

That Sloshing Feeling

By Pete Clark

During the summer of 2007 I went to Shoshoni, Wyoming to check my properties. After finishing my business in Shoshoni, I drove on to Riverton. I checked into the Comfort Inn and decided to have dinner at the new Mexican Restaurant in the old railroad station at the foot of the hill on West Main.

I was drinking a beer and eating delicious food when my stomach began to feel odd. I know when I have had enough to eat when I feel full. This was not that feeling. If water is carried in a bucket, it sloshes, and that is what my stomach felt like: a bucket of water being moved by a tap-dancer. I paid my bill and headed for my temporary haven in the hotel.

Back in my room, I attempted to watch a British Sitcom, but the oscillating pressure in my stomach turned to pain reaching into my intestines. I gave up, readied myself and climbed into bed. I did not sleep at all. With the arrival of morning, I showered and dressed. In spite of the condition of my innards, I thought I would go down and have breakfast. I stepped out of the elevator, entered the lobby and sat down in the first empty chair I found. I sat there for a while, evidently looking like the epitome of misery. I was four hundred miles from home and did not know how I was going to dig my way out of the hole I was in.

A woman, who identified herself as the hotel manager, walked up and asked if I was alright. I said no and described my problem. She said she would be back in a moment and went away. She quickly returned with a woman in tow. She said her employee would drive me to the hospital. When we arrived at the hospital, the lady made sure I got inside and then went back to work.

Riverton had a nineteen-bed hospital. From one of those beds I called my daughter, Lori, in Lyman, two hundred miles away. Lori came into my room, about 1:00pm to check on me and then went to the hotel. Meanwhile a doctor came in and said I had an intestinal blockage and it would be a few days before he knew whether it would clear up on its own. He asked me to tell someone if I passed gas. Usually people know when I fart and run the other direction. Lori returned to the hospital and told me my possessions had been secured and the fully booked hotel had found a room for her.

Wednesday afternoon, the doctor told me the blockage was clearing up and I would probably be released Friday morning. With the news of my improvement, Lori left for Lyman.

Home at last, I called Choice Hotels Customer Service. The agent who took my call was flabbergasted when he learned the call was not about a complaint, but a thank you for a level of service far beyond normal business activities.