



Recipe Corner

Crockpot Beef Stew

Start with layer of chopped sweet onion on bottom adding some garlic bits. Then diced Yukon potatoes. Couple squirts of Worcestershire sauce. Cubed beef marinated in Italian dressing overnight. Salt, pepper and some chopped celery. Some frozen vegetables and a few Bay leaves and set crockpot on low. Start it mid-morning and should be done by dinner time.

I'm finding the best recipes take the longest to cook. Maybe that's why I have three crockpots of various size.



Turned out great. Salad, one of my rolls, a glass of Shiraz and I'm happy.



In case you're looking for some political comment...here 'tis!

THE FRANK REPORT

5.16.2020 #226

All the news I see fit to print.

Freedom of the press belongs to those who own one.



Paid an inspector to check out the house before I bought it. He certified all appliances OK. Then found the dishwasher would not run and I paid another inspector to verify that the circuit board was bad. Price of new board and install was about cost of new dishwasher. Bought the new dishwasher...and less than four years later it died. Paid another inspector to tell me that circuit board died. Cost of replacing...yep ... about the price of a new one. Took some time to research and I found a brand that uses the dial knobs and relays for operation. No circuit board. Apparently American manufacturers are still into tunnel vision on short term profit rather than long term customer satisfaction. Circuit boards are cheaper than the relays and knobs...yet they push the circuit boards on their more expensive models. I've been driving a Japanese car for almost 30 years and wouldn't trade it for any American car on the market. Sears is gone but I remember their lifetime guarantee on tools and appliances that came with detailed schematics and a list of replacement parts that allowed me to keep appliances running for decades...not a just few years. Remember the Craftsman brand? I had to replace a sander that died...Sears gave me a new one...no charge. Same with a socket wrench I busted on a stubborn nut. With that kind of customer service, was I a loyal Sears customer? Damn straight! In case you're wondering, the dishwashers that kept dying were made by Whirlpool. I've contacted them for their comment about the situation. Fully expect to get constant spam about their products but damn little acknowledgement of their product flaw. They have not learned one of the primary lessons of marketing:

Word of mouth...Whirlpool sucks!!!

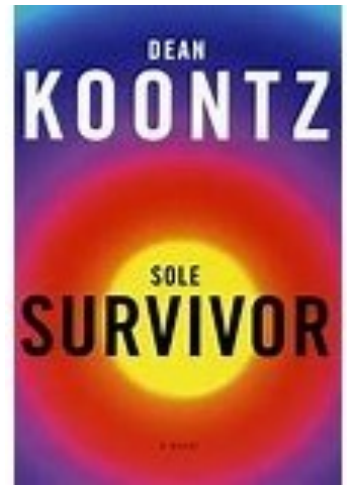
Bon Mots

Lie to government:

Felony

Government lies:

Politics



Book Report

Got into this sci-fi thriller and thought I had read it. Turned out it was the mini-series I had watched but the 1997 book is gooder than the TV version of 2000. Typical of Koontz, you get lots of philosophy with his books. Thanks to Dr. Mike Marshall for the memory nudge. He's been sending me books I wouldn't have noticed.



Heard from Whirlpool:

Brenda L. e-Solutions Specialist
"I am terribly sorry to hear that the circuit board on your 4-year-old refrigerator (sic) has failed. As a consumer myself, I know this is frustrating for you... Your concerns have been documented and we have coded your file for review. This may not generate any further contact with you..."

Gives me a warm feeling that they feel my pain. /s

-more-



Ever wonder what's inside that green box in your yard? Lots of copper and aluminum wires. Did you also know that taxpayers have been charged for fiber optic as a replacement for this rat's nest of cables in your front yard? By the end of **2014**, we had been charged about \$400 billion by the local phone companies for a fiber optic future that never showed up. And though it varies by state, counting the taxes, fees and surcharges that you have paid every month (*many of these fees are actually revenues to the company or taxes on the company that you paid*), Internet and telecom providers paid \$1.8 Billion dollars to the government's "Universal Connectivity Fund" in 2017. Guess who really paid it? America has relatively slow internet, and just a 9.4% penetration rate for fiber optic cables, according to the international website **Business Insider**. Lack of fiber optic affects the speed of broadband. As detailed in MN state law, we are at 25 Mbps down and 3mps up.

So who monitors the speed?

The Apple Valley, Farmington, Rosemount Cable Commission (AFRCC) is a joint powers organization for franchising agreements and video services for each member city. Residents who subscribe to cable television with Charter or Frontier Communications receive local Government, Educational, and Public Access channels.

*"The AFRCC board is made up of three people, one from each city. The purpose of the franchise agreement is mostly to regulate service lines in the city right-of-way, **we can't regulate pricing or how they operate as a business**. This is basically based on federal law and it only applies to cable television, not internet or phone services. This is a non-exclusive agreement, any company can get a franchise with the city".*

Tim Klausler | Cable Coordinator
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(Hat tip to Tim for the info)
 Members of the AFRCC commission:

City of Apple Valley Charles Grawe
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City of Farmington David McKnight
 dmcknight@farmingtonmn.gov

City of Rosemount Emmy Foster
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The state body responsible for our internet access (*MN Office of Broadband Development*) has also set "goals" that the state be in:

- 1.The top five states in the nation for broadband speed universally accessible.
- 2.The top five states for broadband access.
- 3.The top 15 when compared to countries globally for broadband penetration.

- 1.MN ranks 26th among states in speed.
- 2.MN ranks 27th among states for access.
- 3.The MN mandate for 25mps would put it just ahead of Poland which is 28th in ranking worldwide.

That MN statute that mandates the 25mps down and 3mps up is for 2022 and another deadline of 2026 to achieve universal access to 100Mbps and 20Mbps up.

Tewodros (Teddy) Bekele, senior vp and chief technical officer of Land O'Lakes is chairman of the state body appointed by the Governor. Paul Weirtz, President of AT&T MN is one of 14 members of the board.

Here's their website:

<https://mn.gov/deed/programs-services/broadband>

Let's recap: the federal government gets billions of dollars from us (*paid like sales taxes to the cable companies as "fees"*). The states (*MN as an example*) establish commissions and boards that obfuscate responsibility for holding cable companies to task to deliver what they promise.

That green box is your connection to telephone, cable television and the internet. It's part of the infrastructure that should have been replaced decades ago **because we already paid for the replacement!**

The people on those boards and commissions can only work with the laws at the federal and state levels. However, they could look into the fees paid and what the companies and politicians did with the money.

Hope this has helped shed some light on what's going on with your internet connection and any streaming service for television. In the military, we called it a fustercluck...or something like that.

With the 5G internet connections producing speeds up to 4GBS, by the time the politicians and government boards and commissions have figured it out, most of the problems will have been solved by good old capitalism where companies like Frontier go broke and others do what they have to do to keep customers.

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