

1997 02 21 Friday**Mel Waters****Mel's Hole****MEL WATERS**

MW: (via fax) "I'm writing to you to see if I can get some help from you or your vast listening audience. I live in rural eastern Washington near the Manastash Ridge. On our property there is a hole; like the previous owners and the owners before them – we have been throwing our trash into the hole. Apparently the hole has been there as long as anybody can remember. At first I thought it was an ancient well ... anyway, the hole is nine (9) feet, nine (9) inches in diameter. There is a stone retaining wall around it, and we put a steel door on top to keep anybody from falling into it. As I said earlier: "People have been throwing their trash into the well for decades." Furniture, household trash, dead cows (!), building debris – you name it!

The thing is that I noticed that the hole never filled up. So I got curious, actually obsessed ... I began trying to measure the depth of the hole, so I emptied three (3) fishing reels of about fifteen hundred (1500) yards [sic] of monofilament [fishing line] trying to determine the depth. Soon I was buying fishing line in bulk. So far I've sunk about eighty thousand (80,000) feet of line into the hole without reaching bottom."

AB: "That's eighty thousand (80,000) feet folks!"

MW: (fax cont.) "My wife works at a local university with a geology department. We hope to get some professional scholarly help in determining the depth of the hole. As far as I can tell, there's nothing else particularly strange about the hole except for two other things:

One, dogs refuse to get within about a hundred feet of it; birds will not sit on the retaining wall or steel door. Another strange thing is there's no echo when you yell into it. None! Indeed, I've never heard anything hit bottom when tossed in. We once tossed in an old refrigerator and never heard it hit bottom – no crash, no splash, no crunch. – I hope your listeners can help with possible explanations.

I'm wondering if this – based on my measurements so far – is the deepest hole on earth? Signed, Mel Waters.

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Aud: A quick calculation about that hole in Washington – 80,000 feet of fishing line is over fifteen (15) miles deep. "Can you believe that?"

AB: "Well, I don't know if I can believe it or not – it's a very intriguing letter – there's no question about it.

Aud: "It certainly is. I think it requires some further investigation." ...

AB: "I agree with you. ... Look, I've got the guy's phone number here ..."

Aud: "Well, that needs a call back for sure."

AB: "I agree with you."

"Yeah, this is a really intriguing letter ... Mel, if you're out there, how about giving me a call? I don't think I want to call Mel at this time in the morning. ... Obviously, I'll follow up on this"

AB re-reads Mel's letter (fax). "Eighty thousand (80,000) feet – we're talking *Journey to the Center of the Earth* here ..."

MEL WATERS

AB: "Now to eastern Washington, ... Mel, are you there?"

MW: "Yes, I am."

AB: "First of all, Mel, thank you for answering. ... When did you discover this hole?"

MW: "Well, the hole has always been there. We've been out there for a couple of years now. ... The hole's been there since we've been there. It's been there since the previous owner was there. And the previous owner was quite elderly, and he was there for a good thirty (30) or forty (40) years before we moved in."

AB: "And so there's been a thing of throwing stuff down this hole for a long time?"

MW: "Oh yeah. It's been going on for as long as the hole has been there I assume. ... We take all of our trash, rubbish, anything that we have that we have to get rid of and throw it in the hole. The people from around there throw all of their stuff in the hole."

"I mean, it's just been goin' on for a long time. I got to thinking one day, how come this hole is not filling up? It must be an awfully deep hole."

AB: "It must be a good thing to consider, sure as you throw stuff in it for decades literally ..."

MW: "I used to be pretty close to a professional shark fisherman, so I had a couple of huge fishing reels, went out there, and started letting the line down ..."

AB: "Did you weight the line?"

MW: "Oh yeah – in fact, the original line is still down there – I've just been adding to the line and keeping track of how much line I've used ..."

AB: "How much weight is on it?"

MW: "There's a one pound weight at the bottom of it."

AB: "One pound weight."

MW: "It's a triangular one pound weight."

AB: "Okay. ... So in other words, it would go down kinda like a plum bob?"

MW: "Exactly, exactly! In fact, I have a rig across the center of it, so it goes straight down from the center there. ... It's not resting against anything at this point here and it continues to go down freely."

AB: "Have you ever heard anything coming from ... Any sounds or anything?"

MW: "Well, the normal thing to do is to yell into it to see if there's an echo, and I've never heard an echo ..."

AB: "No echo ..."

MW: "... come out of that thing at all!"

AB: "... at all!"

MW: That's one of the first things I noticed about it."

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MW: "As usual [tonite when Mel was out there at the hole] I brought my dogs with me, but they wouldn't go anywhere near the damn thing – they went back to the [Chevy] Suburban and hung out over there.

You know, if I try to bring them there on the leash, they'll just dig their feet in – they do not want to go anywhere near the hole."

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AB: "Well, you've got miles and miles ..."

MW: "I'm measuring it by feet – I convert feet to yards – I don't know how many miles that is ...? A fair number of miles though."

AB: "Well, five thousand two hundred and eighty (5,280) feet is a mile ... So you really think you've got eighty thousand (80,000) ...?"

MW: "Yes. ... Yeah, I get five thousand (5,000) yard spools ... I've gone through that many."

"The local university my wife works for finds it quite incredible that I've let that much line into the ground [sic], but that's what I've been doing."

AB: "Have you ever thought of winding it all back up again?"

MW: "When I let out the first fifteen hundred (1500) yards [sic] of line, I reeled all of that back in. And I wanted to know if I had hit water down there, because I thought that's a lot of feet."

AB: "You bet."

MW: "That's forty five hundred (4500) feet ... So what I did, I sent down a roll of lifesavers ..."

AB: "Lifesavers?"

MW: "Yeah, so when it hits the water, the lifesavers will dissolve ..."

AB: "Oh, I see – very smart!"

MW: "It's an old shark fisherman's trick there. We used to send our bait put on a balloon attached to a roll of lifesavers – the bait would go out into the ocean on the tide, eventually the lifesavers would melt, and the bait would fall to the bottom."

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AB: "So ... you got any guesses?"

MW: "I have no idea ... I thought it coulda been a mineshaft. The surface part of it's been very well cared for – someone built a very lovely wall around it ..."

AB: "All right, tell me about the nature of the side of the walls – in other words you must be able to look down far enough at least to examine the side of the walls."

MW: "Sure. It's stone for about fifteen (15) feet down. And then after that it's soil, dirt ... and further down rock.

But the visibility really isn't there. You cannot see much."

AB: "No matter how powerful a light, when you're talking about eighty thousand (80,000) feet, forget it."

MW: "They should have some technology that can give me a good idea of how deep this thing really is. Obviously the old fishing line method is only going to go so far."

AB: "What we need here is a volunteer (!)"

MW: (laughs).

AB: "Really, I'm serious. Somebody who would be willing to be lowered into this hole."

MW: "You know, to be honest with you, I don't know if there's even any air down that far ..."

AB: "Well, I wouldn't know that either – that's true ..."

MW: "Or what kind of pressures we're dealing with ...? You know, these are things that are totally beyond my grasp."

AB: "Do you own this property?"

MW: "It's our property, yeah."

AB: "Umm, how long have you been workin' on this?"

MW: "Well, we've been out there for a couple years – about four (4) years now ... This project here with letting down the line – that's only been since last summer here.

They [the neighbors] all know the hole out there."

AB: "They all know about it?"

MW: "Well, yeah, since they all bring their trash out there."

AB: "So the local legend of the hole?"

MW: "Yeah ...

This could be an apocryphal story: The one guy claims that he threw his departed canine down into the hole ..."

AB: "Aww ... really?"

MW: "And the story is, he swears ... the dog actually came back to him."

AB: "Really? (!)"

MW: "The story is that he was a hunter, and he was out there hunting, and he saw the same dog – he had the same collar and the same little metal thing on his collar there – and he said it was the same dog, 'cause he knew he threw his dog into the hole. Now that's not my dog ..."

AB: "It's not your story, but it's the story of a resurrected dog."

MW: "Yeah."

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AB: "If you had a fatal disease, Mel, would you jump in the hole?"

MW: "I would."

AB: "You would?"

MW: "Actually, it is in my will ..."

AB: "What!"

MW: "... should I meet my demise ..."

AB: "That you would be thrown into the hole?"

MW: "... that I be disposed of into the well. [sic]"

AB: "I'm not sure the health department would allow that."

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MW: "The water around that area is absolutely pure water."

AB: "So nothing thrown down ... has polluted the water?"

MW: “No. I can’t speak for everything that’s been thrown down there, but none of that has been showing up in the water that people draw from their wells. ... The water’s as clean as it’s ever been out there.”

AB: “Mel ... Mel, you wouldn’t be pulling my leg?”

MW: “No, I’m not.”

AB: “We have not identified specifically where it is. ... Remember, folks, this is private property.”

MW: “It is posted too.”

AB: “Oh, it is? Well there you are.”

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MW: “I’m mostly curious about the depth of it. How deep is the deepest hole that’s ever been found?”

AB: “I’ve never heard of anything deeper than this.”

MW: “I thought this was like a Guinness Book of World Records type-hole here. ... Could have been like an old mine ...?”

AB: “I’ve heard as you go down into the earth, Mel, it gets hotter, right?”

MW: “Ooh.”

AB: “So you would think that your fishing line with the weight on it at some point would melt or ... But there’s still weight on it?”

MW: “Yup. Yeah, yeah. The line is not moving freely – it still falls under its own weight.”

AB: “Oh, that’s amazing!” Let’s take some calls: “Because I just might be missing something.”

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Aud: “The Marianas Trench, which is the deepest hole we know about...”

AB: “That’s in the ocean, right?”

Aud: “Right ... is thirty six thousand (36,000) feet deep.”

AB: “So this is certainly over double that already.”

Aud: "Right. And it [the encyclopedia] also says under 'Mining' that under current technology we can only go down about sixteen hundred (1600) feet."

AB: "Wow!"

MW: "Wow! That's great! That is great!"

AB: "So you've got something here that already qualifies for Guinness."

MW: "That is wonderful! Oh gosh, I like that! That's great!" ...

AB: "All right, all right. Thank you very much for that information. So already we now learn that you may have a Guinness-qualifying hole there – no question about it."

MW: "Gee ...!"

AB: "But I want to know – inquiring minds want to know" – I would think even if we have somebody lowered down below the sixteen hundred (1600) foot mark – to see what's down there!"

MW: "That would be cool, but it wouldn't be me!"

AB: "You wouldn't do it?"

MW: (laughing) "I wouldn't go down in the hole ..."

AB: "At least not while you're still alive!" ...

MW: "What if the rope broke?"

AB: "Well, that's true."

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Aud: "You mentioned earlier that you wanted somebody to be lowered into the hole ..."

AB: "That's right."

Aud: "I would be willing to do that."

AB: "See there – a volunteer."

Aud: "Obviously under certain conditions."

AB: "Like what? (!)"

Aud: "Just a cage, for one ..."

AB: "A cage?"

Aud: "Yeah, just in the event there's some kinda weird subterranean thing eating all of this garbage down there. ... Obviously I would want to be in some kind of a cage."

AB: "Well, what makes you think though that anything that could gobble up a refrigerator ..."

Aud: "Couldn't eat the cage? Well, I would have obviously a very powerful light and I would be able to see it at some point before it's too late."

AB: "So we'd have a radio contact with you and we could hear you scream at least."

Aud: "Yeah. Yeah."

MW: "Sounds too much like *Jaws*."

Aud: "Or you could have an 'Up' button."

AB: "An 'Up' button?"

Aud: "An instant 'Up' button. On-back-up – you know, like at high speed."

AB: "You could take a camera with you, with a light and show us everything ..."

Aud: "I've got a pretty adventurous nature to me anyway ... Plus I have a very appealing draw to the supernatural for some reason." ...

AB: "Nobody's saying there's anything supernatural about this!"

Aud: "Well, the dog story would indicate something supernatural."

AB: "Well, that's true."

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Aud: "Is this possibly at a grid point on the planet?"

MW: "I wouldn't know about grid points ..."

Aud: "Art, do you know anything about the grid point area?"

AB: "Well, yes, I've heard about grid points, but I would have no way of knowing whether this is one of them – I wouldn't know!"

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Aud: Why don't you use radar to determine the depth?

AB: "Would radar go down the hole?"

Aud: "Absolutely ..."

AB: "Without hittin' the sides?"

Aud: "Radar would definitely work."

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Aud: I'm just down here in Yakima, and "I'm awful surprised I haven't heard about this before now."

AB: "Well, now Mel hasn't made this public ..."

MW: "No, it's just on my land."

AB: "Wait, wait, this is the first public announcement of the hole?"

MW: "As far as I know, there's no newspaper accounts of it."

AB: "Well, there will be now ..."

Aud: "As usual folks, you've heard it here first on Art Bell."

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AB: "I'd be interested to lower a camera and a light down." ...

MW: "It occurred to me – maybe this has some sort of astronomical type thing."

AB: "What do you mean, Mel?"

MW: "Like the various pyramids in Egypt are supposed to be lined up on various star systems or whatever ..."

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AB: "You've never felt drawn to the hole personally have you, I mean in terms of ... you know ..."

MW: "You mean in terms of some sort of 'spiritual involvement'?"

AB: "No! Suicide, Mel – suicide ..."

MW: "No ... Oh no, no! ... I mean, I keep the lid on it there because it's an attractive nuisance."

AB: "There's actually no way of knowing whether people have gone in, because they'd be gone!"

MW: "Not in my ..."

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Aud: "How much does fifteen (15) miles of fishing line weigh?"

MW: "I have no idea."

AB: "So in other words, it could have hit bottom some time ago, and the pure weight of the line ..."

Aud: "Right!"

MW: "It doesn't feel like it has reached bottom – there's no slack in the line."

AB: "But even if that's true caller, think about it – he's still got the deepest hole ever heard of in the world!"

Aud: "Yeah he does ... But the weight of the line would keep pulling the line down ..."

AB: "Yeah, yeah, there would be so much line down there by then ..."

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AB: What does the local university say to your wife?

MW: "Oh, you don't have a hole that deep ..."

AB: "So in other words, they don't believe her ...?"

MW: "No, no ..."

AB: "Mel, would you be willing to talk to newspaper people or television people? They're crazy – they'd send someone down there!"

MW: "I'm not sure I'd want to have a TV crew ..."

AB: "So you're not sure you'd want that kind of publicity?"

MW: "No. [But] I could put together a website on it ..."

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AB: "Mel lowered the lifesavers forty five hundred (4500) feet ..."

MW: "... and they came back perfectly dry."

Aud: "Once he gets a fair amount of line down there ..."

AB: "That's a good point." ...

Aud: "... the one pound weight on the end of the line is insignificant."

AB: "But even if what you're saying is true, he still put lifesavers down forty five hundred (4500) feet, so this is still by a long shot the deepest hole ever ... Ever!"

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AB: "So you would swear on what is sacred to you, that what you have told us is the absolute, unadulterated truth?"

MW: "This is my hole, and this is the truth about it!"

AB: "God, it's an amazing story, Mel ..."

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MW: "Probably a good twenty (20) people use the hole regularly."

AB: "Just throw junk into ...?"

MW: "Yeah, yeah. It's always been done."

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MW: "From the hole: Good night everyone from coast to coast."

AB: "From the high desert to the Cosmos out there – Good Night!"

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