

## Not So Bright and Shiny

*By Pete Clark*

During my high school years my buddy Homer and I would cruise the eight blocks of Shoshoni's main drag, U.S. 26. Back and forth we would go, flipping U-turns at each end of town. Once in a while we would stop for coffee at the Snack Bar, which was an attempt to lend legitimacy to one of the most famous Houses of Ill Repute in the West, the Blue Goose, but mostly we cruised and listened to 50's Rock and Roll on KOMA in Oklahoma City or KIMN in Denver. KIMN is where I first heard about that great golden byway, Colfax Avenue.

Beaucoup years later, I worked on East Colfax Avenue, between Washington and Clarkson, as a night computer operator. I smoked back then, so after batch processing was completed, the reports and journal were printed and the first disk pack was being backed up, I would take a break. I stayed under the canopy of our drive-through for passenger unloading, which was lit up at night. Those smoke breaks provided an education as to the lives of those in the undercurrents of Denver Society, as our building was next to Miss Kitty's who specialized in pornography and prostitution and was near the Mammoth Events Center, now the Fillmore Auditorium.

I usually finished backups about 11:00pm and went home. I soon learned to lock the doors of my pickup as soon as I was behind the wheel. As I waited for the light to change at Colfax and Washington one night a woman opened the passenger side door and got in with me. Since she was going east on Colfax I dropped her off at some dive on my way home. I had several people try to get in through the driver's side door and I dragged one man into the middle of the intersection as I made the left turn.

One night a Denver Policeman stopped me and lied about one of my tail lights being out so he could run wants and warrants. It was simply harassment.

I observed meticulously costumed prostitutes arriving at Miss Kitty's in shiny limousines apparently preparing to service high dollar johns.

One summer evening a Denver Policeman drove up Washington, looking at a pimp viciously beating one of his girls in our parking lot and didn't bother to stop and assist the woman.

The most disgusting situations that I observed were the parasites who parked under our portico to sort their wares for sale to the addicts and future addicts who flocked to the noisy concerts at the Mammoth Events Center.

The most puzzling thing I saw was a well-dressed couple with a well-dressed toddler standing on the far side of Washington. When the light turned green at 16<sup>th</sup> and Washington, they would send the child into the street in the face of oncoming traffic. Fortunately the drivers refused to hit the child.

I do not miss working in the world of Colfax Avenue and Washington Street.