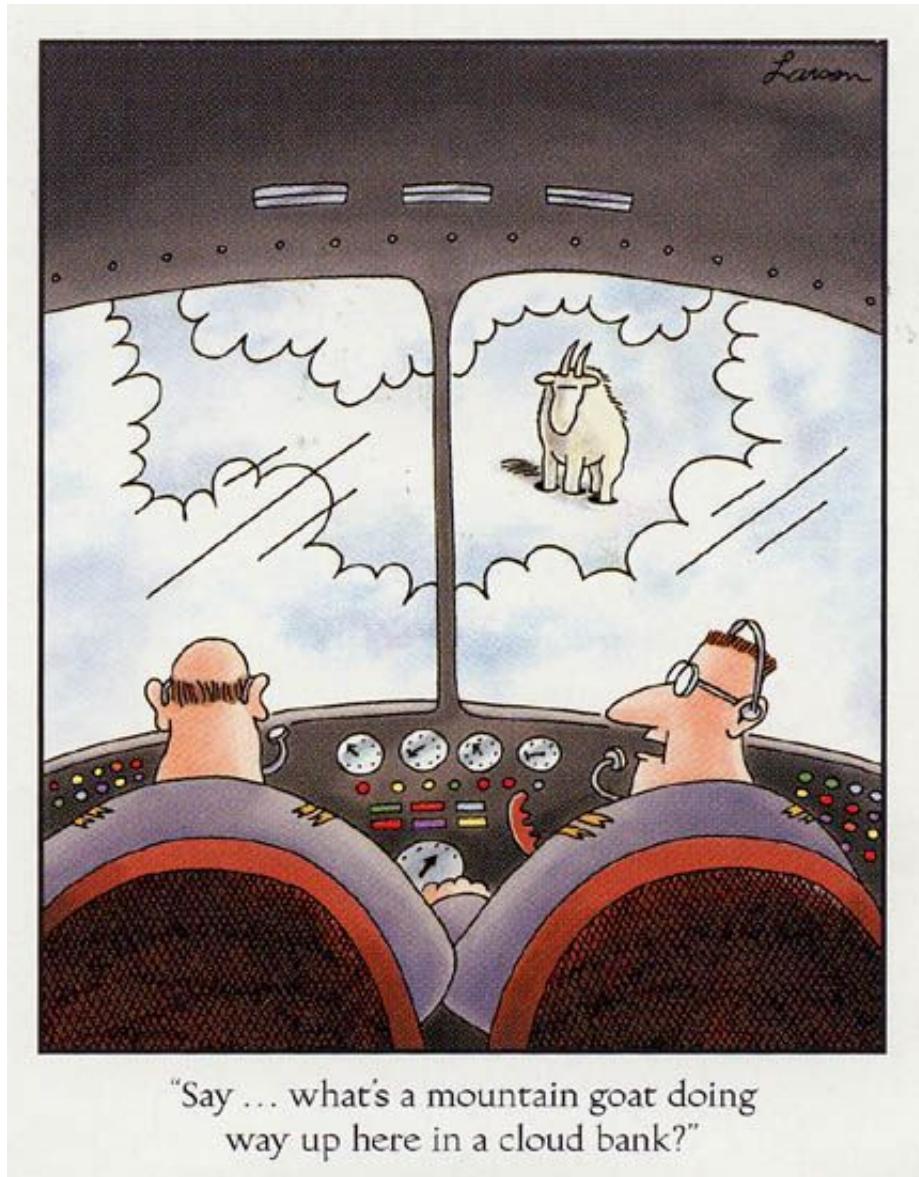


## Things found "along the way"



*But she sensed that she had stumbled into the most important work of her life.* —Nancy Koehn, describing Rachael Carson (*Forged in Crisis*, page 412)

The first time I came across the phrase “along the way,” I was studying leadership, specifically, the topic of vision. I read: Vision is often found “along the way.” That is, in the normal course of life, we can observe things that we can adopt as vision for our own lives and organizations. If we’re observant, we can benefit from the experiences of day-to-day living. It seems like an obvious, simplistic observation, but we seldom take full advantage of it.

Here are two suggestions.

### **Make sure your “along the way” remains fresh and invigorating.**

It’s easy and convenient to settle into our personalized “dog-runs.” Day after day, we do the same things, drive the same routes, talk to the same people, read from the same sources...and our “way” becomes predictable, non-stimulating, even boring. We are anesthetized by the common. Our minds enter a mental school-zone.

It’s tempting to reside in these ruts but they can lead to atrophy and stalemate. It takes initiative and effort

to press into new areas.

This is one reason I'm a huge fan of international travel; travel far from your bailiwick and you'll be forced to see things differently. Additionally, make new acquaintances; read a book written by someone you fundamentally disagree with; visit art museums; once a month, take a field trip to a place of interest you've never been to.

**When you're "along the way," observe and learn.**

Just being in an invigorating environment doesn't guarantee we'll benefit from it. We can sleep-walk through stimulating environs just like we do in our dog-runs. The phrase is "things *found* along the way" which suggest that we must be searching, observing, seeing connections, notating, and writing down impressions.

It's been said that all good ideas are borrowed and all great ideas are stolen. I don't totally endorse the statement, but I understand its veiled meaning. Some of my best ideas have been birthed "along the way." I had the vision to write a book while looking at an advertisement on a New York City subway; I had the vision for Lead Well while reading a business article in a Geneva airport; I started a successful concert series based on an experience at another venue.

View life as one continuous Easter-egg hunt. You'll be delighted at what you can discover.