

LIFE UNDER THE NORTHERN LIGHTS

Leftover screws



Kevin Holten

Are you a fix-it man or woman? I'm not.

But I've done plenty of hard labor in my life. From picking rocks to tossing around hundreds and maybe thousands of square hay bales.

And when you do ranch or farm work you know things are going to break down occasionally and oftentimes, you're expected to fix it. But I'm not someone who overhauls a truck motor or welds together a piece of equipment.

I fix things like MacGyver did in that old television series; very creatively with whatever I can find to help me do the job, whether it's wire or Gorilla tape.

And if I'm asked to assemble something that might have arrived in a box, you can bet, in the end, there are going to be a few screws left over. That's just the way it is.

Yet, when I'm finished, everything appears to work. Nothing is wobbling, leaking or making unusual noises. And yet there they are. Three screws, staring back at me.

So, at that point I do what every experienced handyman does. I put them in a coffee can and declare victory.

Still, you should know that I used to mentally beat myself up when something like that happened. Until one day when I realized

that life itself is a lot like that. Because, in many life situations there are screws left over.

When I was young, I assumed that successful people had everything figured out. And I thought that, by a certain age, I'd have all the answers, all the wisdom, all the confidence and all the pieces perfectly assembled.

Then the decades zoomed by and I discovered that life's coffee can was full of leftover screws.

And I know it's not just me who sees that. Because I've interviewed world champions who struggle with self-doubt. Millionaires who can't balance work and family. And brilliant people who can't find their car keys.

I've interviewed some of the toughest cowboys on the planet. Men who have rode the rankest bulls and broncs, survived injuries that would make most people quit, and persevered through hardships most of us can't imagine. Yet every one of them has a story about mistakes, missed opportunities and wrong turns.

The truth is none of us are assembled perfectly. We all have

parts that don't quite fit. Dreams that didn't work out. Plans that went sideways. Relationships we wish we had handled differently.

We carry scars, regrets and unanswered questions. And yet somehow, by the grace of God, we keep moving forward.

When I was younger, I thought perfection was the goal. Now I think resilience is.

Life isn't about having every screw in exactly the right place. It's about continuing to function when a few are missing. It's about learning and adjusting and even laughing at yourself occasionally.

And the older I get, the less impressed I am with perfection and the more impressed I am with perseverance. With people who keep showing up, keep trying, believing, loving and helping others.

Those are the people who inspire me. The people who admit they don't have all the answers.

So, if life ever leaves you with a few screws left over, don't worry about it. Most of us have a full coffee can. Just hike up your jeans and keep moving.



PARKER'S PERSPECTIVE

What a difference 32 years makes



Gaylon Wm. Parker

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By now, you've probably seen the exuberance of World Cup soccer fans, many of whom have been tooling around the United States – along with Mexico and Canada – to witness the 26th edition of "the beautiful game's" premier international showdown. Now, international soccer can be a bummer because many of these players routinely get hurt playing in those "friendlies" or "qualifiers" and continental affairs ... but that's a column for another day.

Instead, it helps to offer some context pertaining to these viral "international fans react to United States after seeing (insert business here _____) for the first time." Honestly, the Bass Pro Shops and Wal-Mart or Sam's Club videos are the funniest, because many folks are seeing a firearm or a 10-lb. bag of shredded cheese for the first time EVER, but there's a wonderful little undercurrent to these items that quite a few commentators have noticed.

For one, almost in-unison these fans are genuinely surprised by America and all it has to offer, but even more shocked at the friendliness, courtesy, charity and openness of our fellow citizens. It's not that obvious what these people have been told the past few years either by their media, celebrities, politicians or com-

mentators, but the folks who have visited this country and done similar videos WITHOUT the World Cup exposure have been broadcasting these subtle realities for some time.

There's a UK couple, for example, called "James and Siana" who have traversed more than 25 states in an RV and visit here periodically who have posted 145 videos since early 2025. The stuff you're seeing from Scotland fans in Boston over the last two weeks has been noticed by these two delightful Brits, and they find new ways to surprise their fans with each video.

Part of that is because folks who visit SPECIFICALLY New York, Orlando, Los Angeles or any other major city don't get to experience the Florida Keys, Utah, Moab, Ariz. or Southwest North Dakota to see what the USA is REALLY like – region-by-region – and how different or unique we truly are. But now, you have Argentinians descending on Arlington and the French invading Liberty Financial Field in Philly, while Bosnians will be in Seattle soon and Brazil is headed to Miami Gardens before the Netherlands nestle in Kansas City in a few days.

The breadth and scope of this country is one thing for the European mind to handle, but the shock of experiencing these new cultures has been a good jolt to their consciousness. My favorite tagline that goes along with these reaction videos is: "We Were Lied To ..." about whatever, and that's a telling situation. You see, I believe it's somewhat offside for the United States to have hosted the World Cup twice in the last 32 years and soccer's birthplace – England – hasn't hosted it since 1966, but what they're all seeing in the meantime is well worth the effort.

Some of the facts that are left out of these remarkable discoveries about the United States might help smooth over the cracks, because 32 years ain't really that long. But if we go back to 1994 (when, ironically enough I was living in East Anglia and watching the event with British people), there was no social media, there were no cell-phones – much-less cell-phone cameras – there was no Internet, and there wasn't even the Sky Network or satellite dishes. All that stuff popped up in the last few decades along with "supercenters," supply-houses, mega-stores and all the rest of the stuff these folks find so fascinating.

I was joking the other day that, "I pay Wal-Mart \$15 a month to NOT go in there and have my stuff delivered instead, and these people are practically willing to roll naked over broken glass to get through the doors," and I'm not that far off in my assessment. And still, the thing that brings a smile to my face is seeing how happy they are with ZERO condescension and borderline awe with the things I take for granted. I'm not the only one who feels this way, and the millions of views on YouTube are a testament to my neighbors' satisfaction as well.

Yeah, while I certainly hope that England secures a hosting gig for the World Cup sometime soon (because I still have friends over there and plan to take my son along so he can see where he was born), this regular OUTSIDE view of the U-S-A has taught me a lot. What's gratifying is this: In the meantime, it's taught THEM quite a bit as well, which has made for a complete circle of success.

And, yes, just so I don't leave it out: The games have been pretty good, too ...



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ABBREVIATED NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT, AMEND, AND REPEAL ADMINISTRATIVE RULES RELATING TO THE NORTH DAKOTA REAL ESTATE COMMISSION

TAKE NOTICE that the North Dakota Real Estate Commission will hold a public hearing to address proposed changes to the N.D. Admin. Code at 8:30 a.m. on Thursday, July 9, 2026, at 1120 College Dr. #204, Bismarck, ND 58501. A copy of the proposed rules may be obtained by writing the North Dakota Real Estate Commission, 1120 College Dr. #204, Bismarck, ND 58501 or calling 701-328-9749. Also, written comments may be submitted to the North Dakota Real Estate Commission, 1120 College Dr. #204, Bismarck, ND 58501 until July 20, 2026. If you plan to attend the public hearing and will need special facilities or assistance relating to a disability, please contact the North Dakota Real Estate Commission at the above telephone number or address at least three days prior to the public hearing.

Dated this 4th day of June, 2026.
 Jeanne Prom, Executive Director