

The Wallace Street Journal
By David Bond

Leaving the Information Grid

Wallace, Idaho – We've been off the information grid for nearly a month now. Oh, we've still got electricity, the internet, the gas and water and sewer connexions, but a month ago the satellite went away at our command, so no more government and corporate news at 6 p.m. or the Sunday morning food-fights.

I do miss Charles Osgood and Gwen Eifel but that's about it. These are offset by the welcome losses of Judy Woodruff, Brian Williams, and all of Fox News and all of the Spokane happy news. We don't like being barked at by news purveyors who've never been in a street fight or spent a night in jail, whose only claim to the august positions they hold is based on race, sex, or a tawdry journalism degree from some tawdry college.

Can't much stand our local Shruggles News-Press, either. It seems content to republish police reports and how the local cheerleaders are doing. The new paradigm. Newspapering is now a stenographer's job.

For news in the morning, it's a quick surf through Drudge, who is the premiere old-school news editor, then a deep read through the Washington Post's op-ed page, which seems to be the only surviving newspaper willing to air a variety of actual thinking on topics of import. I read Will, Gerson and Krauthammer on the right, and Dione, the robotic Robinson, and Milbank on the left, then maybe some Samuelson for balance. (For \$10 a year the WaPo is the best real newspaper left on the web.)

Back to the central point. We're not missing anything. The dish, with all of its channels advertising faux diamonds and Vego-O-Matic gadgetry and hatred-spewing from Fox and MSNBC, just wasn't worth \$80 a month. I don't really give a crap who the next president is going to be, because nothing's going to change. They're welcome to duke it out, but not on my dime, nor my time.

Television is entertainment. Regrettably, the news model has fit itself into the entertainment game and these sissified boys and girls at the anchor desks have capably adapted.

So I turned them off and haven't missed a bloody thing. The sun still rises and sets. The dog, cat, Better Half and me are still healthy. Blood pressure has dropped by many points.

What the Dow does to-day has no impact on our real lives. It's a handful of speculators, mostly banks, trying electronically to out-guess each other. Who really should care? Does caring about it pay my rent? But it's front-page news – a bloody distraction.

The Mid-East burns. Let it. They've been doing this to each other for 6,000 years. What gives us the hubris to think we can fix that? And if you think the U.S. is without guilt there, visit what Kermit Roosevelt did in Iran when he organized the toppling of a duly elected president to install the Shah of Iran in the early 1950s, all to protect British oil interests. Thirty-some years later, we got the blow-back.

Good books and good movies are the way to go. In fiction, nobody lies.

