

Memo

To: All Employees
From: Tom Sheehan
Date: 1/24/2010
Re: Work/Life Balance

Camp Coffee

When we fished the Pine River, Ed LeBlanc, Walter Ruskowski, Brother Bentley and I, for thirty-some years, coffee was the glue; the morning glue, the late evening glue, even though we'd often unearth our beer from a natural cooler in early evening, a foot down in damp earth. Coffee, camp coffee for your information, has a ritual. It is thick, it is dark, it is pot-boiled over a squaw-pine fire, it is strong, it is enough to wake the demon in you, to stoke the cheese and late-night pepperoni. First man up makes the fire, second man the coffee; but into that pot has to go fresh eggshells to hold the grounds down, give coffee a taste of history, a sense of place. That means at least one egg be cracked open for its shells, usually in the shadows and glimmers of false dawn. I suspect that's wherescrambled eggs originated, from some camp like ours, settlers rushing westerly, lumberjacks hungry, hoboes lobbying for breakfast. So, coffee has made its way into poems, gatherings, memories, a time and thing not letting go, like old stories where the temporal voices have gone downhill and out of range, yet hang on for the asking.



Tom Sheehan