

# The Alternative Line

by Joe Holzer for CNY-PCA Redline Report Copyright 2016 <http://www.holzerent.com>

## A Terribly Sad Day

The vast majority of we Porsche drivers would rarely be attributed as “shrinking violets”. Usually, our responses to most of life’s activities involves at least decisive decisions, even if some are later proved to be somehow wrong. I feel I am little different from that model, and I trust few who know me would argue with that assessment. Those who know me more intimately know that my life has been changed, in many ways for the negative, in the years since “The Great Recession” started. And 2016 was a culmination which has resulted in an uncharacteristic indecisiveness by me, even while I was taking aggressive steps to offset some of the negatives which life has tossed me over the past eight years.

Some background: I spent my career first becoming an experienced manufacturing engineer on the practical, vs theoretical, end of the skills spectrum, which I have addressed somewhat in prior articles. Then I worked nights to obtain an MBA, after which I sought responsibilities commensurate with those talents. That was paired with a phenomenon I suspect might have many parallels amongst my reader audience – I found myself laid off by some of America’s best companies, largely on a “last in, first out” downsizing basis which seemed to completely miss that I NEVER generated less benefit for my employer than a MULTIPLE of my cost. To this day I cannot seem to fathom the math of those choices. But they were nonetheless reality.

So, on 6/1/1986 I decided to stop kidding myself, and made a fateful decision to become an Independent Contracting individual “consultant”. The term applied is “self-employed”, which I have always found to be an absurd term; were I able to employ myself, would I EVER be working so hard? ;-). Instead, I recognized, as I suspect most of you readers do, that whomever is paying for my services is my “employer”, whatever the IRS’ definition. However, I ALSO read the rules well enough to be able to use them to my advantage, to the point that I was one of very few supporters of the losing candidate this past November who was not even slightly disturbed at the winner’s lack of income tax liabilities over the past few years. But I digress... as usual ;-)

Having made that career decision, though, along with the fact that I had been a track instructor for two years at that point, after getting my first Porsche in 1981 and putting a trailer hitch on it to allow me to pull my popup camper so I could afford that “hobby”, I decided to buy means to transport the Porsche and have lower costs for housing while allowing me to follow the old “Palladin” parallel; “Have Brain, Will Travel” to best meet clients’ needs for onsite services; my motorhome and car trailer. I used them for many contracts, eventually replacing my first “Tranny Trash” which I wrote about many years ago, which would ALMOST reach the state boundary without blowing the transmission, with my current, and far more robust, 92 Holiday Rambler Imperial Custom 34 Ft unit.

Because I owned that when my now ex wife filed for divorce, then bankruptcy just before that came through, it became my residence of choice when all THAT started with her filing for divorce on 12/24/2009. Yep. Perfect timing for a guy many friends refer to as “Santa”. And it’s all in the court papers. Anyway... No, that’s not the subject of this article’s header ;-). But it starts to explain how I went from a six figure income which put my daughter through Wellesley, and my now ex through Sage to get her NP certs, to where I find myself today, gainfully disemployed despite over 30 years of solid industrial accomplishments, and BSME and MBA degrees, and three patents, and living now on social security payments, seemingly because grey hair is antithetical to today’s business needs. But that is only a partial contributor to the subject header...

When, as the result of my first and ONLY accident where I was the “driver at fault” my 993 was damaged at WGI on 5/28/2013 while teaching a student, who subsequently asked if I would teach him AGAIN, my “insurance company” chose to ignore their contract and substitute undefined terms therein to deny my repair claims but keep my premiums since I was 16 on ALL my vehicles, combined with my economic situation caused by added “ethical people” who caused the collapse of Enron, representing 40% of the business of my then last industrial employer, GE Power, the best gig I ever had, I happened to be sans client at just the time my then wife wanted to start her own medical practice. And when she had no prior business experience, while I had setup and run multiples, I figured it was a good match for me to handle the business side while she would handle the clinical. Unfortunately, that became much of the basis for our divorce, sadly. And with the bankruptcy, I could not afford the house either, so... As an aside; should any of you readers decide to become romantically involved with me, DON’T ASK me to become involved in YOUR business. Won’t happen ;-). But even THAT was not the cause for the header...

No, another “ethical” entity, the person from whom I rent the land on which my motorhome is sited, agreed to terms whereby I would take his fallow non-working farm whose house had burned to the slab in Nov. 2011 and make it like an RV Park for year-round usage, in return for pre-paid “rent” as drawdown against that “bank” of my investment of both capital and equity, both sweat and physical, and would include my exclusive use of the two garage bays in the barn with horse stalls, whose electric doors would protect my 993 from weather. He decided my life actually looked to be livable after two years, so he would move onto the property with me, and setup an apartment in that barn. Unfortunately, as it subsequently turned out, his “ethics” are not a model to emulate, and in a fit of pique because I would not allow him to steal my SECOND Tahoe like he was stealing my first when he decided to abandon it on the side of the road, he has physically locked me out of my garage bays and storage area in the barn containing over \$10K of tools and my belongings, but which ALSO means I am unable to put the 993 in there and still have access to it either.

Calls to the Police to protect my renter rights have fallen on deaf ears, even while the thief steals my electricity, and the wheels of “justice” seem to turn pathetically slow in Oswego County – small claims filings to recover my use of what I already paid for along with renter rights as defined by the state, are STILL not resolved despite filing over six months ago, because I don’t have the wherewithal to provide full employment for the lawyer class to seek the real damages I am due. And in ANY case, when I DID hire a lawyer, for the 993 damages suit, his incompetence in advising me was legendary, to the point he refunded all I paid him. But too late to fix the car, which I wound up having to repair mechanically, albeit not cosmetically, because I HAD to in order to move in 2013.

In 2016 I started to actually see the fruits of my labors coming back – not compensation wise per se, but I had started to perform for open mic sessions, and even recorded 18 songs including a “PCA Medly” of spoof lyrics from my 2004 appearance at the “Foat Wuth” Porsche Parade on a CD which can be downloaded from my website homepage at the lower right as a 144MB Zip File. I have also been providing entertainment for Senior Lunches in many of the towns in Oswego County, and posting the charitable meals on the LocalSYR.com website to aid them in getting traffic. And I’ve been meeting more people and socializing a bit, instead of living like the hermit I otherwise am on my remote non-working farm like an RV Park for me and my thieving landlord.

No, the cause of the heading was attributed to the combination of factors – the barn lockout, the inability to replace the fabric roof on the 993 nor protect it in the garage, and the very wet October, which left enough water inside the 993 that the electrics are perhaps permanently damaged. ONLY my ability to find another garage a half hour away to put it, belonging to a friend, MIGHT allow it to recover. But so far no luck. So, even if the weather suddenly was gorgeous, I have no Porsche, something I told my divorce attorney he would never understand when he told me it was the FIRST thing I should sell, something I told my bankruptcy attorney was ESSENTIAL for me to keep, and something which is causing me to lament horribly because of a situation which has left me unable to make ANY decisions about almost EVERYTHING. So I remain in this untenable quandary, with a landlord STILL stealing my electricity, STILL threatening me with physical harm, STILL having over \$5K of MY VALUE retained in HIS PROPERTY if I simply “move” as suggested by the worthless Police, and STILL have no resolution in sight from the authorities nor court.

The header reflects the morning I discovered three inches of water in the footwell of my beloved Porsche because the rear window had torn free of the roof before three days of torrential downpour, and the dash lit up like Christmas, including the Tiptronic warning system, as it drove to the storage garage in “limp home” mode. And I am heartbroken and incapable of deciding which foot to put in front of the other, sadly. ;-(

