

# St. Some Times

The Life and Times of Greg Lemoine, International Educator since 2001.

V271 Special RANT

April 2023

## *Laundry*

Finally, I did my laundry. I had enough underwear to last a month. So, why not see if I have enough clothes to last that long?

**ALMOST  
NO  
NEWS!**

I'll think of something to write. I always do. Just don't expect very much from this edition..



# CAMPING OUT

A PERMANENT FIXTURE @  
STARBUCKS

They open a 6am. I get there just after they open the doors and sit there for hours. Working on what? Websites. Photo editing. Audio engineering for podcasts. Writing this newsletter. And drinking...tea.



Living single, overseas, has always presented me with time to grow. Not just physically (haha, I'm exercising again), but mentally. Take the social excitement out of my free time and I ascend to learning new digital skills and documenting the

life that I lead. I have been this way for years. No wonder I've been able to publish a newsletter almost every month. When life gets boring, I tend to publish more. That's why I wrote this special RANT volume at Starbucks.

The

# Hell of Noise

A REACTIVE RANT... AT STARBUCKS!



## They Know Not...

Starbucks. Afternoon lull. I am perhaps the only patron in here besides the three 20 somethings working behind the counter.

Notice the two girls with their asses on the counter used to prepare food and coffees? (above) I did the same kind of thing at home or in college, but never where I worked in public. They don't know any better. Youth!

But this rant is not about sitting on a presumably clean surface in a restaurant. Nope. I'm pissed about the phone in her hand. This event is why I have to wear earbuds and listen to music. The only way for me to escape the steady stream of stupidity that is shared on TikTok and other social media is to have my earbuds handy. The bottom line is a lack of caring.

Did I miss the society meeting? Did someone tell everyone the best way to watch a stupid video is on your phone with the volume maxed out and no headphones?

I've seen it in airports and restaurants. Almost every public space has been invaded by this new event.

I'd like to think it is a consequence of innocent youth. No one has told them it is intrusive to force your loud media choices on others. But age has nothing to do with it. This is not a random boom box blaring rap in a park while a small group of breakdancers perform. No. Phone permeate.

So Many  
People Don't  
Give a Shit  
About Others

## Obviously About Me

The more I reflect, "I Don't Give a Shittism" is rampant. People really live in a "ME" state. If I pull out my phone, turn up the volume, and start watching an episode of CSI, to hell with anyone else in the world.

Why can't these individuals simply plug a pair of earbuds into their ears? Why do they want everyone else in the world to know what they are watching? Why why why?

Am I the only person that truly enjoys being in my own world of entertainment while the world turns around me? Who doesn't enjoy the sound earbuds instead of a loudspeaker?

I will simply keep my own earbuds handy. I can escape and watch the stupidity with my own soundtrack.

# Another RANT

Written a while back, this rant didn't fit in any other volume. It fits now.

## SAFETY FIRST?

The setting: World Cup games are in Play and on display at a popular public space on the island. It's the weekend. Driving up to my recent writing haunt, I notice a crane and lot of hard hats. Why are they working with a massive crane during weekend daylight hours. Won't there be a lot of people around? Crashing cranes have killed many workers, much less swarms of world cup fans after their recent Starbucks addiction.

I only bring up the topic of safety because I have friends formerly in the business of safety. Aren't we all worried about safety? Isn't a crane lifting massive ceiling pieces into place a concern? A little plastic fence around the crane, with a 2 foot safety perimeter? Really? I can see it happening during a night shift. Flood lights can be plugged in. Labor hours matter the least. Get it done before the average coffee rush happens. Do it any other day than a weekend when average people are wandering around the "new" area.

# THE CRANE. NOT...SAFE!



## The Parental Disaster

I just *have* to report on what I witnessed today. Even though I don't have kids, I am around kids and families all the time. There should be instruction booklets and some kind of interstellar regulation on how to deal with kids.

I bore witness to this for three hours.

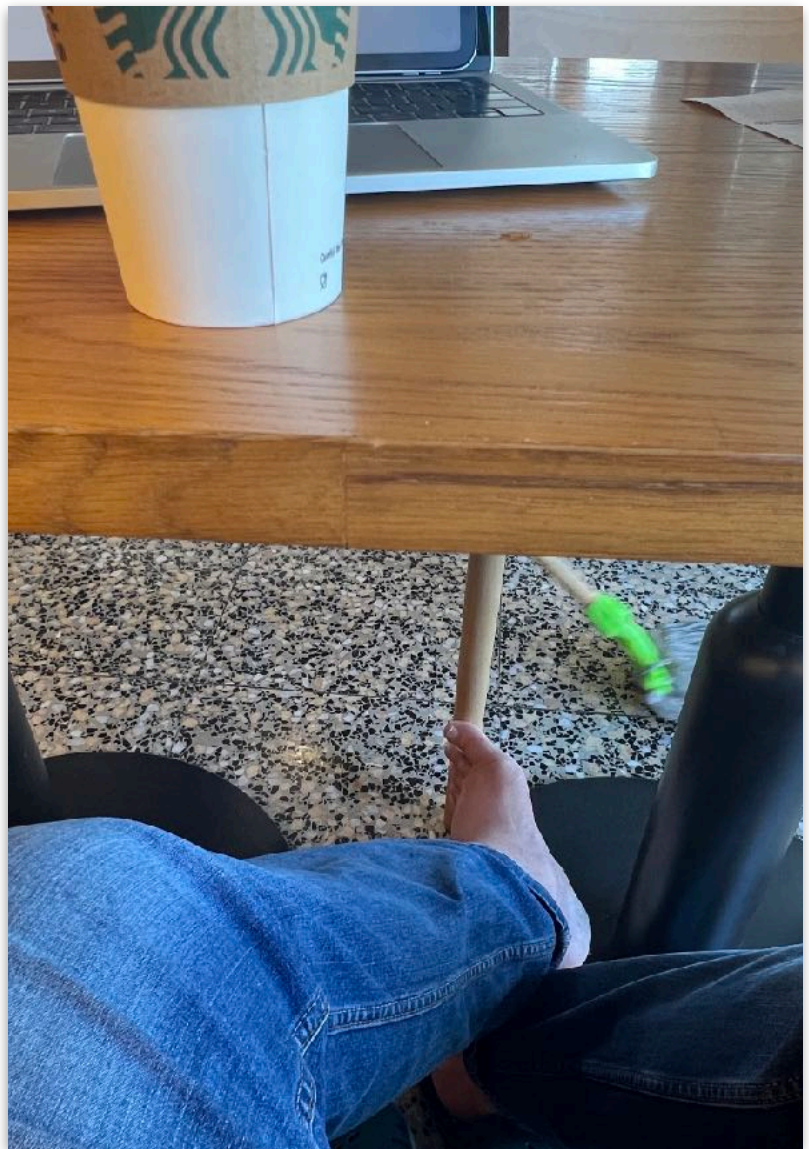
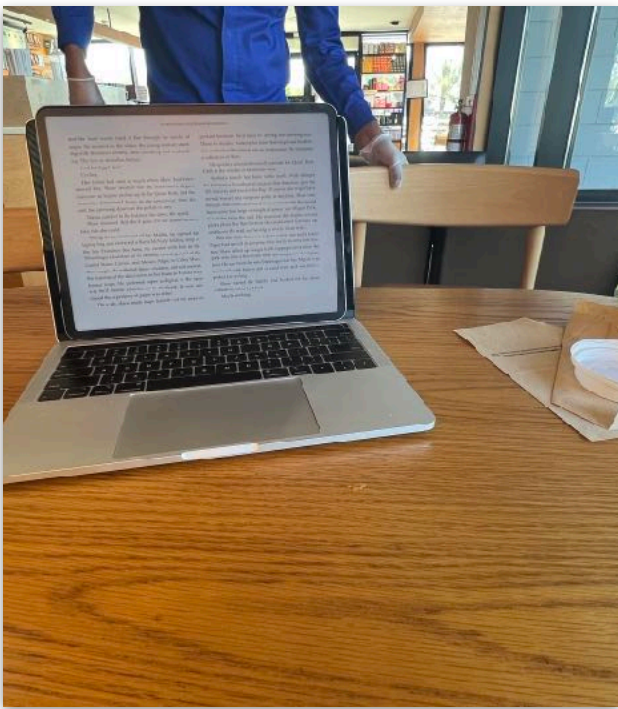
Pregnant mom. Eight year old boy. Four year old girl with an iphone. Terrible twos territory little sister. When they arrived, the littlest demon was in her stroller screaming. I couldn't hear her because I was editing a podcast with noise cancelling earbuds in. Mom takes the lounge couches on either side of a small coffee table. She leaves the kids to wrestle on the couches while she goes up to retrieve her coffee and cookies, a chocolate milk for the boy, and two sugary concoctions for the girls. The boy takes the opportunity to sit on the four year old while the toddler is licking the window and looking at the flowers. Mom comes back. I lose interest and fade away for the next hour working on my editing.

Two hours later, my earbuds have run out of juice. I can hear the kiddy program blairing out of the iphone in the four year old girl's hands. Mom is holding up her phone to her ear sideways like she is trying to stuff it into her ear canal. (You know how people listen to the speaker on the phone instead of the phone speaker? I still don't comprehend this tactic! Hold a phone to your ear like a phone and you can hear it perfectly well without transmitting to the world.) Why are they still here? What is going on? This mother does not care about her kids. Is her coffee fix so important? Children don't have any input at Starbucks! I quickly lose interest as music floods my ears from my wired earbuds.

Noon. It's three hours later. I've decided to record this in words. The kids are still here. The older ones are running around the restaurant bothering every adult waiting in line. The ninja mom is still listening to her phone at a 90 degree angle. The toddler is watching some Arabic language version of a cartoon at full speaker volume. I know because I was greeted with the noise she was sharing as I got up to take a leak. Mom didn't even realize her two older kids had left out the front door. She looked around for them before taking away the phone from the toddler and putting her into the stroller. Mom Went out the door in the wrong direction, looking, then passed going in the opposite direction.

I have so many comments. All start with foul language.





## The Inevitable Mop, Broom, or Sweeper

My mother and I have shared a joke for the past 35 or more years - the inevitable sweep. Each time it happens, which is always, I smile and think of my mother.

Many years ago, my mom and I were eating at a restaurant. It must have been when I was in my teens and early twenties, the years when I earned cash serving and bartending in bars or restaurants. During our meal, a server came over and started to sweep around our table, even daring to brush our feet. How rude! Certainly unprofessional.

The professional rule that had been drilled into me by many a restaurant owner and "lifer" wait staff: Never sweep near a patron. It interrupts the comfort of a sit-down meal.

Mom, at that time, simply said: "It seems that every time I eat, someone has to sweep." I grinned and explained she wasn't alone in her fate. "Happens to me too, Mom."

It is so appropriate for me to be writing my Rant volume and the worker attested to our fate. The pictures above prove it, just in case you don't believe us. Mom. It F&\*%ing happened in Saudi!

I have been around the world. I've had meals on sailboats in the Indian Ocean. Posh establishments in DC. Street-side plastic tables in developing countries. Even sitting on a Thai beach with tables on the sand (a timely raking of dried seaweed and shells).

Of all the sweeps, in all of the years, my most memorable was a McDonald's parking lot in Atlanta. I am willing to bet my mother will remember upon reading this. Mom and I were driving the E80 White Mercedes from the Midwest down to Florida. We were hungry and stopped at a McDonald's. We even joked that if we ate in the car, no employee would be able to seal our sweeper fate.

We parked and left the air conditioner running. McAte our meal in the shade of a lone tree, next to the McDumpster. It was pleasant. No other car in sight.

Along came an employee with a McBroom and dust pan. She even Mcswept UNDER the Mercedes. Fate.



## The Urth Cafe Incident

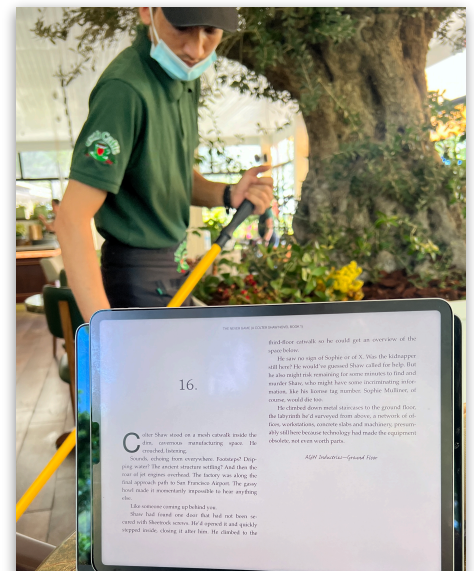
The Urth Cafe is the same cafe that surprised me by serving lunch during Ramadan. That was an impressive addition to my life. Be that as it may, I decided to venture out alone on a Saturday and see what kind of crowd they might have. I have had my fill of Starbucks. Most people think I work there now. It was time for a new setting.

As I entered the plush, green decór of the garden restaurant, the staff looked up from their phones and busied themselves as if the boss had just entered. This is the kind of place you order at the counter, take a number marker, and find your own seat. Order, pay, sit, wait, eat, leave. Simple.

So here is another pet peeve of mine. Restaurants that only have a digital version of their menu. "Oh, sir, just click on the QR code. Our menu is online. No, we don't have a paper menu anymore." Shit. What if I don't have any data? Your secret code for wifi is protected and it's not offered to your patrons?" Ok. Give me your phone. I'd like to see what's on your menu. No? I cannot borrow your personal cell?

I didn't bother to look under the glass counter. All kinds of baked goods to go with coffee. I remember they make a great "off menu" pepperoni pizza. I ordered and chose my spot at a 4-top at the back of the 30 table restaurant so I could see the comings and goings. Just in case they got more patrons for lunch.

I opened my iPad and waited for my order. Guess who decided to mop under my table! F#\$@!





Almost  
**Done**  
RANTING

What a dumbass. I should have gone here instead of sitting in Starbucks and sipping tea. I saved vacay days that's what I did.

All I have to do is survive another 60 days before summer vacay.

I guarantee, even on some remote island, someone will sweep under my table while I'm eating.

Mom. It's our curse! -Smile