Maynard News

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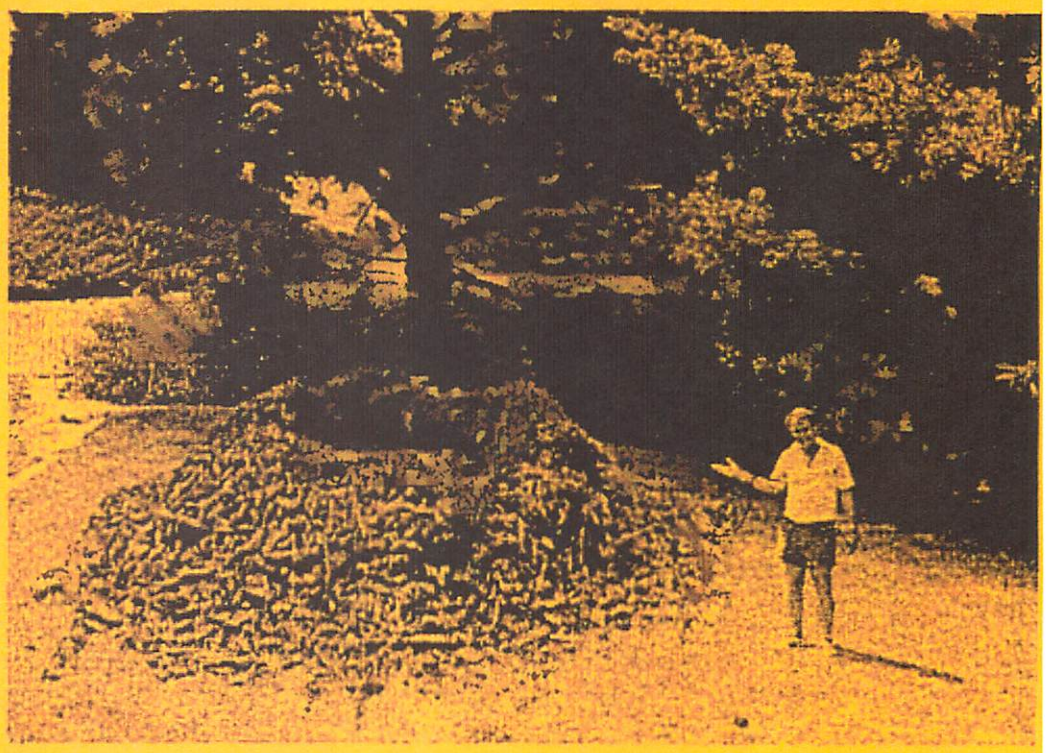
Volcano Emerges at Maynard Lake

JULY 28, 1995 —

On Saturday morning, July 15th, as I was making coffee for Barb and me, I thought I saw some smoke drifting up into the sky, just west of the house. I stepped outside and I could not believe my eyes. A huge volcano had appeared in the side yard. Well, actually it was probably small for a volcano, but in my context it was humongous.

If there were any earth tremors during the night, I guess we slept through them. We'd had a nice shrimp and pasta dinner the night before — and a fair share of wine.



I got my shoes and went out onto the rear deck. Thinking that the volcano could erupt again suddenly, I began walking toward it, slowly. Very slowly. Of course, I knew that if it really blew it could take out the whole neighborhood, if not the whole town. So I figured I may as well witness this phenomenon up close, right?

The rim of the cone was only a foot or two above my head. Through a low spot in the rim I could see what I thought was a soft, orange glow from the inside. It wasn't very windy, so the smoke was just gently rising, slightly to the north, into the trees.

All four of my neighbors were out of town, so I couldn't tell them about it. I thought about reporting it to "the authorities," but I decided to wait because if the volcano went down before they arrived they'd think I was some kind of nut. I went and got Barb. She was totally flabbergasted, didn't believe it. She kept saying I arranged for a big pile of mulch to be brought in to fool her. We managed to get a whiff of the smoke, and it was clearly something different — something we'd never smelled before. After she became properly awed and concerned instead of skeptical, we decided that — at least for today — it would be just *our* volcano.

As noon approached, the smoke began dying out and we saw signs that the volcano was actually receding a bit. So we got a little braver and a little closer.

Suddenly it hit me: "Haines, dumb-dumb, you have a camera!" (I call myself "Haines" when I'm accusing myself of being stupid.) Here I'd been looking at this thing for five hours and I hadn't taken any pictures yet. Zheesh!

We took a few pictures, finishing up the roll. On Monday I took it to One Hour Moto Photo. The kid told me that the sale price for second sets was only on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, I could get matte prints on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays and gloss prints on Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays, or something like that. I couldn't get gloss prints today, second set on sale. So I took it to Walgreens. The picture above was the best one.

By late afternoon the volcano had gone down to where it was only about four feet high, and by the next morning it was a little one-foot pile that looked like, well, a one-foot pile of mulch. Too late to show it to anyone else. But — we do have these photos as proof!