

Spokane: 'Near Nature, Near Zombies'

Doug Clark/SR

Identity is a big concern for any municipality looking to lure visitors who will come and spend their dollars (and not just on drugs).

I remember years ago how much time the city's top tourism boosters frittered away to come up with what they believed would be the perfect commerce-evoking sentiment in a brand-new Spokane slogan.

Once the wine was gone, however, they lost interest and settled on "Near Nature, Near Perfect," probably so they could all go home and sleep it off.

Today, alas, Spokane's appeal has apparently suffered a major civic setback due to a couple of zombies who are being accused of uttering horrible defamatory things about my hometown.

Sorry. I meant actors in a television show about zombies.

Kellita Smith and Michael Welch are cast members on SyFy TV's "Z Nation," which is filmed right here in Spokaloo. During an interview on a Los Angeles chat show, Smith labeled Spokane as "apocalyptic ready," according to a news account.

Huh?

That's what has Twitter lemmings in a lather?

I've been warning everyone for decades that the Spopocalypse is nigh.

You don't have to attend a City Council meeting and listen to George McGrath to know that our Armageddon is closer than Millwood.

The signs are everywhere: Truck-swallowing potholes. The bus plaza white elephant money pit.

Racial Dolezal's confusion ...

Next time you're downtown, take a gander at that scarifying "King of Glory" building mural. If that doesn't get you building a Doomsday bunker, nothing will.

After making the apocalyptic remark, Smith went on to explain that "some of the locations that we've been on are like amazing because it's almost like it's ready, so once I get to the set, I believe."

Again, this is not slander. Anyone who has watched "Inside the Actors Studio" knows Smith is talking about "motivation."

As in ...

Director: “OK. This next shot calls for you to run through a horde of brain-eating undead so try to muster up some real terror.”

Actor: “I’ve got it. I was in Costco Saturday and had to fight my way to a checkout aisle.”

Director: “Perfect!”

Welch also hit a nerve during the interview by saying Spokane property can be bought for a couple of peanuts.

An exaggeration, of course.

It takes at least a can of peanuts to buy property in Spokane.

I know this because Emily and Shane, my daughter and son-in-law, are closing on a nice home on the South Hill. They’re moving here, along with granddaughter Ronan, from San Francisco.

The same house in the City by the Bay would cost millions. Compared to Frisco real estate, Spokane is a Planters peanut gallery.

The only remedy for this zombie ruckus is to adopt a more realistic city slogan.

We need to get rid of the Near Nature nonsense and embrace one of the grass-roots attempts that are coincidentally being made right now to redefine what Spokane should mean to the uncivilized world.

Derrick Oliver, a transplanted Texan, has been making news lately with [his “Spokane Doesn’t Suck” brand](#) for a line of T-shirts and such. (See it on the Web at <http://kck.st/1PZF7Nu>.)

Oliver’s a good guy. His heart is in the right place. But I can’t say I totally buy into his message.

Fact: Anybody who’s visited our beloved Garbage Goat in Riverfront Park knows that Spokane doesn’t just suck – it sucks hard!

Meanwhile, my friend and Keyboard Cat creator Charlie Schmidt has started “Cheer Up Spokane” as an Internet therapy to help assuage our municipal inferiority complex.

While at the same time selling coffee cups and other stuff nobody really needs. (Visit www.cheerupspokane.com to see for yourself.)

As Charlie told me, “Who in Spokane wouldn’t want to be drinking their morning coffee out of a Cheer Up Spokane mug? It’s an affirmation.”

It does sound cheery.

But I say the time for a Spokane motto makeover is now, hopefully before the river turns to blood and the locusts arrive.

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