister R. B. Bennett expressed their support of the peace building idea. PM Bennett said it best, "It is my earnest hope that this International Peace Park, stretching across our common frontier and in which citizens of both our countries may seek recreation, may forever remain a permanent memorial of all that the neighborly relations should be between adjoining nations".

Great Start Rotary, but what have you done for me lately? Well, down here a bunch of Texans liked the concept and got together with friends in Mexico. They want an International Peace Park designation for a place called Big Bend National Park. Easy job? Well, not really. It is a LONG story. Here is a brief version. The project started in **1935** when Senator Morris Sheppard sent a letter to F. D. Roosevelt. Then Cordell Hull started a commission to study it. In **1944**, Big Bend became a park. **1946**, Harry Truman contacted President Comacho pushing for the International Peace Park status. Well, not much happened. Then the Carlsbad, NM, Rotary Club started agitation to try to get the project finally approved. In March of **1997**. Two months later, Rotary District 5220 Conference in El Paso pushes for approval. Four months later, a Bi-District meeting in Nuevo Casas Grandes, Chihuahua got a dozen DG's involved. Speeches are being given all over Rotary in both countries. Then in **1997**, the great RI President-elect, Frank Devlyn, joined the effort. (Frank has a Bob Deffeyes made wooden bowl, similar to our Happy Dollars bowl.) Then came **Sept 11, 2001** and we didn't trust anyone. **2006** brought us the Secure Fence Act along with a proposal to build double-reinforced fence along the border. Oops. That shut International peace down. In **2008**, candidate Barach Obama said he has "no desire to pursue a costly and ineffective fence project". We are still stuck at that point. I am amazed at how **fast** we can declare war, but how terribly **long** it takes us to declare peace.

—Bob Deffeyes

The Sun Lite

Humor Is No Laughing Matter

Page 3

A Priest, A Rabbi, And A Mouse...

A Priest, a Rabbi and a mouse went into a bar together... What? Oh, you have already heard that one. I thought it would be a great intro to this serious article about the latest scientific research into the subject of humor — mouse jokes. Scientist Jaak Panksepp published an article about mouse jokes in “Behavioural Brain Research” a reviewed medical journal. No joke, this is serious research. Panksepp’s research shows that mice and rats have a sense of humor, no kidding. They all laugh when funny stuff happens. The trick is trying to tell what a mouse thinks is funny. So I thought you would want to know about this late breaking field of science.

I, personally, regretted reading the article. For years I believed that humans were the only kids who had a sense of humor. Years ago, we had a cat that really seemed to enjoy a good joke as long as our dog was the butt of the joke. Then a few years ago, came reports from the primatologists that lowland gorillas have a sense of humor. Today we know that mice get a chuckle when the cat gets his tail slammed in the refrigerator door. So, this revelation comes as a significant emotional event and makes me change my gut level value system about mice and men.

Gorillas laugh with deep hearty laughter that seems almost human. Pretty easy to detect that. However, rats laugh at 50,000 cycles a second. Even people with sharp ears cannot hear any sounds above 20,000 cycles a second. So mouse laughter is way above the sounds that people can hear. You have to use electronic magic to be able to move the sound down so you and I can hear it. Even then, it sounds like high-pitched chirps.

Once Panksepp’s lab workers learned to recognize when a rat is laughing, Katie bar the door. They are learning all kinds of stuff about mouse humor. For example, they find that rat pups laugh a lot more than adults. They clown around a lot and love to have a good time. So

then the researcher blew a little kitty cat odor across the cage and suddenly all went quiet. Mice find nothing funny if a cat is around. (Sort of like our not telling Baylor jokes when a certain Rotarian is in the R-O-O-M.)

When rat pups are in a cage with two adult rats, one who laughed a lot and one who does not, the pups want to hang out with the happy one. Well, DUH... I found that VERY interesting. I did some research myself. In my experiment, I caught male rats that *hang around the golf course* here at Cowan Creek and tried to breed them with female rats that *avoid the golf course*. Nothing happened, I guess there are some things that even a female rat won’t do.

Humor in America has all but died over the last 20 years as “politically correct” has taken over. We had a brief reprieve during the Republican primaries, but now we are back to humorless. I thought maybe the new field opening up would give me a chance to revive humor by opening a chain of “Rat Comedy Clubs”. I might become the first stand-up mouse comedian with my new routine “The Three Mousketeers” about a love triangle with Minnie Mouse playing the part of the hypotenuse. Jesse Bering gives us some guidelines on what makes mice laugh.

Joyful Laughter = meeting a good friend after a long absence

Taunting Laughter = laughing at cat or other opponent after having defeated him

Schadenfreud Laughter = Laughing at another mouse who just slipped on a banana peel, but no serious harm is intended

Tickling Laughter = caused by physically tickling a mouse. (Rats are ticklish on the nape of the neck)

So maybe I will finally be able to develop a use for my priest, rabbi and mouse jokes.