



BULL OF THE WOODS

In March of 1922, a cartoon panel entitled *Out Our Way* appeared in newspapers and consisted of a variety of subjects, including one entitled *Bull of the Woods*. *Bull of the Woods* chronicled the experiences of machinists and their boss whom they referred to as the "Bull of the Woods." Created by cartoonist J. R. Williams, *Out Our Way* became the most popular newspaper comic of the time, with 40 million readers in 1930.

In 1942, business at The Ford Meter Box Company was affected by World War II, slowing down all manufacturing. This reduced business primarily to war jobs, so John Ford began monthly mailings to keep in touch with customers. In these mailings, John wrote about traveling salesmen and their adventures. These stories from John eventually were printed on the back of J. R. Williams's *Bull of the Woods* cartoons and distributed to the Ford customer base. During that time, John's stories and the factory cartoons were a light-hearted reminder that Ford Meter Box was still alive and would resume manufacturing water products once peace returned to our nation.



Beginning with 1,350 recipients, these mailings strengthened customer relationships and marked the presence of The Ford Meter Box Company during a period when business suffered. The *Bull of the Woods* cartoons and John's stories together brought joy and hope for those in the waterworks industry. Today, these stories have evolved into *The Meter Setter* and are sent with a monthly calendar featuring articles by local historian Pete Jones to nearly 7,000 recipients.

For over 60 years, *The Meter Setter* has informed its readers of Ford products, Ford history, and stories of general interest pertaining to the waterworks industry. Although the name, format, and content has changed since John Ford wrote the first *Bull of the Woods* story, the intent has remained unchanged. The Ford Meter Box Company continues to mark its presence as a strong, reliable, and durable provider to the waterworks industry.

Click on the "Documents" tab on the Ford website to find archived *Meter Setter* publications.



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