

# Reader's digest

JULY/AUGUST 2018

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# Dear Readers

## 10 things you did not ask me about my dog but that I'll tell you anyway:

- 1) Her name is Steph Curry. Long story. Don't ask.
- 2) Well, now that you've asked, my teenage son fell in love with her as a puppy in a classmate's litter. We didn't need a dog, but he said, "I promise I'll take care of her." And his favorite athlete's name is ...
- 3) How hard are you laughing at us right now? Our 16-year-old told us "I promise," and so we said yes?
- 4) When she was a few months old, she ate a squirrel. Cost in vet bills to extract said squirrel from her stomach: \$3,000.
- 5) The squirrel was a toy squirrel (though pretty much life-size when seen in outline on an X-ray).
- 6) After that, plus the infamous "Turkish carpet incident," I decided that was it. We needed to find her another home.
- 7) Of course, by then I would have rather gone into bankruptcy than let her go. What can you say about a dog this beautiful who runs through the forest like a golden-brown leopard, stretches out in bed with us exactly like our former teenagers used to, and snaps her epic tongue at you in love?
- 8) Because I love my good girl, I am entering her in our Pet Photo Contest, which you can see on page 70.
- 9) It has come to my attention that as an employee, I'm not allowed to enter the contest.
- 10) If I had been allowed, guess who would have won?



*Steph Curry, at two, having just raced like the real Steph Curry up Mount Eisenhower in New Hampshire.*



Bruce Kelley,  
editor-in-chief  
Write to me at  
letters@rd.com.

# NEW!

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# Letters

COMMENTS ON THE MAY ISSUE

## 50 Ways to Survive the Hospital

I am a registered nurse and found your tips well defined. However, I take issue with your “How to Say It” recommendations, such as “I’m sorry, but I’m really nervous about infections. I know you are very careful, but would you mind washing your hands for me?” Why should the patient be sorry? Just say “I’m really nervous about infections. Please wash your hands, use hand sanitizer, or put on gloves.” One can make straightforward requests without being confrontational.

SUE ELLEN COLLINS, *Monrovia, Indiana*

## Everyday Heroes

Finally a Heroes story that wasn’t gory! Reading “Design for Living,” about how Nancy Ballard got some fellow artists to brighten up the chemotherapy rooms in her San Francisco doctor’s office, I was thrilled to see her idea making such a difference for people. I have been pestering one of my physicians to



have holes patched and walls repainted in her exam room. I always leave feeling disappointed that the state of her office is so far beneath the caliber of care I receive from her. So much can change with a little effort and a few cans of paint.

WENDY YECKLEY,  
*Mohnton, Pennsylvania*

## The Bell Still Tolls

I gasped in surprise as I read the name McSavaney in the short list of men from the small town of London, Ohio, who died during a war. Part of his name was even in the illustration. John McSavaney was my uncle. He was declared MIA in World War II and was finally shipped home in 1946. What a wonderful story for us to add to our genealogical journey.

CAROL LEE CHERRY, *via e-mail*

## Your True Stories

After reading “Enjoying the Quiet,” Karen Autenrieth’s story of her husband’s bucket-list parasailing experience and his surprise at how quiet it was, I can relate that it’s not just because he wasn’t wearing his

hearing aids. I took an opportunity to go up in a hot-air balloon and was equally amazed at the absence of noise. The higher we went, the quieter it became. We mortals don't realize how much noise surrounds us every day on terra firma until we get a chance to soar with the birds.

**SHERRIE FACCHINE**, *Jupiter, Florida*

### 13 Things You Didn't Know About Mother's Day

I recently told my granddaughter how we celebrated Mother's Day (and Father's Day) when I was little. My parents, my sister, and I would dress up for church, wearing roses pinned to our dresses, or in the case of our father, his suit. A red rose symbolized that your mother or father was still alive; a white one meant he or she had died. Mother, my sister, and I always wore red, but Daddy always wore white, his parents having died years before. I have noticed that not many people seem to follow this custom. Perhaps we should revive it.

**JEAN GUICE**, *Denham Springs, Louisiana*

### So You're Going to the Royal Wedding!

Suggesting conversation starters for chatting up the queen, author Andy Simmons asked, "When is a piece of wood like a queen?" To which our nine-year-old granddaughter, Caleigh, replied, "When it's made into a queen bed." Smart kid!

**DORI VROMAN**, *Vista, California*



### YOUR AHA! MOMENTS

"How to Create an Aha! Moment" sparked many of you to share your own.

Driving to my third day on a Houston jury, I realized I was truly looking forward to it and wishing I didn't have to return to work. That night I decided I would quit my bank job, get a PhD (previously only a passing fancy), and become a professor. And so I did.

**MARGARET LANGFORD**,  
*New Braunfels, Texas*

Whenever I can't think of something, I try for a while, then leave it to my unconscious mind. I'm 89 years old and figure I have a lot of debris in the attic of my brain, so it takes time to go through all those years of accumulation. Sure enough, maybe a day later, the name will just pop into my head. That keeps me from thinking I'm getting Alzheimer's.

**RUTH CEIKE MEIER**,  
*Melbourne, Florida*

### SHARE YOUR GLORY STORY

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# EVERYDAY HEROES



When his homeless patients can't get to  
a physician, he goes to them

## The Doctor Is Out

BY JIM AXELROD FROM CBS NEWS

IT'S A FRIDAY morning in Boston, which means Dr. Jim O'Connell is making his rounds. He might be more comfortable inside an exam room, but that's not where his patients are. O'Connell is one of a handful of physicians making house calls to the homeless in the city.

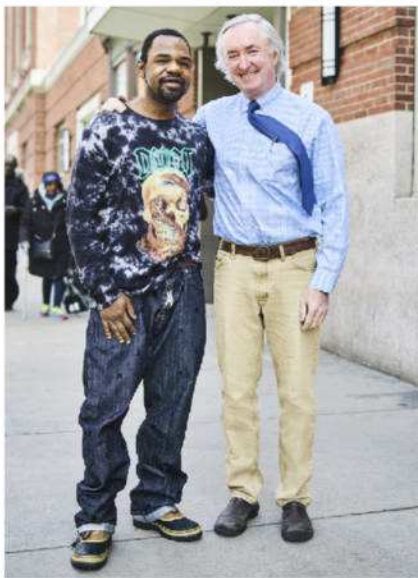
More than 550,000 Americans are homeless, and many have health problems but no access to care. O'Connell and his team, made up of psychiatrists, internists, a nurse practitioner, a case manager, and a recovery coach, are doing something about it. They spend their days

walking around where the homeless live—in parks, under bridges, and on the outskirts of town. They treat about 700 regular patients. During these rounds, O'Connell himself usually sees about 20 patients. He knows where most of them sleep and whom to ask if they are missing. "I feel like I'm a country doctor in the middle of the city, you know?" he said. ➔

*Shortly after this photo was taken, a homeless woman nearby tripped and cut her scalp. "Dr. O'Connell stepped in with a level of care and compassion that felt so gentle and nonjudgmental," said our photographer, Chris Churchill.*

MASSACHUSETTS AVE





**For O'Connell, getting to know his fellow Bostonians is the best part of the job.**

O'Connell went to Harvard Medical School and was on his way to a prestigious oncology fellowship when his chief suggested he take what was supposed to be a one-year position as the founding physician of a new health-care program for Boston's homeless. That turned into a 33-year career at the Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program, one of the country's largest of its kind.

"You realize, 'You know what, I'm just a doctor. And what I can do is I can get to know you and ease your suffering, just as I would as an oncologist,'" O'Connell said. "You could

not find a more grateful population."

And his patients *are* grateful. "This man is unbelievable!" one remarked. "He's like Jesus," another added.

O'Connell dispenses just about everything, from stitches for an arm to surgery for the soul. If patients can't be treated on the street, he finds them a treatment bed at the organization's medical respite facility, a place for patients who are too sick to be on the streets but not ill enough for a hospital stay.

"Everything I had been taught to do [in medical school]—go fast, be efficient—was counterproductive when you take care of homeless people," O'Connell told *Harvard Magazine*. "When you see somebody outside, you get them a cup of coffee and sit with them. Sometimes it took six months or a year of offering a sandwich or coffee before someone would start to talk to me. But once they engage, they'll come to you anytime because they trust you. I often say that the best training I had for this job was having been a bartender, because it's all about listening."

When asked about how his life might have turned out had he become a highly paid oncologist, O'Connell said, "I never think about it anymore."

Some things are more valuable than money. Just ask the man who gets everything from patients who have nothing material to give. **R**

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*Preston Sharp doing what he does every week—adding flags to the graves of veterans*



# Planting Patriotism

BY STEVE HARTMAN FROM CBS NEWS

YOUNG BOYS aren't easily appalled, but 12-year-old Preston Sharp sure knows the feeling.

"Yeah, I was surprised," Preston said. And disappointed.

Preston's mom, April Sharp, had never seen him like that before. "Not this angry and passionate," she said.

What upset her son so much was visiting his grandpa's grave in Redding, California, and realizing that not every veteran in the cemetery had a flag. So April told him, "Son, if you're going to complain about something, you have to do something about it or let it go."

Next thing April knew, Preston was taking on odd jobs and soliciting donations to buy flags and flowers for every veteran in his grandpa's cemetery. And when that cemetery was covered, he moved on to another, and then another.

Here we are, nearly three years and an estimated 65,000 graves later. And he does it every week, rain or shine—especially rain. "They were out there in the rain doing their job, protecting us," Preston said.

His devotion is contagious. When word gets out that Preston will be at a cemetery—he has a Facebook page, Preston Sharp/Vet flags and Flowers—folks feel compelled to join in. People like Vietnam veteran Fred Loveland. "It's amazing," Loveland said. "What he's doing brings them out because they can't believe a young man in this country is doing what he does."

It is a movement of young and old, of those who served and those who are so grateful they did, all led by a proud grandson who saw an injustice and decided to do something about it.





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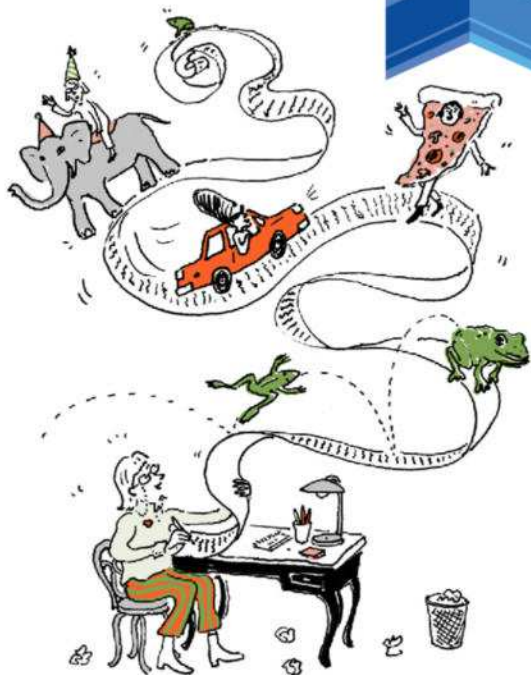


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# VOICES & VIEWS



Department of Wit

## Why I've Decided Not to Write My Memoirs

BY ARLENE AIKINS



ARLENE AIKINS was a proud mother of two, grandmother of six, and great-grandmother of 12, and a lifelong writer.

**A NOTE ABOUT THE AUTHOR** (by her granddaughter, network news producer Allison Arlene Hansen):

*Not long before she died, I sneaked away for a Grandma sleepover. A character who was always full of surprises, she motioned me to her beloved writing desk—black with gold chinoiserie and a white leather top. “That’s yours,” she said. “You’re a writer, like me. You get the purple box inside too.” I opened the box to find stacks of her stories, some sweet, some adventurous, some droll—just like her. This one, an amusing look back written when she was in her 70s, shows her fondness for the unexpected path. ➤*

Dear Children,

As you know, for years I've planned to write up the memories I've been saving on scraps of paper since you were young. I've kept them put away in safe places, like memory hooks holding on to funny remarks and actions.

"Guess Who Gets to Keep the White Rat for the Summer?" was one of my favorites.

And the one about the frog we planned to train for the Frog Jump at the Calaveras County Fair until your father hit it with the lawn mower while he was mowing the backyard. (My training as a nurse came in handy when I was called to splint its leg with a Popsicle stick.)

And the one about the baby alligators who lived in our backyard pond.

We do have an interesting history with animals, don't we?

Now that you are grown and off having adventures with your own children, I've enrolled in a memoir-writing class. You know what? It's such a struggle!

I wake up in the middle of the night with just the right thought in my mind. Grabbing notepaper and pen, I go in the bathroom and write it down. Great! I don't want to lose that, and in the morning it may be gone.

But I'm having trouble getting back to sleep these days and find myself nodding off in my chair after dinner.

I also tend to pick at a certain area of my head when I'm searching for exactly the right phrasing. It seems to me the hair is a little thinner now in that one area.

I spend a great deal of time staring out the window in contemplation. I've noticed I'm having a wee bit of trouble sometimes getting my eyes to focus again, and once in a while I get a little twitch in the left eye.

I also carry around a notebook in my purse to capture the thoughts I'm coming up with during the day when I'm driving around or at the grocery store. The notebook takes up so much space in my purse!

It's great to have pictures to illustrate the writings—they add so much. But in finding just the right ones, I have to search around through all the boxes, and the house is in disarray. In fact, I'm becoming a little bit absentminded, I have to admit, from all this creative concentration. I forgot to turn on the coffee-pot the other morning, and yesterday the potatoes burned when I was writing down this great description that came to me out of the blue at dinnertime.

Your dad is supportive, but it's a mistake to let him read my articles while I'm composing them, I find. Last week he very nicely said, "I don't like the way this sounds. Why don't you say so-and-so?" and I didn't handle it too well. In fact, I said, "Please! I read this in class,

and they thought it was good. I'm not changing it."

We are encouraged to be original, so instead of writing "I remember," I said something like "The long-dormant brain cells were activated again," and he said, "That's corny. Why don't you say 'sweet memories'?" To which I replied, "We're supposed to be original. 'Sweet memories'—that's so everyday." Later I decided it sounded ridiculous. But the right expression came—during the night. Naturally I jumped up and got it written just the way I wanted.

It's all sort of an exquisite torture, as the expression goes. I'm walking around with dark circles underneath puffy eyes.

So, my dears, I've decided it's fun to write and relive all the memorable times I've enjoyed in my life and to share the happy days of your growing-up years. But I think at my age, I need

my rest. And frankly, I think your dad misses me watching those great PBS shows and National Geographic specials on TV with him. He says he's lonesome. Enjoy the ones I've written because I've decided not to write any more memoirs.

Love, Mom



*Two generations of writers: granddaughter and grandmother*

## EPILOGUE

*When Grandma gave me those stacks of handwritten stories in the magic lavender box, many of which I'd never read, on top was a letter addressed to "Editor of Reader's Digest." Grandma explained that she had written that letter a hundred times. But she'd never sent it, and though*

*many of her stories made it into her local paper, her life's dream remained to be published in the magazine. After she passed away at 94, I made it my life's dream, too, and sent her work to Reader's Digest. You made it, Grandma!*

**R**



## THE LOW-WATER MARK

When I was a tour guide at Niagara Falls, the most common question was "What time do they turn the water off?"

 @CHRISDOBMEIER

The car accident marred one teenager's face, but it left no scratch on a friendship

# The Gift of Forgiveness

BY JAMIE QUATRO FROM O, THE OPRAH MAGAZINE



JAMIE QUATRO teaches at Sewanee: The University of the South. Her first novel, *Fire Sermon*, is available now.

THE SUMMER I TURNED 16, my father gave me his refurbished '69 Chevy Malibu convertible. Cherry red, chrome accents, V-8 engine—a gift wasted on me at that age. What did I know about classic cars? The important thing was that Hannah and I could drive around Tucson with the top down.

Hannah was my best friend, a year younger but much taller, almost five foot ten. “Hannah’s a knockout,” my mother always said. And sure enough, that summer she signed with a modeling agency. She was already doing catalog and runway work.

A month after my birthday, Hannah and I went to the movies. On the way home, we stopped at the McDonald’s drive-through, putting the fries on the seat between us to share. “Let’s ride around awhile,” I said. It was a clear night, oven-warm, full moon slung low over the desert. Taking a curve too fast, I hit a patch of dirt and fishtailed. I then plowed through a neighbor’s landscape wall and drove into a full-grown palm. The front wheels came to rest halfway up the tree trunk.

French fries on the floor, the dash, and my lap. An impossible amount of blood on Hannah’s face, flaps of skin hanging into her eyes. They took us in separate ambulances. In the



ER, my parents spoke quietly: Best plastic surgeon in the city. End of her modeling career.

We'd been wearing lap belts, but the car didn't have shoulder harnesses. I'd cracked my cheekbone on the steering wheel; Hannah's forehead had split wide open on the dash. What would I say to her?

When her mother, Sharon, came into my hospital room, I started to cry, bracing myself for her anger. She sat beside me and took my hand. "I rear-ended my best friend when I was your age," she said. "I totaled her car and mine."

"I'm so sorry," I said.

"You're both alive," she said. "The

rest is window dressing." I started to protest, and Sharon stopped me. "I forgive you. Hannah will too."

Sharon's forgiveness allowed Hannah and me to get back in the car together that summer, to stay friends throughout high school and college, to be in each other's weddings, and to watch my four teenagers fawn over her three younger children. I think of her gift of forgiveness every time I'm tempted to resent someone for a perceived wrong. And whenever I see Hannah. The scars are so faded no one else would notice, but in the sunlight I can still see the faint shimmer just below her hairline—for me, an imprint of grace. **R**



FINISH THIS SENTENCE

# The one thing I never go

## A can of smoked oysters

from Trader Joe's in case I get hungry on the plane.

**BERTI KLEIN**

Los Angeles, CA

Prescott, AZ

## A small Swiss Army knife.

I broke the knife blade off so it would pass through airport security, but I've used the other tools on it many times.

**SUSAN FLADAGER**

Leadville, CO

## Aloe.

My husband always gets sunburned.

**ROBYN GAYLORD**

Kearney, NE

## A container of Clorox wipes.

Hotel rooms (especially TV remotes) can be nasty!

**MELISSA PRESSER**

## My acrostic puzzles.

They keep my mind occupied and let me relax at the same time.

**LIZ BRIGGS**

## Toe tape for dancers.

A blister from walking can ruin everything.

**PAMELA MARTIN**

# on vacation without is ...

## My lavender essential oil.

It helps me relax and fall asleep when I'm away from home.

MARCIA LEE

## Bail money.

MARY VENIS

St. Paul, MN

Neenah, WI

Huntley, IL

Streetsboro, OH

New York, NY

Windsor Mill, MD

## A corkscrew.

There's nothing worse than having a nice bottle of wine on vacation with no way of pulling the cork.

MICHAEL FAHEY

## Cash.


I keep a \$20 bill under the insoles of both my shoes. I could be stranded somewhere without any of my things, but at least I'd have some money.

KATHERINE LORENCZ

## My Imodium tablets.

Better safe than sorry!  
DENISE ODEN

New Orleans, LA

 Join our Inner Circle Community at [tmbinnercircle.com](http://tmbinnercircle.com) for the chance to finish the next sentence.

# Your True Stories

IN 100 WORDS

## GOD'S BUBBLE BATH

**P**acific Northwest beaches occasionally have unusual quantities of sea-foam, which forms because of large algal blooms, storms, and dissolved matter from marine plant life. On one foamy day, my husband and I left Portland with our two kids, then ages six and four, to go to the beach. As soon as our car crested a dune, we got our first glimpse of the shoreline. "Look, Mommy," our four-year-old shouted excitedly. "God put bubble bath in the ocean!"

—**AVERIL MCALLISTER**, *Wilsonville, Oregon*

## THE FRIENDLIEST SKIES

**I** flew standby on a cross-country flight piloted by my older brother. Of course, my seat was way in the back of the plane, and I managed to whack every elbow on my slow hike up the aisle. People glared. Soon my brother's voice filled the air: "This is your captain speaking. The last passenger on this flight was my sister. This will be the fastest, smoothest,



safest flight ever. So sit back, relax, and don't worry, because if anything happens to my sister, our mother will kill me." People applauded. It was the best flight ever.

—**LANEY WILKINS**,  
*Roswell, New Mexico*

## TABLE HOPPER

**W**hen my husband and I go to our favorite restaurant for lunch, he often rejects the first and sometimes the second table we're given. I've never understood why, but after 30 years, I am used to it. Recently, he accepted the first booth the hostess offered. Moments later, he said, "I don't want to sit here." A waitress moved us to a corner booth ten feet away. As I opened my mouth to ask why we needed to move, a car crashed through the restaurant, destroying the booth we'd just moved from. I'll always sit wherever he wants to sit.

—**LINDA BROWN**, *Loganville, Georgia*

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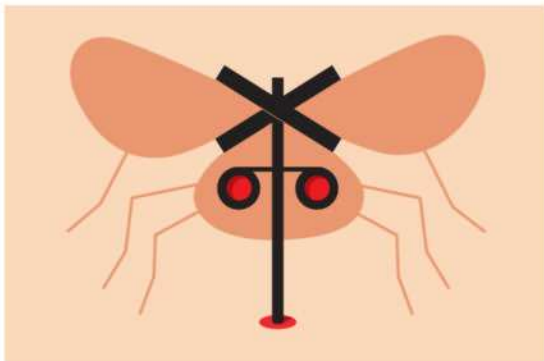


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Is a railroad company responsible for keeping insects away from its employees?

# The Case of the Mosquito-Bitten Worker



BY VICKI GLEBOCKI

EVERY MORNING when William Nami and his crew stepped out of their truck to repair and replace the rail line in Sweeny, Texas, they were swarmed and bitten by mosquitoes. It shouldn't have been a surprise; Sweeny had long ago christened itself "the mosquito capital of the world." Still, those working on the job from July to October 2008 amid tall grasses were basically a buffet for the mosquitoes, especially after September 13, when Hurricane Ike blew through and left pools and puddles everywhere. It didn't help that the door on the cab of the tamping machine, where

58-year-old William spent his days leveling the track and packing the crushed stones that lay underneath the tracks, didn't close completely and there were holes in the floor. He could never escape the bugs. William reported the problems to his supervisor at Union Pacific Railroad, where he'd worked for 32 years, but he says the company didn't repair them, mow the grass along the railroad tracks, or provide bug spray.

On October 22, William's daughter Sarah Nami found her father slumped over on the couch at home. He was sweating and mumbling ➡➡



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incoherently, and he had a fever of 103. Sarah called her mother, who rushed home from work, and together they lifted William off the couch and got him to the emergency room. After many tests, William was diagnosed with West Nile virus, an infectious disease spread by mosquitoes that can develop into a potentially life-threatening neurological infection. As a result, he developed encephalitis and has suffered permanent damage, including cognitive impairment, muscle weakness, and decreased kidney function. He can no longer work.

In 2012, William sued Union Pacific under the 1908 Federal Employers' Liability Act, which protects railroad workers hurt on the job. He claimed the company was negligent for not providing him a safe work environment. Union Pacific argued that since 2002, the company had held several safety meetings and sent a bulletin to employees about the threat of West Nile (which William said he'd never received and knew nothing about). Plus, it was impossible to tell whether the mosquito that infected William bit him at the work site in Sweeny or at his home, at a football game, or, really, anyplace he went outdoors during his time on that job.

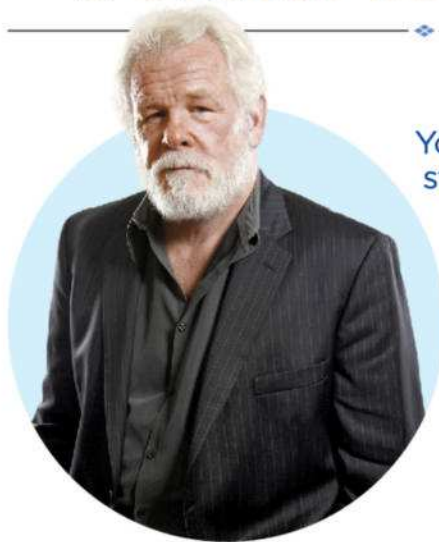
***Was Union Pacific negligent because it didn't protect an employee from mosquitoes? You be the judge.***



## THE VERDICT

No, it was not. A jury in the District Court of DeWitt County did find that Union Pacific was negligent and deserved 80 percent of the blame for William Nami's illness. (It ruled that William himself was 20 percent to blame because he didn't try to mitigate the problem with bug spray or long-sleeved shirts.) William was awarded \$752,000 in damages, and Texas's 13th Court of Appeals upheld that ruling. But the Supreme Court of Texas overturned those rulings. It cited a common law doctrine called *ferae naturae*, which states that a landowner is not liable for the acts of wild animals on the owner's property if the owner hasn't attracted the animals on purpose. The court decided that the law applied to business owners as well. "There is no evidence that Union Pacific could have done anything to prevent mosquitoes throughout the area from being around its siding and tracks," explained the Supreme Court on June 24, 2016. Further, "Union Pacific did nothing to attract mosquitoes, indigenous to ... all South Texas." "Basically," says the railroad's attorney, Bob Burns, "the railroad couldn't be found to be negligent for the actions of mosquitoes." **R**

# Points to Ponder



Your life should be full of stories. Sometimes they're funny, and sometimes they're outrageous. Sometimes you can't comprehend them, and sometimes they're painful ... But the more you get hit, the more fun it's going to be.

**NICK NOLTE**,  
actor, in *Men's Journal*

**ONE OF THE BEST** feelings is when you know that luck didn't play a role in your success. Doing work eliminates the need for luck. I'm not lucky; I just took the stairs.

**LILLY SINGH**,  
*YouTube performer*,  
in her book, *How to Be a Bawse*

**NOT MUCH HAPPENS** when we're in our comfort zone. I hear people say, "But I'm concerned about security." My response to that is simple: "Security is for cadavers."

**BOB PARSONS**,  
*entrepreneur*, on bobparsons.com

**WE SCIENTISTS** have found that doing a kindness produces the single most reliable momentary increase in well-being of any exercise we have tested.

**MARTIN SELIGMAN**,  
*psychologist*, in his book *Flourish*

**THERE WILL ALWAYS** be folks hard-selling you the life of the few: the private schools, private planes, private islands. They are trying to convince you that hell is other people. Don't believe it. We are far more frequently each other's shelter and correction.

**ZADIE SMITH**,  
*writer*, in a commencement speech

# Life

IN THESE UNITED STATES



**AS MY TWO SONS** were climbing into the back seat of our car, Eric, five, yelled, “I call the left side!”

That didn’t sit well with Ron, four.

“No, I want the left side!”

“I want the left side!”

“No, I want the left side!”

Intervening, I said, “Since Eric is older, he can have the left side.”

“Thanks, Dad!” said Eric. “Which side is left?”

**JOSH WESTON**, *Montclair, New Jersey*

**MY HUSBAND AND I** were day-dreaming about what we would do

if we won the lottery. I started: “I’d hire a cook so that I could just say, ‘Hey, make me a sandwich!’”

Thomas shook his head. “Not me. I already have one of those.”

**JULIE PHELAN**, *Cincinnati, Ohio*

**I WAS ADMIRING** my aunt’s necklace when she surprised me by announcing, “I’m leaving it to you in my will.”

I was overjoyed, perhaps too much. “Oh!” I shouted. “I’m looking forward to that!”

**MONA RANDEM**, *North Chicago, Illinois*

**YOU KNOW HOW** some TV news stations will caption a story to better explain it? These news captions could use their own captions:

- “Wife stabs husband with squirrel”
- “Will high gas prices cost your kids their educaiton?”
- “Inmate overdoses on underwear”
- “Man killed to death”

Sources: Bay News 9, Fox News, LEX 18, and WBTV

**I ASKED MY** 91-year-old father, “Dad, what were your good old days?”

His thoughtful reply: “When I wasn’t good, and I wasn’t old.”

F. M., via rd.com

**THE FIRST THING** I did when I heard our great-granddaughter was born was to text my son: “You are a great uncle!”

He texted me back immediately: “Thank you. What did I do?”

PEGGY KLASSE, *Westbrook, Minnesota*

**OVERHEARD:** My 15-year-old niece fighting with her friend. “You think I can’t live without you? Who do you think you are, my phone charger?”

🐦@ERUM\_SANGJI (HASEENA GOLIMAAR)

**I ASKED A FRIEND** in Seattle what the difference was between a state like Washington and one like Florida. He shrugged. “Apples and oranges.”

JOHN FRIES, *Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania*



## SURVEY SAYS!

Name actual responses to prompts on *Family Feud* that are so ludicrous they no doubt started real family feuds.

Answer: These.

**Q:** Name a type of foreign money.

**A:** Monopoly.

**Q:** Name a farm animal that the farmer may grow so fond of, he might not want to eat it.

**A:** Dog.

**Q:** Name a place where you might see another person take off all their clothes.

**A:** The mall.

**Q:** Name something a duck and a chicken have in common.

**A:** They both quack.

**Q:** Name a place where it’s smart to know where the exits are.

**A:** Church.

**Q:** If someone tells you a secret, how many people do you tell?

**A:** Five.

**Q:** Name something you eat too much of.

**A:** Food.

Source: stupidgsa.com

Got a funny story about friends or family? It could be worth \$\$\$\$. For details, see page 3 or go to [rd.com/submit](http://rd.com/submit).





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# ART *of* LIVING

## The Best Family Vacation Ever

A mother learns to forget the snags and snipes. The journey is as memorable as the destination.

**BY HEIDI STEVENS**  
FROM THE *CHICAGO TRIBUNE*

PHOTOGRAPH BY MATTHEW COHEN



✪ TRAVELING WITH KIDS is 90 percent reminding yourself to live in the moment and 10 percent vowing to never again leave your house.

I have an uncanny ability to forget this as soon as we return home from a trip and I've finished washing our 74 loads of laundry (guys, did we bring home other people's suitcases too?) and we've settled back into a routine and looked through our vacation photos and started feeling nostalgic for the place we just left.

Family travel is like childbirth, I suppose. Painful, loud, messy, sort of awful, actually, but also spectacular. And you remember only the spectacular—until you're back on a plane bound for someplace new and your kids are fighting over who gets the aisle seat while irate passengers bore actual holes in your clothing with their eyes, which is fine because you could use the ventilation since you're sweating from shouldering all six carry-ons. Then you remember the bad stuff.

Or maybe that's just me?

It was me last weekend when my kids and I flew to Texas for my daughter's trampoline and tumbling competition, plus a couple of side trips. We would tour the Dallas Cowboys' stadium. We would visit Waco's Magnolia Market, made

famous by HGTV's *Fixer Upper*. We would play outdoor mini golf in January.

We would have nothing to complain about! We would be leaving behind school and work for a hotel pool and Texas-shaped waffles and wall-to-wall fun!



*We made our memories at the tail end of a very long day, in a tiny pool near a Texas airport.*

And yet—we found things to complain about. And by we, I mean two of us. And by two of us, I mean the other two.

The pool was bigger in that other hotel! That's not how you play Uno! Why do you get to shower first? They call this coffee!?! (That last one may have been me.)

Luckily, I'd packed my metaphorical coat of armor. I've learned to put it on as soon as we land somewhere, and it forces complaints to bounce off me and land in a pile at my feet. I shrug. I grin. I'm like the shruggie emoji.

For three days, genuine fun was had, frivolous complaints were lodged and ignored, and more genuine fun was had. Until it was time to return the car, hop a plane, and fly home.

Except our flight was canceled. And so was the flight after that. (Fog in Chicago.) And once that airline resumed flying, there would be no room on any of its flights for another 21 hours.

We spent the next couple of hours securing seats for the next evening, tracking down our already-checked bags, and finding a hotel room.

We hit the hotel pool before bed. We swam well into the night, my kids making up songs and singing and jumping and gasping for air from giggling so hard at their own goofy lyrics and their crazy good fortune to be swimming at 10:30 on a school night.

And that was when it hit me that family travel is all those things I said before, but it's also a lot more.

It's taking your kids to parts of the world that will open their eyes and their minds and finding that,



actually, yours need opening too.

It's discovering that things don't have to go right to go well.

It's remembering that joy and memories are where you make them, not where you find them. My kids made them at the tail end of a very long day, in a tiny pool near a Texas airport. So I did too. **R**

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## 3 EASY WAYS TO ADD JOY TO YOUR TRIP

Leo Babauta at zenhabits.com specializes in mindfulness training, and his pointers for de-stressing daily life are especially helpful when applied to traveling with the extended family.

► **Put space between things.** Don't schedule items on your itinerary close together. A vacation isn't a race, and you can leave some breathing room in your schedule. That will help everyone relax, especially if one stop on your tour takes longer than expected.

► **Spend at least five minutes each day doing nothing.** Just sit in silence. Become aware of your thoughts. Notice the world around you without worrying about moving through it and on to the next thing. One good place: in a chair by the window in a hotel room.

► **Eat slowly.** Food can be crammed down your throat, but where's the joy in that? Savor each bite, and take in the surroundings while you're at it. You'll even eat less. (Imagine that: a vacation where you don't gain weight.)

Maybe you don't need your oil changed so soon after all

# Car-Care Myths

FROM THE FAMILY HANDYMAN

**“Premium fuel helps performance.”**

Premium gas won't make a difference in any normal vehicle. Only cars built for less combustible fuel need it. Your manual will tell you if premium is required or just “recommended,” in which case you can skip it and save.

**“I'll get more gas if I fill up in the morning.”** The temperature of gasoline doesn't change much when the air is cooler, so you aren't saving any money by filling up in the cold.

**“Electric cars are more likely than conventional cars to catch fire.”**

While there had been some concern that the battery in hybrid and electric cars might catch fire after a crash, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration issued a report stating these vehicles do not pose a greater risk of fire than gas-powered ones.

**“I have to change the oil every**

**3,000 miles.”** You can actually wait much longer. Most modern cars can go 7,500 miles or more without fresh oil. Check your car's manual for the proper maintenance schedule.

**“Well, I might as well change my coolant fluid and air filters when I do get my oil changed.”** The mechanic may recommend you change these out “while they're at it,” but it could be a waste. Again, check your manual.

**“Driving with my tailgate down reduces drag on my truck, making it more fuel efficient.”** The TV show *MythBusters* tested this theory and found that trucks had more drag with the tailgate down than up. To really improve efficiency, replace the tailgate with mesh. R





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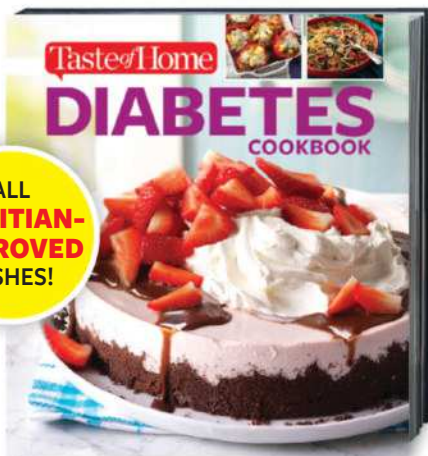
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It is more a measure of your borrowing than of your overall financial health

# Why I Stopped Worrying About My Credit Score

BY HOLLY JOHNSON

FROM THE SIMPLE DOLLAR.COM

IF YOU BELIEVED everything you read about your credit score, you'd think it was the most important component of your financial health. Without a good credit score and history, the experts say, it's more difficult to qualify for a mortgage or a car loan—and more expensive if you're approved for a loan, too, because you won't get the best interest rates. In many states, bad credit can even raise your insurance premiums, cost you a rental apartment, or make it harder to get hired.

While all of that is true, it doesn't tell the whole story.

First off, there are several credit scores out there. While it's important



to nurture your credit scores by using credit responsibly, your FICO credit score may not be the same as what VantageScore reports, and lenders may use a different one entirely, so obsessing over one score can be a fruitless exercise.

More important, as financial reporter Dave Ramsey notes on his blog ([daveramsey.com](http://daveramsey.com)), your credit score is not a measure of your overall financial health. "All it tells you is whether you are good at borrowing money and paying it back. That's it," he writes.

FICO, the most popular credit-scoring agency, uses several weighted factors to determine your credit score, including payment history (35 percent), amounts owed (30 percent), length of credit history (15 percent), new credit (10 percent), and credit mix (10 percent). Believe it or not, these criteria allow you to be penalized for becoming debt-free!

My husband and I enjoyed steady credit scores above

820 for a while. But when we paid off one of our rental properties in 2017, we both saw our credit scores fall by 20 or more points. The sudden drop took place because we completed a 15-year loan and reduced the average length of our credit history tremendously. In other words, because we paid off and closed a line of credit, our scores took a hit.

That's a racket if I've ever heard one. I would rather be debt-free than have a perfect credit score.

I do track my score and new accounts opened on [creditkarma.com](http://creditkarma.com)—which is free—but that's mostly just to prevent fraud and identity theft, not to judge my score.

Your credit score is certainly important when you're starting out and likely to borrow money for a down payment on a home or some other big purchase. But once you're fairly established financially, it's much easier to see it for what it really is: a measure of how well you borrow money. **R**



**HOLLY JOHNSON**  
*is an award-winning personal finance writer and the author of **Zero Down Your Debt.***

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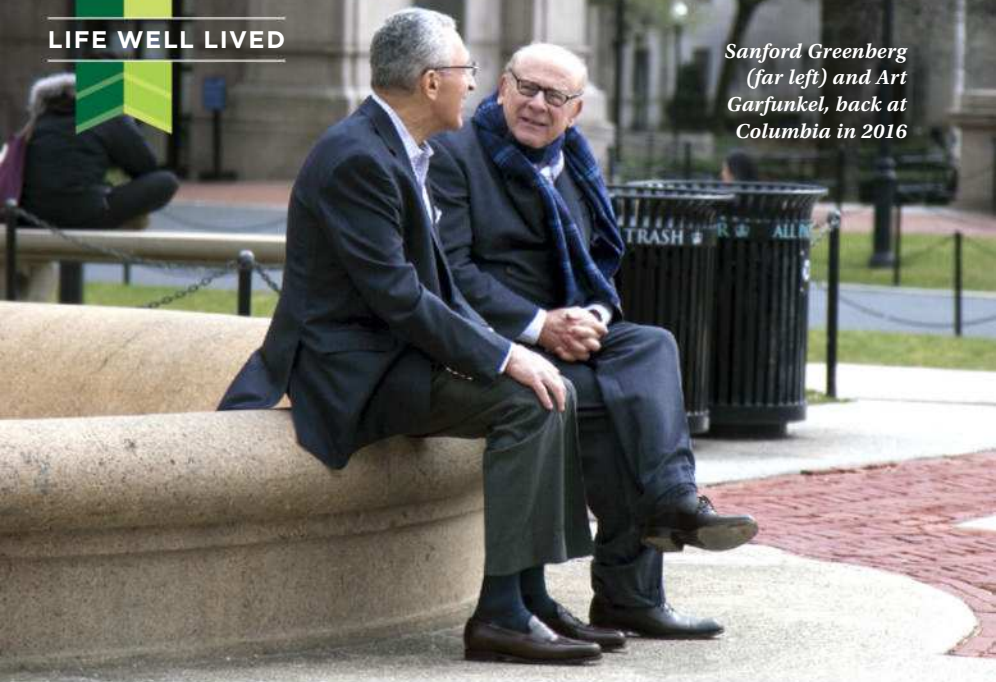


## BEWARE THE ETERNAL BAD HAIR DAY

Make good choices because ghosts are stuck with the haircut they died with.

 @SGTCURRYPANTS

Sanford Greenberg  
(far left) and Art  
Garfunkel, back at  
Columbia in 2016



As a man goes blind, his friend watches his back

## His Bridge Over Troubled Water

BY PAUL HOND FROM COLUMBIA MAGAZINE

ONE DAY during his freshman year at Columbia University, Sanford “Sandy” Greenberg, class of 1962, stood on campus by a grassy plot with his classmate Arthur Garfunkel. “Sanford, look at that patch of grass. You see the colors? The shapes? The way the blades bend?” Garfunkel asked.

Greenberg was smitten. Other guys

talked about girls and sports, but Garfunkel wanted to talk about ... a patch of grass!

Was there a luckier guy on campus than Greenberg? Here he was, a poor kid from Buffalo, New York, on full scholarship, taking classes from superstars such as anthropologist Margaret Mead, physicist Leon

JEFFERY SAKS



Lederman, historian James Shenton, and poet Mark Van Doren. And he had a great new pal, a brainy kid from New York City with a pure tenor voice.

But in the summer of 1960, just before junior year, Greenberg's fortune changed. He was in Buffalo, playing baseball, when his vision "steamed up." He had to lie down on the grass until the clouds went away. The doctor said it was allergic conjunctivitis.

Back at school that fall, Greenberg had more episodes, but he didn't tell anyone. He didn't believe it was anything serious. Still, his roommates—Garfunkel and Jerry Speyer—saw that he was having trouble.

On the first morning of finals, Garfunkel escorted Greenberg to University Gym, where exams were held. Greenberg started writing at 9 a.m. By 10:30, he couldn't see a thing. He lurched to the front of the gym and handed his blue book to the proctor.

"I can't see, sir," he said.

The proctor laughed. "I've heard some terrific excuses," he said, "but that's the best."

Greenberg went back to Buffalo, where he received another diagnosis:

glaucoma. That winter, doctors operated on Greenberg's eyes. The surgery didn't work. Greenberg was going blind. He was so depressed that he refused to see anyone from college.

But Garfunkel went up to Buffalo anyway.

"I don't want to talk," Greenberg said.

"Sanford," said Garfunkel. "You must talk."

Garfunkel persuaded Greenberg to go back to Columbia and offered to be his reader.

In September 1961, Greenberg returned to campus. Garfunkel, Speyer, and a third friend read textbooks to him, taking time out from their

own studies, and Greenberg ended up scoring straight A's. Still, he was tentative about getting around alone and relied on his friends to help him.

Then, one afternoon, Greenberg and Garfunkel went to Midtown Manhattan. When it was time for Greenberg to go back to campus, Garfunkel said he had an appointment and couldn't accompany him. Greenberg panicked. They argued, and Garfunkel walked off, leaving Greenberg alone in Grand Central Terminal. Greenberg, bewildered,



*The two friends during their college days, in the early '60s*



stumbled through the rush-hour crowd. He took a shuttle train west to Times Square, then transferred to an uptown train. Four miles later, he got off at the Columbia University stop. At the university's gates, someone bumped into him.

"Oops, excuse me, sir."

Greenberg knew the voice. It was Garfunkel's. Greenberg's first reaction was rage, but in the next second, he realized what he had just accomplished—and realized, too, who had made it possible.

"It was one of the most brilliant strategies," Greenberg says. "Arthur, of course, had been with me the whole way."

After graduation, Greenberg got his MBA from Columbia and a PhD from Harvard. He married his girlfriend, Sue; was a White House fellow in the Johnson administration;

and went on to become a successful inventor and businessman.

Garfunkel went on to become Art Garfunkel.

Recently, Greenberg recalled Garfunkel reading him *Our Town*, which, he says, was their "manual for living." The play's message is that humans, caught up in daily concerns, fail to appreciate life's beauty and preciousness. "That's all human beings are!" says the character Emily Webb Gibbs, a dead woman looking down upon the living and astonished by their folly.

“  
***Greenberg's first  
reaction was  
rage, but then  
he realized what  
he had just  
accomplished.***”

"Just blind people!"

Not Greenberg. He sees everything, sings every blessing, great and small: from the love of his family and friends to the dew-dappled grooves of a blade of grass.

"You are talking," he says today, "to the luckiest man in the world." **R**

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## BIG DAM DEAL

At roughly 2,790 feet long, the world's largest known beaver dam (discovered by satellite imagery in Canada's Wood Buffalo National Park) is more than twice the width of the Hoover Dam.

Source: *National Geographic*

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Slow cookers and blenders are designed to be easy, but you still need the proper tools and techniques

# Error-Free Ways to Use These Kitchen Appliances

BY MARISSA LALIBERTE

## Microwave

Container shape is key when it comes to reheating food. The corners of rectangular containers usually attract more energy than other areas, leaving the food in those spots overcooked. A round container, on the other hand, allows food to reheat more uniformly. And don't add seasonings until you're done nuking the meal. Microwave energy is drawn to salt, so a seasoned top will collect heat and leave the outer layer of your food dry. If you'd rather add salt first, stir it in thoroughly.

## Oven Broiler

Keeping the door of your oven closed allows heat and steam to build up, which is ideal for baking—but not for broiling. Venting the steam helps broiled food develop the crustiness you're going for; the escape of hot air also means you'll be cooking mostly

the top of the dish rather than baking (or overbaking) the whole thing. Check your oven's manual first, though. Some ovens are designed for open-door broil, but escaped heat could damage the knobs on others.

## Slow Cooker

Truly trapped heat that cooks the food unabated over several hours is the trick here. Opening the lid lets that heat out and could mean that your dish won't be done when you'd planned. Resist the temptation to take a quick look or give it a stir until there's less than an hour to go; as long as your pot is between half and three-quarters full, the dish will finish cooking just fine.

## Dishwasher

There really is a science to stacking. A British study found that the middle of the racks in the dishwasher, above




the rotating arms, gets the strongest spray of water. That's best for dishes with starchy stains such as potato remnants, which rely more on the force of water than on chemical detergent to get clean. On the other hand, dishes soiled with protein residue such as egg don't need as much force. Keep them at the edges of the rack; the slower spray keeps the soap there longer.

## Blender

When your blender stalls every few seconds, there's a reason—the placement of your ingredients. Start with the liquid base (or yogurt, for a smoothie), then layer ingredients from smallest to largest, keeping ice and other tough pieces at the top. The blades will run smoothly through the liquid while the hard ingredients get incorporated gradually.

## Mixer

The beaters in a stand mixer can become misaligned over time. There should be as little space as possible between the beater and bowl—just enough to reach all the ingredients without hitting and scratching the sides. To fix most units, first locate the adjustment screw on the neck by lifting the head or lowering the bowl (depending on your model). Then turn the screw to the left to raise the beater or to the right to lower it. Consult your mixer's manual to find more detailed directions. 

Just because a test exists doesn't mean you'd benefit from it. Here's how to tell which ones make sense for you.

## 4 Cancer Screenings You May or May Not Need

BY LAUREN CAHN

**1 Breast** The American Cancer Society recommends that women get mammograms every year, but not until age 45. You may need to start screenings earlier if you have a family history of breast cancer or genetic mutations that hinder the function of genes such as *BRCA1* and *BRCA2*, which repair damaged DNA and help suppress tumors.

**2 Colon** You probably don't need a colonoscopy or other colon cancer screening tests until you're 50, unless you have a parent, sibling, or child who was diagnosed with colorectal cancer or adenomatous polyps before age 60.



**3 Lung** Unless you smoke or quit less than 15 years ago *and* you are between the ages of 55 and 80, you likely don't need a lung cancer screening.

**4 Prostate** The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force advises men 70 and older to skip the prostate-specific antigen (PSA) test entirely, but men ages 55 to 69 should decide for themselves. (Prostate cancer is slow growing, and treatment can severely affect quality of life.) But if you are African American or if you have a father, brother, or son who had prostate cancer before age 65, discuss screening with your doctor starting at age 45. **R**

FROM LEFT: JOVAN VITANOVSKI, SHEBEKO, SHUTTERSTOCK (2)





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Learn more at [FreeStyleLibre.us](http://FreeStyleLibre.us)



\*Fingersticks are required for treatment decisions when you see Check Blood Glucose symbol, when symptoms do not match system readings, when you suspect readings may be inaccurate, or when you experience symptoms that may be due to high or low blood glucose.

**REFERENCES:** 1. FreeStyle Libre User's Manual. 2. Data on File. Abbott Diabetes Care. 3. Participating pharmacies are subject to change without notice. Patients with medical benefit coverage, visit [FreeStyleLibre.us](http://FreeStyleLibre.us).

### INDICATIONS AND IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

The FreeStyle Libre Flash Glucose Monitoring system is a continuous glucose monitoring (CGM) device indicated for replacing blood glucose testing and detecting trends and tracking patterns aiding in the detection of episodes of hyperglycemia and hypoglycemia, facilitating both acute and long-term therapy adjustments in persons (age 18 and older) with diabetes. The system is intended for single patient use and requires a prescription.

**CONTRAINDICATIONS:** Remove the sensor before MRI, CT scan, X-ray, or diathermy treatment.

**WARNINGS/LIMITATIONS:** Do not ignore symptoms that may be due to low or high blood glucose, hypoglycemic unawareness, or dehydration. Check sensor glucose readings with a blood glucose meter when Check Blood Glucose symbol appears, when symptoms do not match system readings, or when readings are suspected to be inaccurate. The FreeStyle Libre system does not have alarms unless the sensor is scanned, and the system contains small parts that may be dangerous if swallowed. The FreeStyle Libre system is not approved for pregnant women, persons on dialysis, or critically-ill population. Sensor placement is not approved for sites other than the back of the arm and standard precautions for transmission of blood borne pathogens should be taken. The built-in blood glucose meter is not for use on dehydrated, hypotensive, in shock, hyperglycemic-hyperosmolar state, with or without ketosis, neonates, critically-ill patients, or for diagnosis or screening of diabetes. Review all product information before use or contact Abbott Toll Free (855-632-8658) or visit [www.freestylelibre.us](http://www.freestylelibre.us) for detailed indications for use and safety information. FreeStyle, Libre, and related brand marks are trademarks of Abbott Diabetes Care Inc. in various jurisdictions. The product images are for illustrative purposes only.

# World of Medicine

## Teaching Mosquitoes to Leave You Alone

Forgot your insect repellent while out for a hike? Just wave your arms. A study published in *Current Biology* reports that mosquitoes dislike air vibrations, such as those you create when you move. And when vibrations are combined with your unique odor, mosquitoes associate them with your odor and steer clear.

## Grilled or Broiled Meats May Raise Blood Pressure

In a study of more than 100,000 men and women, researchers found that participants who ate grilled, broiled, or roasted beef, chicken, or fish at least 15 times a month were 17 percent more likely to develop high blood pressure than those who consumed these foods fewer than four times per month. The likely cause: potentially harmful compounds produced when meats are cooked at very high temperatures or over an open flame.



## Doctor Loyalty Pays Off

In a two-year study of more than 230,000 patients ages 62 to 82, those who had the highest level of continuity of care (meaning that they usually saw the same doctor) had 12 percent fewer hospitalizations for preventable conditions such as asthma and pneumonia than did those with the lowest level. Other factors of continuity of care include having a good relationship with your doctor and having your doctor share information with any specialists you see.

## Exercising for One Hour May Cut Depression Risk

A study that followed nearly 34,000 healthy adults in Norway found that those who didn't exercise were 44 percent more likely to become depressed, compared with those who exercised one or two hours a week. And they didn't need to do a vigorous workout; just walking at a moderate pace was enough.

## Inability to Identify Odors Might Signify Dementia

In a recent study, nearly 3,000 adults ages 57 to 85 were asked to identify five common odors. One percent of the subjects were not able to identify any of the smells; five years later, almost all these participants had been diagnosed with dementia. In another study of nearly 300 people whose parents or siblings had dementia, those with the most difficulty in identifying odors also had higher levels of tau and beta-amyloid proteins, both biomarkers of Alzheimer's disease. If you find that your sense of smell is no longer as sharp as it used to be, ask your doctor to evaluate you for Alzheimer's disease.

## Avoiding Unnecessary Biopsies

If your doctor suspects you may have prostate cancer, ask about a targeted diagnostic exam called a multi-parametric MRI. A needle biopsy, the most commonly used diagnostic procedure, tests only random tissue samples and can cause bleeding, pain, and infection. The MRI can cover the entire gland, making it easier to spot malignancies and determine their size and density. A biopsy may still be needed if the findings are suspicious, but using an MRI first could reduce unnecessary biopsies by 27 percent—and detect up to 18 percent more advanced cases of cancer, says a study in the *Lancet*. **R**

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ALL IN

# A Day's Work



*"It's serious. There are no TED Talks for what you have."*

**THINKING NO ONE** could hear me as I loaded a UPS tractor trailer, I began to whistle. I was really getting into it when a coworker in the next trailer poked his head in. "You know, I always used to wish I could whistle," he said. "Now I just wish you could."

**MEGS BRUNNER**, *Dauphin, Pennsylvania*

**WHEN I WAS** a proofreader, I shared with my coworkers this example to

illustrate how writing can skew based on gender: A professor wrote on the blackboard, "Woman without her man is nothing." The students were then instructed to insert the proper punctuation.

The men wrote, "Woman, without her man, is nothing."

The women wrote, "Woman! Without her, man is nothing."

**SUSAN ALLEN**, *Phoenix, Arizona*

**SCENE:** A sports store.

**Customer:** Do you have jogging shorts?

**Me:** We have running shorts. How fast were you planning on going?

STEPHANIE CHAPMAN,  
Arlington, Massachusetts

**I USED TO TEACH** preschoolers at a day care. Recently, I was in my college gym when some guy ran through the weight room and tripped. Instead of an offer to help, the “day care teacher” in me came out and admonished, “This is why we use our walking feet.”

Source: tumblr.com

**SCENE:** A public pool. I’m testing the chlorine and pH level of the water when a woman approaches.

**Woman:** Is the chlorine all right? Is it safe to come in?

**Me:** Absolutely.

**Woman:** Because last time we came here, when we went home, our skin was dark.

**Me:** Oh, the chlorine wouldn’t do that to your skin.

**Woman:** No? Then what would?

**Me:** ... The sun? Source: notalwaysright.com

**A CUSTOMER WALKED** into my clothing shop and asked to see the pants that were advertised in the paper that day.

“We don’t have an ad in the paper today,” I told her.

She insisted I was wrong, so I got a copy of the paper, and we went

through it, eventually landing on an ad for pants from another local store. Exasperated, the customer glared at me and said, “In my newspaper, the ad was for this store!”

EDWARD OPPENHEIMER, *El Paso, Texas*



## COME AGAIN?

Hospital patients are understandably distracted, which might explain these odd statements heard by nurses:

- Patient, when asked about her chief complaints: “Well, my hair hurts.”
- “There was a little hard pellet inside my mouth, and I think maybe it was my ovary.”
- “I didn’t actually fall. It was a controlled landing.”
- “Oh, I’m just so constipated! Please bring me some eye drops!”
- Patient with seizures: “I had to come to the ER because I quit taking my peanut butterball.” (He meant phenobarbital.)
- “My father had thyroids, and I think I do too.”

Source: nursebuff.com

Anything funny happen to you at work lately? It could be worth \$\$\$\$. For details, see page 3 or go to [rd.com/submit](http://rd.com/submit).



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# THE BEST ADVICE I EVER GOT

Suggestions about life are a little like lottery tickets: You may collect a lot of them, but they rarely pay off. Yet if you are truly lucky, you receive a few words of wisdom that inspire you forever. That's called hitting the jackpot.

FROM A BEAUTY QUEEN

# ZIP UP YOUR GO-GO BOOTS AND SMILE

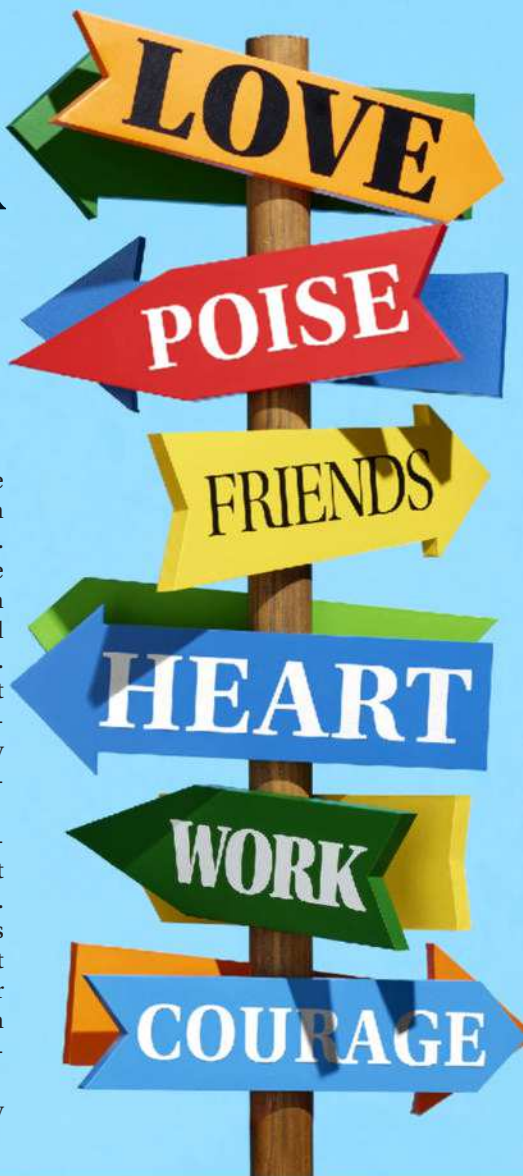
BY TRISHA COBURN

I grew up in a small town in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains, Anniston, Alabama. Much of the town worked at the cotton mill, the Fort McClellan Army base, or the Monsanto chemical plant. The town stank like rotten eggs.

It was a poor town where girls got married at 14. They were usually pregnant by 15. My mama had five kids by the age of 22, and six of her eight husbands came from Fort McClellan.

My siblings and I grew up in a housing project. At school, we had to eat last because we were the welfare kids. By the time I was eight years old, I was cleaning houses and babysitting. But you know, I didn't mind. I felt safer working than being at home with Mama and all those strange men coming and going all the time.

When I turned 12 years old, I got my



ADVICE

"The greatest bit of advice I ever received was 'Don't worry,

dream job, working the concession at the movie theater. I got a chance to see how people outside the projects behaved and how they dressed.

One day, the tallest woman I'd ever seen walked in. She had on a big pink hat. She was wearing a pink dress. She was carrying a pink pocketbook and wearing white gloves. She walked up to the counter and said, "I'll have a large popcorn, a large RC Cola, and a large Hershey bar with almonds." I thought, She must be rich. Nobody orders large.

So she looked at me and said, "What's your name?" And I said, "Trisha Mitchell." She said, "How old are you?" And I'm thinking, Why is she asking me all these questions? I answered, "Twelve." She said, "How tall are ya, honey?" I said, "I don't know, ma'am." And she said, "Well, stand against that RC Cola machine. I'm gonna measure your height."

She pulls out a pink measuring tape. She said, "My, you are tall for your age." And she opens up her bag and gives me a pink card. She said, "I am Olma Macy Harwell. I run Miss Macy's Charm School down on Tenth and Noble. Have your mama call me."

Well, after work I'm clutching that pink card, and I run home. Mom was sitting at the kitchen table, paintin' her fingernails red and drinkin' a glass of gin. I go, "Look, Mama! Miss Macy wants me to come to her charm school." Mama looks at the school

and says, "You ain't goin' down there. It's a whorehouse!" She throws the card down on the floor. Now I'm really confused, but I knew I had to do something. So when Mama wasn't looking, I picked up that card and I went to a neighbor's and I called Miss Macy and told her Mama won't let me come to her school. Miss Macy said, "Don't you worry about that, honey. I'll handle it."

Now, Miss Macy knew a little bit about my family because her husband was the town judge, and he had sentenced one of my stepfathers to prison a couple of times. So Miss Macy told Mama I could come to her school free and I might even be in the newspaper one day and that could make Mama look real important. Mama let me go. After work Miss Macy would teach me how to walk up and down stairs like a lady. She taught me how to sit properly in a chair and even how to exit a room.

And she encouraged me to enter every beauty contest that came to Alabama, like Miss Talladega 500 Raceway. Some of them I won, including Miss Cotton Crop and Miss Escalator. It was the first escalator the town had ever seen.

One day at the charm school, she's waving this *Glamour* magazine above her head. She said, "We are going to a modeling competition at the Waldorf Astoria in New York City!" Now, I didn't know whether to start crying or

**no one else knows what they're doing either."** RICKY GERVAIS

get excited. I'd never thought in a million years I'd go to New York City. The trip was expensive, but I had a year, so I started working three jobs.

One day I'm walking down the street and this little old lady comes up to me, and she says, "Honey, I just got my welfare check, but I'm gonna give you \$5 to help you leave to go up north." I said, "Ma'am, how'd you know I need any money?" She said, "Well, Miss Macy went on the radio this morning and told the whole town that we gotta help you leave."

And the town did help. JCPenney gave me a madras miniskirt with a matching jacket. The shoe department gave me a pair of white patent leather go-go boots. The jewelry store gave me an alarm clock. And the beauty parlor frosted my hair. I walked in a brunette, and I walked out a striped platinum blonde. They even peroxidized my eyebrows.

A few days before leaving to go to New York, an envelope arrived at the charm school with my name on it. Inside was \$2,000 and a note that read, "I want to help you leave to become successful." I still don't know who sent it.

**I**n May of 1971, I was 18 years old. Miss Macy and I boarded the train for New York City with a bottle of Drambuie and a brown paper bag filled with southern fried chicken. Thirty hours later, we

walked into the Waldorf Astoria hotel.

When the competition started, I was immediately intimidated. I thought for sure I did not belong there, with my striped hair and my white go-go boots. And I didn't see one girl walk on the runway the way Miss Macy had taught me, by tiltin' and tuckin' and keeping her chin up. They're walking all fancified and flippin' their hair over their shoulder. I pretended to be confident, but I was really scared people were gonna find out who I really was, this poor white girl from the projects. But Miss Macy, she never stopped encouraging me. When it was my turn to walk the runway, she said, "You get on out there. Those judges need to know how we show clothes in Alabama."

The competition was judged by two top model agents, Wilhelmina and Ford, and by the editors of *Glamour* and *Mademoiselle*. And when it was over, I didn't win anything, and Miss Macy, oh, she was just fit to be tied.

It's a Sunday afternoon. We were going back to Alabama the next day. Miss Macy's frantically pacing our hotel room, drinking Drambuie. She said, "I am not prepared to take you back to Alabama tomorrow. There is nothing there for you." She picked up the telephone and called the Birmingham newspaper. She told them I had just been signed with the world's most famous model agency.

When she hung up, I couldn't



believe it. I said, "Miss Macy, that ain't true." When I look back on that, I realize that Miss Macy had a far better understanding of how destitute my life was in Alabama. And she just kind of ignored my protesting and ordered me to get dressed. We were gonna go down to the bar in the hotel lobby.

So I put on my madras miniskirt and my go-go boots, and she puts on her big hat and her white gloves. Right when I'm reaching for the door, she picks up the telephone and calls Governor George Wallace. "George? This is Olma Macy Harwell calling you from the Waldorf Astoria in New York City. Our Alabaman girl, she just got signed with the world's most famous model agency. That's right, Governor. We're putting Alabama on the map."

Well, at that point, I just grabbed that bottle of Drambuie and I am chugging it. Miss Macy grabbed my arm and we head down to the Palm Bar. We walk in, and there sat Wilhelmina in an entourage of people and a swirl of cigarette smoke. Miss Macy walks right up to her. I hide behind a palm tree.

Miss Macy says, "Wilhelmina, I am Olma Macy Harwell from Anniston, Alabama, and I have a young lady with me that I am not prepared to take

back to Alabama tomorrow. She is staying in New York City and becoming a model with your agency."

I didn't know whether Wilhelmina was gonna burst out laughing or, you know, applaud Miss Macy. So Wilhelmina said, "Well, where is she?" Miss Macy snapped her fingers. I am sweating so much behind that palm

tree that my white patent leather go-go boots are all stuck together.

When I manage to unstick them, I go stand next to Miss Macy, and Wilhelmina says, "Well, do you have a name?" I go, "Yes, ma'am. My name's Trisha Mitchell." She says, "So tell me, Trisha Mitchell, what's

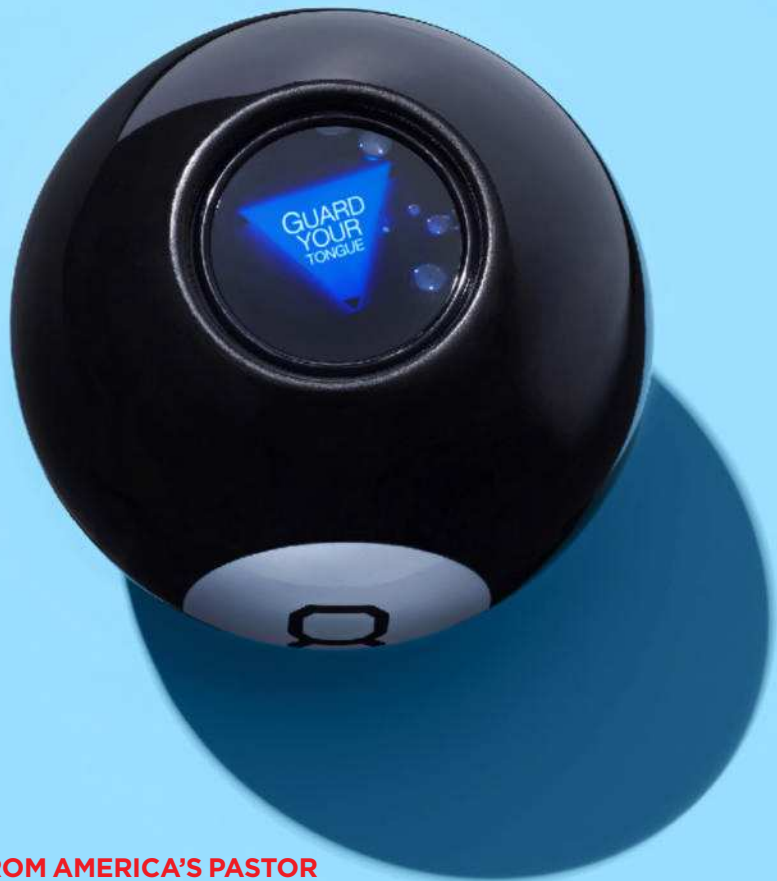
so special about you? Why would I wanna hire you as one of my models?"

God, my heart was pounding at that moment. I didn't know the right thing to say, but this one word popped into my head. It was the word that Miss Macy had always told me about myself. And I said, "Determination, ma'am." She said, "Well, why don't you and Miss Macy come to my office tomorrow morning?"

The next day, Wilhelmina handed me a contract. She said, "I'd like to see what you can do with that determination. But first, we have to do something about your hair." **R**

**"I AM NOT  
PREPARED  
TO TAKE YOU  
BACK ... THERE  
IS NOTHING  
THERE  
FOR YOU."**

**"Wear your own shoes."** OCTAVIA SPENCER



FROM AMERICA'S PASTOR

# BILLY GRAHAM'S 6 RULES OF LIVING

INTERVIEWED BY ALANNA NASH

*America's foremost evangelist, Billy Graham, passed away on February 21, 2018, at the age of 99. In his book *The Journey*, Graham shared principles for living—which he expounded on exclusively for Reader's Digest in 2007.*

ADVICE

**"You have a choice in life. You can either put your stuff in your**

**1. Make it your goal to live at peace with others.** Is it possible to do this with everyone in our lives? Unfortunately, no; even our best efforts may not change another person's attitude. The key is to ask God if we're at fault, and if so, to confess it and seek his help to overcome it. Life is temporary and fleeting. We're here for just a short time. We shouldn't waste our days but live them for God's glory.

**2. Avoid revenge.** Don't be a captive of the past. If someone has harmed us by breaking the law, we have the right to bring that person to justice, both for our good and the good of society. But hurting someone only because they have hurt us is another matter. We can't change the past; we can only seek God's forgiveness for whatever it is we did wrong.

**3. Guard your tongue.** Use it for good instead of evil. How many marriages and friendships have been destroyed because of criticism that has spun out of control? But the tongue can also be used for good; that should be our goal. When people ask me for advice about their personal problems, which they often do, I always try to give them an answer based on the Bible. "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs."

**4. Never repay evil with evil.** Evil is sin; it's a deadly cancer that has invaded our souls. It isn't just an illusion or an absence of good. Ultimately, all evil comes from Satan, according to the Bible. Satan is real, and he is absolutely opposed to God. Still, we are responsible for our own actions. Why some people repeatedly choose to do evil instead of good is a puzzle to me, because evil eventually destroys those who practice it. Only God can replace the evil and sin in our hearts with love and kindness.

**5. Treat others as you'd want them to treat you.** This simple but profound principle—the Golden Rule—comes from Jesus's Sermon on the Mount. How different our lives would be if we actually practiced this! The Bible also tells us, "With humility comes wisdom." Every day I realize I'm just a sinner like everyone else, and I have been forgiven only because of God's grace.

**6. Practice the power of forgiveness.** I adhere to the philosophy of hating the sin but loving the sinner. The key is to realize that this is the way God sees us. When we sin, it's as if we're shaking our fists in God's face, telling him we know better than he does how to run our lives. But God also hates sin because he loves us, and he knows what sin does to us. **R**

**pockets and take it to your grave, or you can help someone."** HODA KOTB



FROM *RD* READERS

## 8 LIFE LESSONS THAT LASTED

### Today Is the First Day Of Your Future

I was considering going back to school for my master's degree but was put off by the fact that it would take me six years—one course a quarter—to do it. I just happened to read an advice column, and the person writing in was pondering getting a degree. The columnist offered this

**ADVICE**

**"Your actions speak so loudly I can't hear what you're saying."**

advice: "Four years from now, where will you be? You can have a degree and a better job or be still doing the same thing and wishing you had the degree." I enrolled that day and six years later graduated with a master's.

MARILYN CLARK, *Jacksonville, Florida*

### Don't Correct Everything

One of the daily chores for my 12-year-old daughter, Joann, was to clean up after dinner, including sweeping the floor. I lamented to a coworker that while walking around barefoot in the kitchen, I could feel each and every crumb my daughter's "swift sweeping" had missed, which resulted in disharmony at home. My coworker, Kathy, who was a mother of four, gave me advice that I use to this day: "Wear slippers."

PATRICIA BREY, *Burlington, Wisconsin*

### Skip the Stupid

As a child, I did many stupid things. After one such amazingly dumb stunt—trying to parachute out of my second-story bedroom window using a bedsheet as the parachute and landing rather hard on the lawn below—my father stood over me, looked down, and said, "Son, you're going to have enough chances in life you don't want to take, so don't take any chances you don't have to take." I quit taking stupid chances.

DAVID KUNKEL, *Tumwater, Washington*

### Judge Not

I heard a quote from the Joyce Meyer Ministries that I live by and has changed my life: "You never have enough information to judge anybody." How many times have we assumed something about someone and didn't know all the facts?

LORI SAMPSON,

*Berkeley Heights, New Jersey*

### It's OK to Hurt

After I miscarried my first baby at four months, I was devastated. All I heard from everyone was you can have another baby, get over it, time heals all wounds, etc. My mother had the best advice. She said, "Honey, time does heal all wounds, but remember that a scar will remain. All you need to do is take your finger and gently rub that scar. That will be the link to your baby, and you will know that love is all around you." Mom let me know that I wasn't going crazy missing my baby. My mom had the experience of losing not one child but two. Her second child (18 months old) died in her arms on the way to the hospital, and the next day she miscarried her third baby. I was her fourth baby.

LOIS SCHYVINCK, *Janesville, Wisconsin*

### Criticize in Quiet

As a newly minted chief in the Coast Guard Reserve, I must have

**In other words, don't just say it. Be it."** DREW BREES



said something uncomplimentary to another Coastie. Immediately, a soft voice over my shoulder said, “Criticize in private and praise in public.” An older, wiser chief had given me the best leadership advice I ever received—in private.

**CALVIN KREFFT**, *Clarksville, Georgia*

### Seize the Day

When I was 20, I asked my little Italian grandmother whether I should marry a girl she liked very much. She would not give me a yes or no answer but rather said, “Somea time, you go to the store and you see something butta you no buy. Then, you go back, and itsa gone.” That was 40 years ago. Since then there have been two beautiful daughters and two wonderful grandchildren. Thanks, Grandma.

**BOB SCHERER**, *Clarence, New York*

### Winning Isn't Everything

I was a young newlywed struggling with marital issues that seemed huge at the time (though in reality they weren't). So I called my dad for help. My wise father said 13 words that changed my life. He said, “Do you want to be right, or do you want to be happy?” Those 13 words became sort of a personal mantra for me and have served me well in many aspects of my life. And 16 years later, I am still happily married to that same man.

**OLIVIA LOWRY COOK**, *Eagle, Idaho*

**FROM A FEW  
FAMOUS FOLKS**

**IF  
AT FIRST  
YOU  
DON'T  
SUCCEED**

#### ▶ **J. K. Rowling**

“It is impossible to live without failing at something, unless you live so cautiously that you might as well not have lived at all—in which case, you fail by default. Now, I am not going to tell you that failure is fun. [But] the knowledge that you have emerged wiser and stronger from setbacks means that you are, ever after, secure in your ability to survive.”

#### ▶ **Richard Branson**

“My mother always taught me never to look back in regret but to

**ADVICE**

“An old actor said to me once, ‘Learn how to nap.’” **LIAM NEESON**



move on to the next thing. The amount of time people waste dwelling on failures rather than putting that energy into another project always amazes me.”

### ▶ **George Clooney**

“The best advice I got from my aunt, the great singer Rosemary Clooney, and from my dad, who was a game show host and news anchor, was: Don’t wake up at 70 years old sighing over what you should have tried. Just do it, be willing to fail, and at least you gave it a shot.”

### ▶ **Michelle Kwan**

“I started figure skating at the age of five, and the first thing my coach taught me was how to fall. I remember gazing up with a puzzled expression, thinking, Shouldn’t I be learning to skate? Looking back, I realize that my coach was very smart. She knew I was bound to fall many times throughout my career and that I’d need to learn how to handle it.”

### ▶ **Michael Jordan**

“I’ve missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I’ve lost almost 300 games. Twenty-six times, I’ve been trusted to take the game-winning shot and missed. I’ve failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed.”

### ▶ **Laura Linney**

“As the late great Jack Lemmon once said, ‘Failure seldom stops you. What stops you is the fear of failure.’ You will never achieve a deeper understanding of your work, or learn the tough lessons, if you are liked or comfortable all the time.”

### ▶ **Wynton Marsalis**

“My father, a great musician whom I had seen killing himself to make barely enough to take care of his family, said, ‘Make sure you don’t have anything to fall back on, because you will.’”

**R**

**“You have to show up, so why not compete?”** VENUS WILLIAMS



FROM A COMMANDER

# LEARN TO STAY IN THE NOW

BY MARK DIVINE FROM THE BOOK *THE WAY OF THE SEAL*

**I**n the pitch black, the sound of the helicopter's rotor blades was deafening. The jumpmaster gave us the thumbs-up as the light turned green. I leaped out into the dark. The static line did its job and pulled my main chute from its rig. I counted one thousand one, one thousand two, one thousand three, and looked up to check the canopy. Whew. Everything looked A-OK.

Ahead in the darkness, I could see the vague outline of my teammate

Chris's canopy. Something was wrong. I took a closer look—yep, he was coming toward me. Standard operating procedure for potential midair collisions is for both jumpers to pull their right toggles, thereby moving them away from each other. I turned right. Chris turned left and collided with me.

My canopy collapsed into a wobbly sheet. I began plummeting to the earth, picking up speed. I had about eight seconds remaining in my 26-year-old life.

**ADVICE**

**“You can tell a guy to go to hell today. Keep your mouth shut**

My mind slowed. My breathing slowed. Time even slowed. Each second seemed like a minute as I moved through the malfunction checklist: Pull on riser to try to reinflate canopy (nothing). Pull on reserve chute cord, punch the bag and rip the reserve out, and throw it as hard as possible into the wind (no good—the reserve shot up and waffled a bit around the main). I'm screwed. I took a deep breath and shook the risers of the canopy again. Ticktock. Six seconds to impact. My mind was clear and silent, watching, waiting for results. I felt no fear, no panic. I was not aware of the past or the future, just the "now."

Suddenly the chute caught some air, and then I hit the ground like a ton of bricks. The canopy had only partially inflated, but it was enough to slow me down for a survivable landing. I waited a moment and took a deep breath to confirm I was still alive. Amazingly unscathed, I got up, dusted myself off, and marched off to find Chris so I could deck him.

What stuck with me most from this experience was how my Navy SEAL training kicked in, allowing me to perform under extremely stressful conditions. Things felt almost mystical as my mind

slowed down and allowed a larger intelligence and calmness to flow through me. I know I would've died if I'd tried to think my way out.

Though most people will never face the risk of plummeting to earth in a compromised parachute jump, we all have challenges to overcome. I use the term *front-sight focus* to describe the incredible concentration and single-mindedness SEALs tap into when pursuing a target, whether they're aiming a weapon at a terrorist, planning a raid, or methodically working through a mess when things go wrong. Front-sight focus refers to a shooter gazing intently at the front sight on his or her weapon after lining it up with a target. When you do this, you remain aware of your surroundings and have your ultimate objective in your mind, but your attention

narrows down to that piece of metal just a few inches in front of you.

Without front-sight focus in your life, you're bound to get derailed, potentially killing any chance of your operating at the highest level possible. With it, you'll easily distinguish high-value targets from low-hanging fruit and maintain total confidence as you move through life amid any amount of turbulence. **R**

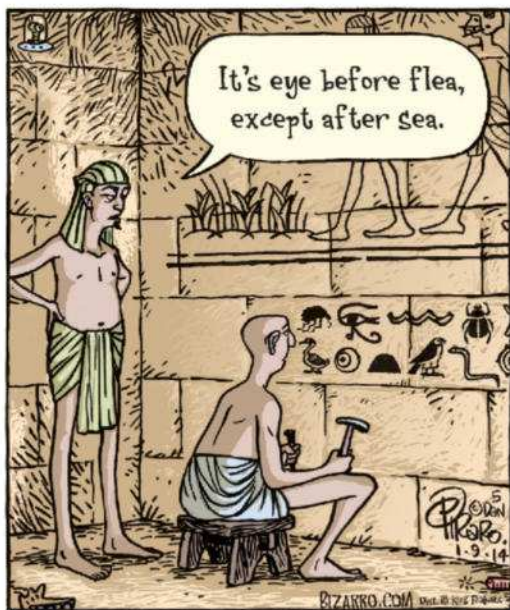


**The New Edition**  
An updated and expanded *The Way of the SEAL* is available at [wayoftheseal.com](http://wayoftheseal.com) and at retailers.

and see if you feel the same way tomorrow." WARREN BUFFETT

# Laughter

THE BEST MEDICINE



**MY FRIENDS ASKED ME** to go camping, so I made a list of the things I would need: “1. New friends.”

—@ROBINMCCAULEY

**A PRIEST BUYS** a lawn mower at a yard sale. Back home, he pulls on the starter rope a few times with no results. He storms back to the yard sale and tells the previous owner, “I can’t get the mower to start!”

“That’s because you have to curse

to get it started,” says the man.

“I’m a man of the cloth. I don’t even remember how to curse.”

“You keep pulling on that rope, and it’ll come back to you.”

Submitted by **ROSE MATTIX**,  
Decatur, Illinois

**MY DAD IS SO CHEAP** that when he dies, he’s going to walk toward the light and turn it off.

Comedian **MATIN ATRUSHI**



**WHAT'S A QUIET** Hawaiian laugh? Aloha. Submitted by **KENNETH GOMEZ**, Glen Arbor, Michigan

**WHEN A MAN** is confronted on the street by a tough-looking goon, he murmurs to himself, "I'm toast." Just then, a ray of light breaks forth from the sky and a voice booms out, "No, you are not toast. Pick up that brick in front of you and bring it down on his head."

Right after the man picks up the brick and knocks out the hoodlum,

a hundred gun-, knife-, and chain-toting gang members appear, glaring at him angrily.

The voice booms out again. "OK ... now you're toast!"

Source: tcm.faithsite.com

**MY NEW DIET** is to pay people to tell me how thin I look.

🐦@MICHAELIANBLACK

Your funny joke, list, or quote might be worth \$\$\$\$. For details, see page 3 or go to [rd.com/submit](http://rd.com/submit).

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**DON'T LET YOUR BLADDER**

**ALWAYS STOP YOU FROM**

**SEIZING THE MOMENT.**



URGENCY



FREQUENCY



LEAKAGE

**Ask your doctor about Myrbetriq® (mirabegron), the first and only overactive bladder (OAB) treatment in its class.**

In clinical trials, those taking Myrbetriq made fewer trips to the bathroom and had fewer leaks than those not taking Myrbetriq. Your results may vary.

**TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR OAB SYMPTOMS BY TALKING TO YOUR DOCTOR ABOUT MYRBETRIQ TODAY.**

#### **USE OF MYRBETRIQ (meer-BEH-trick)**

Myrbetriq® (mirabegron) is a prescription medicine for adults used to treat overactive bladder (OAB) with symptoms of urgency, frequency, and leakage.

#### **IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION**

Myrbetriq is not for everyone. Do not use Myrbetriq if you have an allergy to mirabegron or any ingredients in Myrbetriq. Myrbetriq may cause your blood pressure to increase or make your blood pressure worse if you have a history of high blood pressure. It is recommended that your doctor check your blood pressure while you are taking Myrbetriq. Myrbetriq may increase your chances of not being able to empty your bladder. Tell your doctor right away if you have trouble emptying your bladder or you have a weak urine stream.



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## IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION (CONTINUED)

Myrbetriq may cause allergic reactions that may be serious. If you experience swelling of the face, lips, throat or tongue, with or without difficulty breathing, stop taking Myrbetriq and tell your doctor right away.

Tell your doctor about all the medicines you take including medications for overactive bladder or other medicines such as thioridazine (Mellaril™ and Mellaril-S™), flecainide (Tambocor®), propafenone (Rythmol®), digoxin (Lanoxin®). Myrbetriq may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how Myrbetriq works.

Before taking Myrbetriq, tell your doctor if you have liver or kidney problems. The most common side effects of Myrbetriq include increased blood pressure, common cold symptoms (nasopharyngitis), urinary tract infection, constipation, diarrhea, dizziness, and headache.

**For further information, please talk to your healthcare professional and see Brief Summary of Prescribing Information for Myrbetriq® (mirabegron) on the following pages.**

**You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit [www.fda.gov/medwatch](http://www.fda.gov/medwatch) or call 1-800-FDA-1088.**

Like us on Facebook   
and visit [Myrbetriq.com](http://Myrbetriq.com)



 **Myrbetriq®**  
(mirabegron)  
extended-release tablets  
25 mg, 50 mg



## **Myrbetriq® (mirabegron) extended-release tablets 25 mg, 50 mg**

### **Brief Summary based on FDA-approved patient labeling**

Read the Patient Information that comes with Myrbetriq® (mirabegron) before you start taking it and each time you get a refill. There may be new information. This summary does not take the place of talking with your doctor about your medical condition or treatment.

### **What is Myrbetriq (meer-BEH-trick)?**

Myrbetriq is a prescription medication for **adults** used to treat the following symptoms due to a condition called **overactive bladder**:

- urge urinary incontinence: a strong need to urinate with leaking or wetting accidents
- urgency: a strong need to urinate right away
- frequency: urinating often

It is not known if Myrbetriq is safe and effective in children.

### **Who should not use Myrbetriq?**

Do not use Myrbetriq if you have an allergy to mirabegron or any of the ingredients in Myrbetriq. See the end of this leaflet for a complete list of ingredients in Myrbetriq.

### **What should I tell my doctor before taking Myrbetriq?**

Before you take Myrbetriq, tell your doctor if you:

- have liver problems or kidney problems
- have very high uncontrolled blood pressure
- have trouble emptying your bladder or you have a weak urine stream
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if Myrbetriq will harm your unborn baby. Talk to your doctor if you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant.
- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. It is not known if Myrbetriq passes into your breast milk. You and your doctor should decide if you will take Myrbetriq or breastfeed. You should not do both.

**Tell your doctor about all the medicines you take**, including prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Myrbetriq may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how Myrbetriq works.

Tell your doctor if you take:

- thioridazine (Mellaril™ or Mellaril-S™)
- flecainide (Tambocor®)
- propafenone (Rythmol®)
- digoxin (Lanoxin®)

### **How should I take Myrbetriq?**

- Take Myrbetriq exactly as your doctor tells you to take it.
- You should take 1 Myrbetriq tablet 1 time a day.
- You should take Myrbetriq with water and swallow the tablet whole.
- Do not crush or chew the tablet.
- You can take Myrbetriq with or without food.
- If you miss a dose of Myrbetriq, begin taking Myrbetriq again the next day. Do not take 2 doses of Myrbetriq the same day.
- If you take too much Myrbetriq, call your doctor or go to the nearest hospital emergency room right away.

### **What are the possible side effects of Myrbetriq?**

Myrbetriq may cause serious side effects including:

- **increased blood pressure.** Myrbetriq may cause your blood pressure to increase or make your blood pressure worse if you have a history of high blood pressure. It is recommended that your doctor check your blood pressure while you are taking Myrbetriq.
- **inability to empty your bladder (urinary retention).** Myrbetriq may increase your chances of not being able to empty your bladder if you have bladder outlet obstruction or if you are taking other medicines to treat overactive bladder. Tell your doctor right away if you are unable to empty your bladder.



- **angioedema.** Myrbetriq may cause an allergic reaction with swelling of the lips, face, tongue, throat with or without difficulty breathing. Stop using Myrbetriq and tell your doctor right away.

The **most common side effects** of Myrbetriq include:

- increased blood pressure
- common cold symptoms (nasopharyngitis)
- urinary tract infection
- constipation
- diarrhea
- dizziness
- headache

Tell your doctor if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away or if you have swelling of the face, lips, tongue, or throat, hives, skin rash or itching while taking Myrbetriq. These are not all the possible side effects of Myrbetriq. For more information, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

**Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to the FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.**

#### **How should I store Myrbetriq?**

- Store Myrbetriq between 59°F to 86°F (15°C to 30°C). Keep the bottle closed.
- Safely throw away medicine that is out of date or no longer needed.

#### **Keep Myrbetriq and all medicines out of the reach of children.**

#### **General information about the safe and effective use of Myrbetriq**

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes other than those listed in the Patient Information leaflet. Do not use Myrbetriq for a condition for which it was not prescribed. Do not give Myrbetriq to other people, even if they have the same symptoms you have. It may harm them.

#### **Where can I go for more information?**

This is a summary of the most important information about Myrbetriq. If you would like more information, talk with your doctor. You can ask your doctor or pharmacist for information about Myrbetriq that is written for health professionals.

For more information, visit [www.Myrbetriq.com](http://www.Myrbetriq.com) or call (800) 727-7003.

#### **What are the ingredients in Myrbetriq?**

**Active ingredient:** mirabegron

**Inactive ingredients:** polyethylene oxide, polyethylene glycol, hydroxypropyl cellulose, butylated hydroxytoluene, magnesium stearate, hypromellose, yellow ferric oxide and red ferric oxide (25 mg Myrbetriq tablet only).

#### **What is overactive bladder?**

Overactive bladder occurs when you cannot control your bladder contractions. When these muscle contractions happen too often or cannot be controlled, you can get symptoms of overactive bladder, which are urinary frequency, urinary urgency, and urinary incontinence (leakage).

#### **Rx Only**

PRODUCT OF JAPAN OR IRELAND – See bottle label or blister package for origin

Marketed and Distributed by:

**Astellas Pharma US, Inc.**

Northbrook, Illinois 60062

  
**Myrbetriq<sup>®</sup>**  
(mirabegron)  
extended-release tablets  
25 mg, 50 mg

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Revised: July 2017

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**GRAND PRIZE**

“My cat Minerva enjoying the sunset on Moses Lake in Texas City. Minerva loves putting her paws in the water and sunning herself by the shore.”

ABDULKAREEM  
HARUNANI,  
*Rockford, Illinois*

## RUNNER-UP

“The day after we got seven-week-old Tootsie Lou, she fell asleep on my slipper. I snapped this just as she woke up.”

ERIN VILLELLA,  
*Peachtree City, Georgia*



# YOUR **WINNING** PET SHOTS

We asked readers to send in their favorite animal pictures. We got some real dogs—and cats.

**RUNNER-UP**

“My friend and I went on a walk in Vermont and met this friendly horse who wanted attention.”

**BARBARA ADAMSON, Littleton, Colorado**



**RUNNER-UP**

“Our cat Steve always sits like a person. He also thinks he’s a model because we’re always photographing him.”

**KRISTINA WILSON, New York, New York**

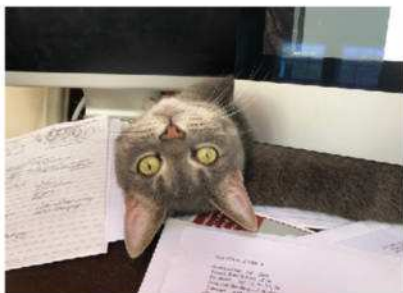






# GO AHEAD, TRY NOT TO SMILE

We received 1,287 photos for this year's contest. Many of them were excellent, and these 17 went a step further—they made us laugh.



**MEEP**

**NADINE SCHNEIDER**, *New City, New York*



**SCUTTLE**

**CHARLA VIRKLER**, *Kissimmee, Florida*



**CAESAR**

**TISH DAY**, *Mossyrock, Washington*



**CASSI**

**SANDI FRITCHLEY**, *Loudon, Tennessee*



**STERLING**

**JOANNE GOULDIN**, *Tucson, Arizona*



**MAVERICK**

KENDRA RICHARD, *Daly City, California*



**HOOCH**

DON ALBRIGHT, *Clayton, Washington*



**QUINCY**

MADISON MONTANARI, *Dallas, Texas*



**CUBBINS**

COLLEEN VAUGHN, *Greer, South Carolina*



**BUGSY**

ANDREA KOONCE, *Mirando City, Texas*



**FINLEY**

KAITLIN KENNEY, *Crownsville, Maryland*





**MANGO**

ANDREA NARCISO, *Chico, California*



**KITTY KAT**

LISA HOSTETTER, *Waverly, Missouri*



**GUS**

VIRGIL SWANSON, *Greenfield, Iowa*



**JACKSON**

JACKI DAY, *El Cajon, California*



**MICKEY**

JIM BROWN, *Bettendorf, Iowa*



**TUCKER**

KAREN FIGEL, *Butler, Pennsylvania*

## BRING A NEW STORY HOME WITH YOU TODAY



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**Struth the Bloody Truth**

Iarn Pernell

www.xlibris.com.au  
Hardback | Paperback | E-book  
\$40.31 | \$24.19 | \$4.99

This book describes how we've all been living according to a reality that exists only in our own mind's creation. It explains how the church manipulated the purely natural human emotion of fear to instill a belief in their god.



**Finding the Warm and Fuzzies**

Dr. Annie Rohr

www.authorhouse.com  
Hardback | Paperback | E-book  
\$29.99 | \$16.99 | \$3.99

This book serves as a tool to remind families that children have the ability to cope with difficult moments. Follow little Eddie on a journey where he learns to create his own happiness by finding the warm and fuzzies.



**Children of a  
Northern Kingdom**

*A Story of the Strangite  
Mormons in Wisconsin and on  
Beaver Island, Michigan*

Elaine Stienon

www.authorhouse.com  
Paperback | E-book  
\$20.99 | \$3.99

A group of non-polygamous Mormons flee to the north after the assassination of their prophet, Joseph Smith Jr. They make their way to Voree, Wisconsin, where a man named James Strang has declared himself to be their new prophet.



**The Other Side  
of the Mic**

Cecil Miller

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*The Other Side of the Mic* shares Cecil Miller's 58 years of professional experience in air traffic control. It is about aviation history, the pilot, and behind the scenes of the air-traffic controller.

As states loosen their marijuana laws, a doctor warns that the drug can be addictive and harmful to younger minds

# The Medical Case Against Kids Smoking Pot

BY SUSHRUT JANGI, MD  
FROM THE *BOSTON GLOBE*

These days, it's decidedly uncool to criticize marijuana and the rush toward legalization. So far, 29 states and the District of Columbia allow medical marijuana, while nine states and DC permit recreational use. Sixty-one percent of Americans say they believe the drug should be legal, according to a recent Pew Research Center survey.





But underscoring this incredible momentum for legalization is the misconception that marijuana can't hurt anybody. It can—especially young people. The myth that cannabis, another name for the plant, is not habit-forming is constantly challenged by physicians. “There’s no question at all that marijuana is addictive,” Sharon Levy, MD, tells me. She is the director of the Adolescent Substance Abuse Program at Boston Children’s Hospital, one of a few programs designed to preemptively identify substance-use problems in teens. Anyone can get hooked, but about one of every six teens who smoke marijuana will become addicted, research shows.

One of Dr. Levy’s patients was an 18-year-old who started smoking pot several times a day in tenth grade. She dropped out of high school, was fired from several jobs, and stole money from her parents. “She and her family were at their wits’ end trying to find appropriate treatment in a health-care

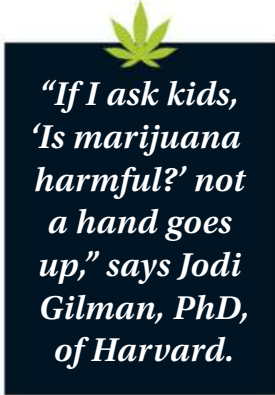
system that doesn’t consider addiction to marijuana a serious problem,” Dr. Levy says. “We are simply not prepared for the fallout of marijuana legalization.”

Yet we don’t hear this perspective very often. Why not? “People strongly defend marijuana because they don’t want legalization to be derailed,” says Jodi Gilman, PhD, an assistant professor at Harvard Medical School with the Center for Addiction Medicine. Big money is at stake. All told, the states that have legalized the drug raked in an estimated \$1 billion in taxes for 2017. A recent study projected

that if marijuana were legal in all 50 states, it would produce \$46 billion in federal sales tax revenue and more than one million jobs by 2025.

Last year, teen marijuana use went up significantly for the first time in seven years, according to a large annual study conducted by the University of Michigan. The latest National Survey on Drug Use and Health, completed in 2016, also showed an increase, while tobacco and alcohol use continued to decrease.

“If you go into a high school and ask the classroom, ‘Are cigarettes harmful? Is alcohol harmful?’ every kid raises their hand,” Gilman says. “But



*“If I ask kids, ‘Is marijuana harmful?’ not a hand goes up,” says Jodi Gilman, PhD, of Harvard.*



**SUSHRUT JANGI, MD, is an internist and instructor in medicine at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston.**



if I ask, 'Is marijuana harmful?' not a hand goes up." In fact, more than half of 10th and 12th graders say they believe pot isn't dangerous, according to a report from the RAND Corporation, a nonpartisan research organization. "That is an unintended consequence of legalization," Pam Luna, a RAND consultant, told NPR. Or maybe it is intended. Pot proponents often argue that one reason to legalize the drug is so its dosage and potency can be regulated.

You might compare public perception now to the way people used to feel about tobacco. In the 1950s, nearly half of Americans smoked tobacco. Meanwhile, the big tobacco companies aggressively used their lobbying power to deceive the public about the harms of smoking and to forestall regulation

by the Food and Drug Administration. Of course, now we know that tobacco causes cancer, heart disease, and other health problems, and cigarette packaging carries mandatory warnings.

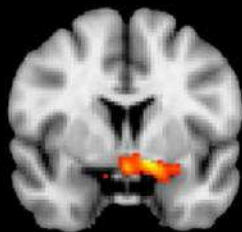
To bring balance to a narrative driven by pro-legalization campaigns, Gilman and others are interested in leveraging data to show pot's real effects. In 2014, Gilman published research on 18-to-25-year-olds that showed differences in the brain's reward system between users and non-users. Teens who smoked marijuana had significant abnormalities in the areas of the brain linked to emotion, motivation, and decision making (see sidebar below). "I got a lot of hate mail after that," she says.

In another study, Gilman found that teens who smoked marijuana

COURTESY JODI GILMAN, PHD

## TODAY'S WEED IS NOT YESTERDAY'S GRASS

The ingredient in marijuana that produces the high is tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). It's also a medicinal ingredient, responsible for muting the effects of chronic pain, nausea, mood disorders, and other ailments. Over the decades, some marijuana strains have been bred to contain more THC and less of the substance that lessens the high, called cannabidiol (CBD). Because THC concentrations have grown stronger, today's "weed" might well be 40 times more potent than the "grass" of the 1970s.



### A TEEN BRAIN ON POT

When young people smoke marijuana, their brains change. The red and yellow areas above indicate abnormal growth in the nucleus accumbens, the part of the brain that affects motivation and learning.



daily showed long-term memory loss in adulthood—even years after they'd stopped. Heavy use can result in a loss of six IQ points, about the same dip that lead poisoning causes, according to the American Psychological Association. In other studies, the brains of young adult pot smokers have shown deterioration in the language areas, with more verbal memory decline among those who started at the youngest ages.

The key ingredient in marijuana, tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), attaches to brain receptors that modulate healthy behaviors such as eating, learning, and forming relationships.

Over time, THC rewires this whole cognitive system, throwing off its finely tuned balance. Early evidence in mice has shown that repeated exposure to THC causes these receptors to disappear altogether.

The results can be lasting and detrimental. Teens who frequently smoked pot, especially young men, were less likely to hold full-time jobs as adults, get married, or finish their education, a University of Connecticut study found. Young adults are three times more likely than others to drive under the influence of cannabis, which is the illicit drug most often detected

in crashes (often combined with alcohol). Numerous studies have shown that its use impairs driving and increases the risk of a crash. Since the drug was legalized in Colorado, related visits to emergency rooms and urgent care centers have increased almost threefold among those under 21.

It's worth bearing in mind that it was science that eventually curtailed the power of Big Tobacco and prevented nearly 800,000 cancer deaths in the United States between 1975 and 2000. As marijuana marches toward the same legal status as cigarettes, its potential hazards will require

equal attention by science. (The National Institutes of Health is beginning a ten-year study of the effects of alcohol and drugs, as well as screen time, nutrition, and exercise, on the adolescent brain. So far, more than 7,600 adolescents have enrolled.)

The argument here isn't whether marijuana should be legal. There are champions on either side of that debate. Instead, should the drug become widely available, it's to our detriment to blindly consider legalization a victory. We must be cautious when societal shifts can affect health, especially among our most vulnerable. **R**



*Teens who frequently smoked pot were less likely to hold full-time jobs as adults.*

# That's Outrageous!

THIS IS NOT THE SMARTEST WAY TO ...

**CRACK NUTS** In 1991, a Chinese man received a mallet-like gift that, over the following 25 years, he used to smash open walnuts. That is, until he happened to receive a leaflet passed out by local police regarding explosive devices. His nutcracker was in fact a 1960s-era hand grenade.

Source: crienglish.com

**GET A DRIVER'S LICENSE** With the examiner in the car, a Buffalo, Minnesota, teen began her driver's test by turning on the ignition, taking the car out of park, tapping the accelerator, and driving her Chevy Equinox into—and through—the brick wall of the examination station.

Source: Star Tribune

**HOOK UP A TV** To find out where the cable needed to go through the wall to connect to his TV, a DIYer set the alarm on a battery-powered clock to go off in ten minutes, tied a string around the clock, and slowly lowered it through an air vent. When the timer went off, he'd know where to drill. Except the clock

slipped from the string and fell out of reach.

Ten minutes later, it went off. That was in 2004. It has been going off at the same time every day since.

Source: WABC-TV

**GRAB A BITE** A New York State woman pulled up to a fast-food drive-through window and ordered a sandwich. That was when she was informed that she was not at a drive-through but at the security booth of the Riverhead Correctional Facility, which was convenient. She was promptly arrested and charged with driving while ability impaired by drugs as well as driving without a license.

Source: pix11.com

**HELP VICTIMS** An agent of the Department of Homeland Security was in Salt Lake City to warn of the dangers of sexual exploitation. After he spoke, he handed out his business card. A reporter later called the number on the card, only to be greeted with, "Hi, sexy!" It seems some numerals had been inadvertently transposed, and the number on the card was for a very different service.

Source: Deseret News



Here are the tricks your favorite eateries use to separate you from your money

# SECRETS YOUR MENU

WON'T TELL YOU

BY ANDY SIMMONS



**H**ave you ever entered a restaurant craving a spinach salad, only to end up ordering the pig roast special? Chances are, the proprietors had a hand in that outcome. Be it a high-end eatery or a fast-food joint, a restaurant's owners have clever ways to influence your choice. That soft background melody? A Scottish study found that diners spent 23 percent more when slow-tempo music was played. The red walls? That color stimulates appetite. And then there's the menu. With its mouthwatering prose and ample use of consumer psychology, of *course* you want to sample every dish. We've annotated a menu you might find at a typical medium-priced eatery. Which of these tricks have you fallen for?

# APPETIZERS

## Crispy Fried Mozzarella Sticks.....12

**THE FINE PRINT** For some consumers, the dollar sign apparently screams, “Watch your wallet!” A Cornell University study found that guests at one restaurant, “given the numeral-only menu, spent significantly more than those who received a menu with prices showing a dollar sign.”

## Panko-Fried Calamari.....9.95

**THE FINE PRINT** Prices ending with a 9, such as 9.99, “tend to signify value but not quality,” says the *New York Times*. Most restaurants round up; if not, they’ll go with .95.

## Bourbon-Braised Beef Short Ribs ..... 10.95

**THE FINE PRINT** Names with lots of consonants that start with the lips and end in the throat (such as *b*) tend to mimic the mouth movements of eating. These dishes were rated more flavorful than dishes with names featuring consonants that start from the back of the throat (e.g., the *c* in *corn*), says a study from the University of Cologne in Germany.

## AUNT LOUISE’S FAMOUS Mac & Cheese.....12

**THE FINE PRINT** A box around the name of a dish gives the impression that the item is special, says hospitality consultant Cenk Fikri. It works well for dishes that cost little to make and get marked up.



## House Salad ..... 3.95

**THE FINE PRINT** When dining, “healthy” is a synonym for “Where’s the flavor?” So restaurants often don’t reference health and indicate a dish is good for us by using a signpost, such as a leaf icon.

## MAIN COURSES

### **Tangy Plump Baby Back Spare Ribs..... 19**

**THE FINE PRINT** People notice bold listings 42 percent more than plain type when they read, one study showed. As for the words *tangy* and *plump*, a different study, authored by Cornell professor Brian Wansink, found that the artful use of adjectives increased sales by up to 27 percent. His study showed that “those who ate foods with evocative, descriptive menu names rated [them] as more appealing, tasty, and caloric than their regularly named counterparts.”

### ***Cheeseburger and Fries*..... 12**

**THE FINE PRINT** “Italic typeface conveys a perception of quality,” reports the BBC. A study conducted by Swiss and German researchers found that a wine labeled with a difficult-to-read script was liked more by drinkers than the same wine carrying a label using a simpler typeface.



### **Meat loaf with summer-whipped potatoes drenched in autumn root vegetables, winter squash, and who knows what else because by this point we're just making things up to pad the dish's name so you'll notice it .....14.95**

**THE FINE PRINT** If boxes, huge fonts, and italics don't catch your eye, how about a super-long dish name? As the restaurant-software company Toast points out on its blog, anything that is different will draw the eye.

**The Golden Twice-Fried Platter.....45**

**THE FINE PRINT** The most desired piece of real estate on the menu is at the top right because that's the spot on the page where our eyes tend to be drawn first—so that's where the restaurant's most profitable dish will likely be found.

**Tuna Noodle Casserole.....18**

**THE FINE PRINT** And when you place the most expensive dish at the top of the menu, says William Poundstone, author of *Priceless: The Myth of Fair Value*, “everything else near it looks like a relative bargain”—even when it's not.

**CHEF'S RECOMMENDATION**

**Baked Chicken.....16**

**THE FINE PRINT** Phrases like *chef's recommendation* are a way of telling you, “Order this!” Restaurants use them to sell their more profitable items and draw you away from your go-to dishes, which may not make them as much money.

**DESSERTS**

**Sweet Georgia Peach Cobbler.....5.95**

**THE FINE PRINT** Restaurants use regional names to entice customers into ordering a particular dish, says Wansink. Want a good peach tart? Well, then, the peaches *have* to be from Georgia.

**Godiva Chocolate Brownie Sundae.....6.95**

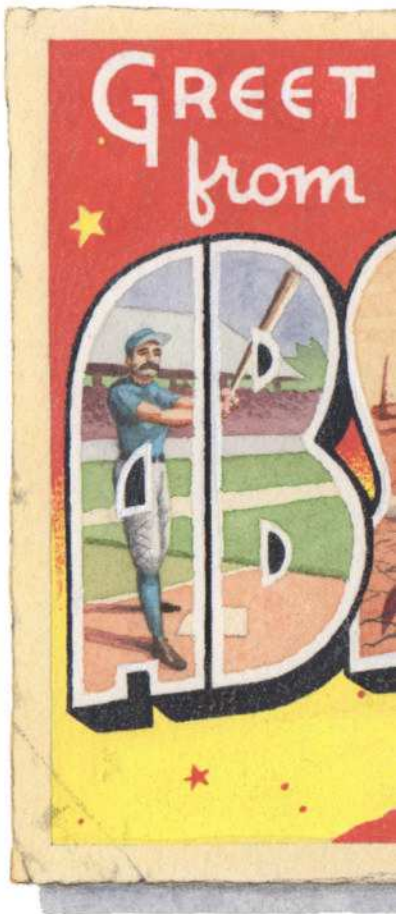
**THE FINE PRINT** Brand names in menu items confer a built-in trust and create a guarantee to diners that they will love the dish.



# 8 Almost States

If some independence-minded citizens had gotten their way, we would have a few more stars on our flag

BY THE EDITORS OF *READER'S DIGEST*



**R**EBELS FIGHTING for their freedom created our country, so it's not surprising that that spirit has bubbled up over the decades on a smaller scale. From coast to coast and for a wide variety of reasons, factions of citizens have proposed seceding from their parent states. Obviously they didn't get their way, or the United States would include more than 50 members today. But some came close, drafting constitutions, electing governors, and dreaming up names. Although they've mostly been forgotten to history, the stories of these eight states that almost were are still fascinating.



## ABSAROKA

In 1939, the old boys of the Sheridan Rotary Club rallied around A. R. Swickard, a former professional baseball player, with a plan to stand up for the grassland ranches of northern Wyoming and western South Dakota by declaring for themselves a new

state (to which southern Montana was later added). They called their proposed new home Absaroka, derived from the Crow word *Apsáalooke*, which means “children of the large-beaked bird.”

Already smarting from Dust Bowl

devastation and perceived indifference from state legislatures, the area was newly disaffected by its minuscule cut of New Deal aid. With winking sincerity, Swickard proclaimed himself governor and oversaw a Miss Absaroka beauty contest. Novelty license plates were created, and after the king of Norway toured the area, dubious claims were made of official recognition. Today, the namesake Absaroka State Take-over, a rockabilly car show complete with pinup girls and hot rods, occurs annually in Sheridan, Wyoming.

## DESERET

In 1849, Mormon settlers tried to claim a massive region in the Southwest near the Rocky Mountains and the Sierra Nevada, encompassing parts of what are now nine states: California, Oregon, Nevada, Utah, Wyoming, Idaho, New Mexico, Arizona, and Colorado. They set up their own government founded on Mormon principles, including polygamy, and elected church leader Brigham Young as their governor. Deseret (meaning “honeybee” in the Book of Mormon) could have been the largest state in the country, but many opposed the idea. In 1850, the federal government opted to give Young and his followers the much smaller Utah Territory. Still,

for years afterward, a wishful-thinking group of Mormon elders met secretly after each legislative session and rewrote the day’s new laws under the “State of Deseret” name.

## FRANKLIN

After the Revolutionary War, some of North Carolina’s frontier lands (now the northeastern portion of Tennessee) were settled initially by 5,000 or so pioneers who felt they were unrepresented by the far-away state capital. So they voted to secede, naming their new home Frankland and setting themselves up with a constitution, a governor, and a militia.

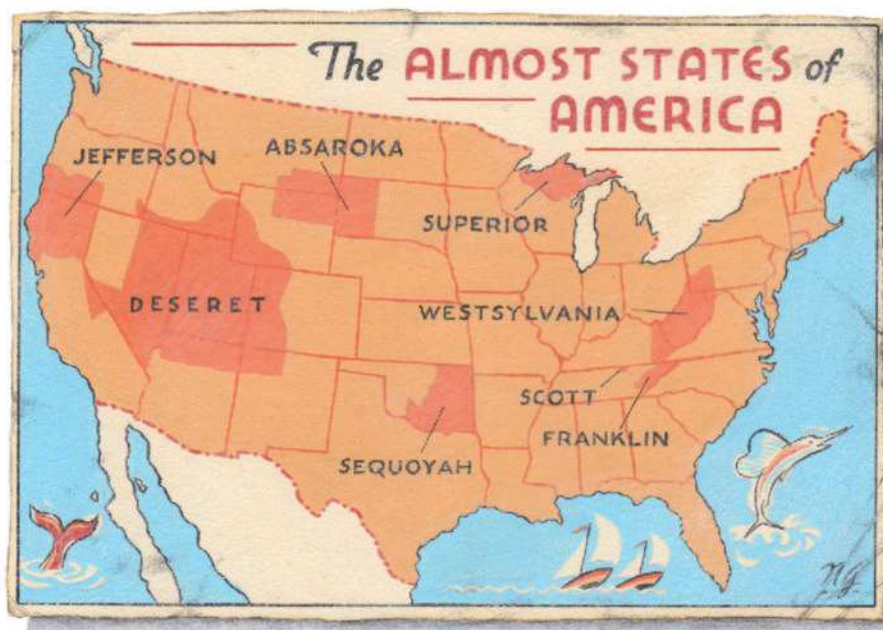
They later changed the name to Franklin, after Benjamin Franklin in hopes of gaining his support. They even created their own currency based not on bills and coins but on animal skins; the governor received a salary of 1,000 deer skins, while his secretary of state got 450 otter skins.

After four years, the rebellion fizzled, and in 1789 Franklin’s leaders decided to rejoin North Carolina. Its short-lived statehood prompted a clause in the U.S. Constitution prohibiting states from breaking up to form new states without the consent of the legislature.

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Franklin  
even created  
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currency based  
not on bills  
and coins  
but on animal  
skins.

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## JEFFERSON

Locals in Southern Oregon and Northern California have tossed around ideas for the State of Jefferson since at least 1854. Nearly a century later, in 1941, the mayor of the small coastal town of Port Orford, Oregon, along with a California judge and a state senator, pushed for self-determination after supportive ranchers and other locals took over a highway near the border between the states. With a "provisional governor" and hundreds of citizens marching in the streets of the proposed state capital proclaiming about the state

flower ("Anything but a pansy!"), Jefferson began to seem like a real possibility. But Pearl Harbor diverted the nation's attention and put an end to the movement, though some would-be Jeffersonians still hold on to hope. (Over the years, two different factions in Texas and one in Kansas have also proposed their own spin-offs to be named Jefferson.)

## SCOTT

Even geography buffs might be surprised to hear that the lost state of Scott technically existed as recently as 1866. During the Civil War, Scott





County, in rugged eastern Tennessee, opted to break away from the rest of the state. Its citizens were hardy mountain people, not plantation owners or slaveholders. They distrusted the “planter class” and the “cotton oligarchs” and had no interest in joining them in the slavery-bound Confederacy. In fact, when the rest of the state voted to leave the Union, 95 percent of area residents voted to stay, declaring themselves the Free and Independent State of Scott. The Tennessee state government largely ignored them, but the Confederacy dispatched troops to demand loyalty. The soldiers were quickly run out of the mountains, and legend says they

took Scott’s charter papers with them, destroying any real evidence of its existence. After the war, the tiny state of Scott was mostly forgotten until Tennessee’s 125th anniversary, when it opted to join the celebration by requesting readmittance.

## SEQUOYAH

Seeking to claim a part of the United States as their own, Native Americans conceived the state of Sequoyah in 1905. Named after the Cherokee leader who invented the tribe’s written language, Sequoyah was based on a tract of land in what was then called Indian Territory and what is now eastern Oklahoma, where Native

Americans had been relocated by the U.S. government. Tribes had been granted sovereignty through a series of treaties, but the political climate was changing, and in 1898 Congress passed the Curtis Act, which would soon nullify their system of tribal government. Leaders of the “Five Civilized Tribes” (the Cherokee, Choctaw, Creek, Chickasaw, and Seminoles) petitioned for their own state of Sequoyah. But Congress refused. Instead, President Theodore Roosevelt decided that the Indian Territory should become part of another new state, Oklahoma.

## SUPERIOR

Michigan's Upper Peninsula, or UP, contains about a third of the state's land and much of the lumber and mining resources, but only about 3 percent of the population lives there, leaving its residents feeling underrepresented in the state government. The Yoopers, as UP residents call themselves, have been known to refer to downstate residents Trolls because they live below the suspension bridge that connects the two parts of state across the four-mile-long Straits of Mackinac.

The upstate/downstate rivalry has sporadically prompted talk of

secession among proud Yoopers for more than a century, so much so that the UP has gone through a few proposed names, including Superior; Sylvania, meaning “pleasant woody area” (and reported to have been Thomas Jefferson's idea); and Ontonagon, after a village and county in the region. The last time

an independence measure came up for public vote, in the 1980s, the succession effort fell short of the majority of state legislators needed to present the plan to Congress.

## WESTSYLVANIA

Before the Revolutionary War, a cluster of land speculators tried to form a colony called

Vandalia, made up of modern West Virginia, Western Pennsylvania, and Eastern Kentucky. The war doomed their plan, and in 1776, they tried to re-form their adopted home as the State of Westsylvania. But that effort failed, too, as Congress ignored their petition. Frustrated, residents threatened to form their own new state anyway. But Pennsylvania, which then owned most of the area, passed a law declaring such agitation to be treasonous and punishable by execution, quickly quashing the uprising. **R**

Residents of Michigan's Upper Peninsula have been known to call their downstate neighbors Trolls.



SIX CAVING BUDDIES SET OFF FOR A DAY OF ADVENTURE. BY NIGHTFALL, ONLY FOUR OF THEM HAD EMERGED FROM THE DEEP.

# NO WAY OUT

BY LISA FITTERMAN



**Jason Storie  
peering through  
a tight passage  
in a cave called  
Cascade**

**T**HE RAIN COMES DOWN steady and hard. Jason Storie hears it but is not worried as he prepares for a day of caving with five friends in a remote spot 80 miles northwest of his home in Duncan, on Canada's Vancouver Island.

He is dressed for the wet weather—and for just about any other predicament: a T-shirt, then two sweatshirts, a pair of overalls, neoprene socks, a water-resistant jacket, and rubber boots. Under his arm, he proudly carries his new helmet and headlamp.

"Sleep in," he whispers, bending down to kiss his wife, Caroline Storie.

"Be careful," she says.

"Always."

It's 6 a.m. on December 5, 2015. A newcomer to the sport, Jason has gone caving only four times. This will be his toughest outing yet: a cave called Cascade. It's dangerous enough that the entry is blocked by a locked

## THE DRIP TURNS INTO A STEADY FLOW. SOON THEY ARE WADING UP TO THEIR SHINS.

metal door to keep the casual spelunker out; the key can be obtained only after everyone in the caving party signs a waiver. About a mile long and 338 feet deep, Cascade is full of turns and barely passable tight squeezes—a claustrophobe's nightmare.

Jason is the outlier among the group, with the least experience and, at 43, older by a decade or more. A stocky father of two toddlers, he is

a university drama graduate turned entrepreneur, the owner of a window-washing company. It was his friend Andrew Munoz, 33, who introduced him to the sport. Unlike Jason, Andrew is an expert caver—a former caving guide, actually—and a wiry paramedic who would know what to do if something were to go wrong.

Jason, Andrew, and two more friends—Adam Shepherd, also a paramedic, and Zac Zorisky, a chef and volunteer firefighter—drive through the heavy rain to the parking lot of a log-cabin candy store in Port Alberni, where they get the key to that metal door. There they meet up with Matt Watson and Arthur Taylor, both computer programmers.

The six men drive up an unmarked trail for half a mile before parking in a clearing to take inventory: Ropes, harnesses, and carabiners? Check. Two bags that contain a small gas-fueled Jetboil stove, food, water, and a first aid kit, and a Mylar "space" blanket that resembles aluminum foil? Check, check, and check.

They hike a bit before coming to the door, which sits in the ground—you'd miss it if you weren't looking for it. It's 10 a.m. They pull the door open





Jason (far right) at Double Trouble on a later expedition

and climb 30 feet down a rickety aluminum ladder into the black, each of them anchored with carabiners to a rope. The last one in locks the door behind him and ties the key to the bottom of the ladder. It is damp and chilly, about 41 degrees. With their way illuminated by headlamps, they walk down a narrow passage studded with jagged boulders. The silence is broken by a *drip-drip-drip* from above. Soon the drip turns into a light but steady flow, and they are wading in water up to their ankles, then to their shins.

"Everyone OK?" Andrew, the de facto leader of the group, calls out.

"Yeah," comes the reply.

"Yup."

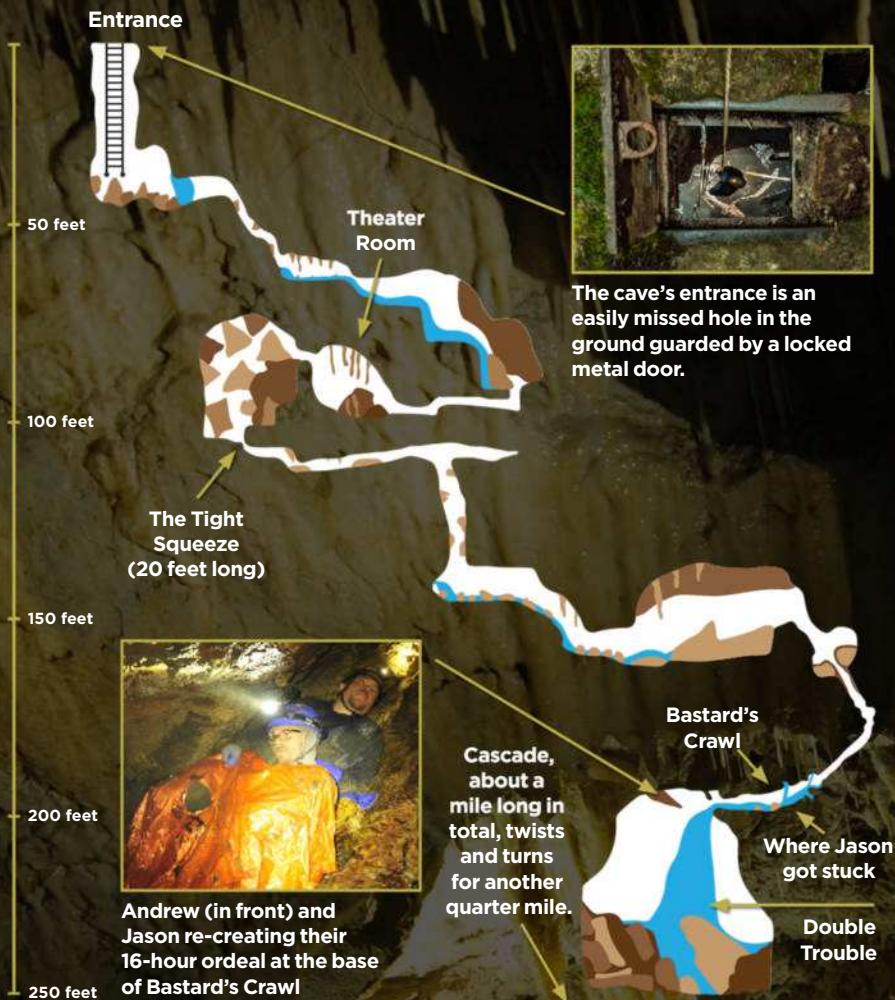
"Me too."

**A**BOUT 45 minutes in, Adam announces he can't go any farther; his back, injured a few weeks earlier, is twinging. The constant hunching over has taken its toll. Matt escorts him to the entrance to let him out. He closes and locks it again, and then rejoins his four waiting friends.

For the next 90 minutes, they are explorers, taking their time as they crawl, stride, and slide through the cave's two very different environments: either pipelike passages barely big enough to fit a grown man or chambers that are like the nave of a church, big but not overwhelming. Wherever they go, they try to stay within a hundred feet from the first person to the last, congregating in the chambers between the

## INSIDE CASCADE

With its narrow passages, flowing streams, and chambers studded with stalagmites and stalactites, Cascade is a caver's dream. But for the novice spelunker, it can turn into a nightmare.





more challenging crawls and climbs.

Jason is in awe of his surroundings. Andrew once told him, "There are over a thousand caves and tunnels on Vancouver Island, and it's never the same." Cascade is like nothing he's seen before.

Soon they approach one of the features that make the cave unique: a narrow passage not big enough to stand up in that leads into a short, tight downhill. This has a name: Bastard's Crawl. Four streams meet here, and indeed, the water is flowing more quickly.

"Crab-walk!" Andrew calls.

Once they emerge from Bastard's Crawl, they approach the top of a waterfall called Double Trouble—so named because a jutting rock splits the stream in two. They set up their ropes to rappel 50 feet. Boots and gloved hands claw for leverage on slippery ledges. The water gushes on either side of the rock formation, landing at the bottom in a spray of bubbles. There's a reason this cave is called Cascade.

As Jason descends, his heart is beating so hard, it feels as if it will jump out of his chest. You wanted a harder challenge, he thinks. You got it.

**A** FEW MINUTES beyond Double Trouble, they stop for a quick bite. It's just before 1 p.m., and they've been in the cave for three hours. Andrew fires up the Jetboil to make beef

and chicken stew with rice. After their 20-minute lunch, the five head out again, sliding and crawling their way down toward the cave's end, less than a quarter mile away. But they get only 300 feet when Zac begins shivering violently. Although the temperature hasn't changed, the cold inside a cave can hit unexpectedly. The five decide to turn back together.

They start to retrace their route. First Matt goes, then Arthur, then Jason, Zac, and Andrew. The sound of rushing water grows louder. There is more mud than there was on the way

## IF HE DOESN'T MOVE FAST, THE SURGING WATER WILL POP HIM OUT ONTO THE ROCKS BELOW.

down a few hours earlier, and it sticks heavily to their heels. Plus, they are now climbing up, so it's taking much longer to return than it did to come down. "Careful!" one of the cavers up front yells to those behind.

As it nears 2:15 p.m., the cavers approach Double Trouble. The sound of the water has turned into a roar. What had before been a gushing but manageable flow is now a churning, angry white froth. How could this happen so quickly? Jason wonders. Is it runoff from the rain?

Matt hooks the rope that was left attached at the top of Double Trouble to his harness and starts hauling himself up. The journey is not long, maybe 50 feet, but it's tough, precise work:

hoisting one leg to find a tiny, wet shelf in the rock wall; then a gloved hand; then the other leg. Once he has climbed to the top, he throws the rope down, and Arthur follows suit, then Jason. At the top, Jason gets on his stomach to pull himself up the incline of Bastard's Crawl. The water, deeper than before, smashes into his face as he powers through it. God, it's cold!

Finally emerging through the opening and into the next tight passage, he pauses, puzzled, because it splits into two. He can't see the two cavers ahead

## JASON TRIES TO CALL FOR HELP, BUT INSTEAD HE GASPS FRANTICALLY FOR AIR.

of him and is nervous about waiting at the top because there is really only room in this spot for one person at a time. I'll just go back down and ask, he decides.

He carefully crab-walks about 15 feet when the streaming water suddenly sweeps him onto his back, submerging him. He feels the pressure of more water building up behind him. If he doesn't get out of the crawl fast, the merciless surge of water will pop him out like a champagne cork, over Double Trouble and onto the rocks below. But he can't move—his boot is stuck between two rock shelves.

Lying on his back with the water rushing over him, he tries to call for help, but instead he gasps frantically for air. It has been about five minutes.

It feels like forever. Images of his family flash before him, like a mental photo album he tries to hold on to: Caroline, whom he has been married to for 16 years and who had warned him to be careful that morning; Jack, five, who loves airplanes; and three-year-old Poppy, his princess.

Zac, having followed Jason up, is now atop Double Trouble. He shouts down to Andrew, "Jason's in trouble!"

Andrew clambers up behind Zac and goes to the bottom of the crawl. "Head up, Jase," he yells to his friend.

He can barely see his friend's face through all the water.

Jason is only a couple of feet away, but he's in such a precarious position and in such a tight space, Andrew can't easily pull him out. "Keep on coming, dude. Toward me! Head up!" Jason is flailing. "Place your feet against me! Lift your butt up and float. C'mon, Jase!"

Jason's gloved hands emerge from the water, then his wet face. He is gulping air as if he has hiccups. "My leg's caught." Jason doesn't recognize his own voice because it comes out so slurred and slow, as if he'd suffered a stroke. He tries to dislodge his boot. It won't budge.

"It's OK, dude," Andrew says, reaching into the rushing water and fishing around for the stuck boot. He grasps something solid. "Is this it?"

"Yeah."

"Well, we got ourselves in a jam. OK, we'll do this together."

**Five of the cavers  
enjoying being  
aboveground for  
a change**



Twenty minutes after getting stuck, Jason emerges from Bastard's Crawl like a baby being birthed, wet through, eyes shut tight, and gasping. Andrew settles him on a narrow ledge inches above the water. Jason, his eyes now wide-open and looking bewildered, knows he had a close escape.

"You're OK," Andrew says, grasping his shoulders. "Zac, stay with Jason while I get the supply bags up ahead."

It takes him about 15 minutes. On his return, Andrew tells Zac the water is still rising, so he should join Matt and Arthur just beyond Bastard's Crawl. "I have to get Jason warmed up before we try to get out," he says. "If we don't catch up to you in 30 minutes, notify Search and Rescue."

Unspoken is Andrew's fear that

Jason is turning hypothermic, so cold that he has stopped shivering. He wraps his friend in the Mylar blanket and fires up the Jetboil. He warms Jason by pouring hot water down his clothes. As he does so, Jason's color starts returning to normal.

"Welcome back, buddy. Do you feel ready to get out of here?"

With an hour hike to the entrance, they start to climb, inundated by water. They're fighting it—or it's fighting them, crushing them, pushing them back. When they finally near the top of the crawl, there are barely four inches of air left between the water and the ceiling, not enough for them to keep their heads up to breathe.

"It's too high!" Andrew calls. "Turn back!"



**Andrew (left) and Jason continue to explore Vancouver Island's caves together.**

Jason spots a ledge; although the wall is at an awkward 45-degree angle, there is room enough for the two of them. Andrew perches in front of Jason to take the brunt of the spray from the water, his legs uncomfortably braced against a ledge on the other side of the waterfall.

The water keeps rising, almost to the ledge, and its sheer force and fury cause a wind to come up. Both men know that caves have their own microclimates, and with nowhere to go, the wind whistles and keens. It is 6 p.m. They are about 200 feet underground at this point. Zac left them three hours ago. They huddle together under a blanket. The Jetboil is out of fuel.

"If we don't get out of here, our wives will kill us!" Jason says drily.

**C**ONSERVING THE batteries in their headlamps, they sit mostly in the dark, which makes them forget what a tight space they are in.

Jason draws on his theatrical training, forcing his breathing to slow down and move through his diaphragm and up to the tip of his skull. Trying to warm his face, he pulls his sweatshirt up over his nose. He thinks about his family and wonders how much life insurance coverage he has.

Andrew silently recites a mantra based on a passage from the science fiction novel *Dune*: Fear is the mind killer. Fear is the little black death that brings total oblivion. I will let the fear pass through me, and when the fear is gone, only I will remain.

There is no sign of rescuers. Did the other three even make it out? Maybe they're lying on the other side of Bastard's Crawl, blocked by water and injured. Or dead.

What the two men don't know is that their friends did make it out. They called for help, and at around 9 p.m., members of the Ground and Cave Search and Rescue squads arrived on the scene and entered the cave. But the water level, as well as its ferocity, forced them to retreat. They would have to try again later.

**T**HE HOURS PASS. Jason and Andrew don't dare to move for fear of slipping. They doze off, then jerk themselves awake, and they check in with each other every 20 minutes or so.

"You still with me?" Andrew asks.

"Yup. You still good?"

"Yup."

Every once in a while, one of them turns on his headlamp to scan the water level. Around 5 a.m., it seems to be receding.

"Let's wait for a bit and see," Andrew says.

An hour later, the water level has gone down enough that they can keep their heads above water and try an escape. Stiff from sitting in one position for 12 hours, they slowly unfold their bodies. Jason screams in pain. A muscle in his groin is strained, but he is determined not to let it stop him.

Getting on all fours and through Bastard's Crawl, nothing else matters but that. Still, each time Jason moves a leg, he cries out. "You can do this," Andrew exhorts. Then they are through.

Over the next 90 minutes, they make their way toward the entrance, at times in chest-high water. Now, in a passage that is high enough for them to walk upright, Jason sees something flicker in the distance.

"Lights! I see lights!" Jason plows ahead. Soon they hear voices.

"Hey," they call out. "We're here!"

"Andrew? Jason?" It's one of the rescuers.

For the first time since entering the cave, over 20 hours earlier, Jason's emotions get to him and tears trickle down his cheeks. "We made it." **R**



## WHY NOMENCLATURE ISN'T THE STUDY OF GNOMES

Mineralogy? Study of minerals.

Oceanology? Study of oceans.

Meteorology? NOT ABOUT METEORS.

 @ADAMOFEARTH





NATURE

Where on earth is my father shooting video of these mysterious critters? Amazingly, they're from ...

# My Neighborhood Gone Wild

BY RYAN BRADLEY

FROM THE *NEW YORK TIMES* MAGAZINE

ILLUSTRATION BY BEN GILES





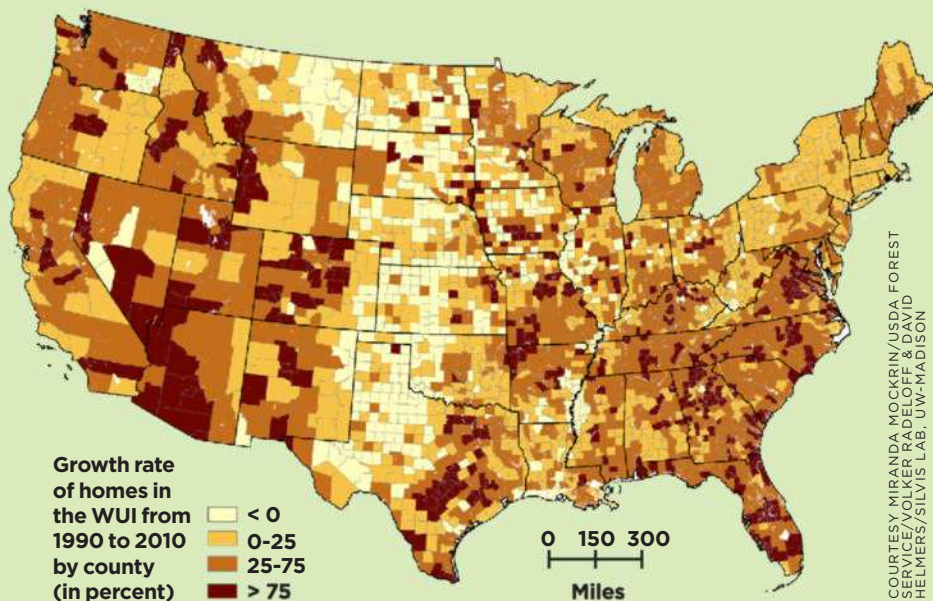
**L**AST YEAR, I RECEIVED an e-mail from my dad, under a mildly worrisome subject line: “Mystery critter???” There was no body text, but attached was a ten-second video clip, shot in the eerie grays of infrared night vision. It showed a furry creature, about the size of a Pomeranian, charging away from the camera and down a driveway.

Midway through the video, the animal stops abruptly, turns slightly, and stares back—if not directly at the camera, near enough that its retinas catch the light and, for a moment,

glow. Then it slouches off, away from the camera and into the darkness. Watching it again, I noticed that the driveway looked oddly familiar. It was my childhood home.

There were soon more e-mails with more videos attached. The next had a fox—or the back half of a fox—making a rapid exit offscreen. The one after that showed a possum plodding into and through some hedges. By the time my dad moved the cameras to the backyard, he had captured another possum, or maybe the same possum, plus more foxes, a rabbit, and a pair of coyotes. He had

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR WILDLANDS



COURTESY MIRANDA MOCKRIN/USDA FOREST SERVICE/VOLKER RADELOFF & DAVID HELMERS/SILVIS LAB, UW-MADISON

also solved the case of the mystery critter. It was a raccoon rendered unrecognizable by the loss of its tail.

My parents live in the foothills of Santa Barbara, California, and for years they had been talking about wanting to set up some camera traps, just to see what sorts of animals were prowling around the house. But my dad had always thought the cameras were a little too expensive and complicated. Still,

“

## By the time my dad moved the cameras, he had captured a possum, foxes, a rabbit, and a pair of coyotes.

they pined. For the past 30 years, my parents' primary hobby has been exploring and settling their backyard, weeding and gardening it aggressively and making note of all the paw prints and scratch marks they encountered as they did so. When I was growing up, this was where I built forts and caught lizards, dug up anthills and found skulls, bleached and buried, of long-dead rodents (and once, a pet cat).

Nature is obviously a beautiful neighbor, as the increasing number of Americans moving closer to the great outdoors can attest. But it's also a tricky neighbor. The **wildland-urban interface (WUI)** is the technical term for areas where homes are intertwined with undeveloped wildland vegetation. As of 2010, after 20 years during which 13 million homes joined the WUI, 99 million people qualified as WUIers. That's one third of Americans. As you can see from the map to the left, there is WUI in every state—even in some very big cities.

The big side effect of life

in the WUI is almost certainly wildfires and the possibility that humans there accidentally start one; forest or brush fires are obviously more likely to threaten lives when there are homes nearby. But fires aren't the only WUI complication, as anyone who has cleaned up the garbage after a raccoon visit or worried about Lyme disease can tell you. For the record, the most dangerous wild animal in America is now the deer. Deer cause approximately 1.5 million car accidents every year, according to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety. But that's just one statistic. For a sense of the

impact of the WUI, take a look at the points below:

- Las Vegas had a 500 percent growth in WUI over the past 20 years, the most of any major metropolitan area.
- In Connecticut, 60 percent of land is in the WUI.
- At least 2,000 coyotes live in and around Chicago, including a large pack in a residential area near O'Hare International.
- There were more alligators removed from Orlando (235) than from any other Florida city in 2016. The average size of the gators: 6.7 feet.
- Texas has the most fatal car crashes involving wildlife: 187 in the past ten years.

This sort of terrain, between the settled and the unsettled land, is known as the wildland-urban interface, or WUI. Each decade, the interface is carefully mapped by the Forest Service as part of its fire-safety precautions. The last effort was in 2010, and it found that almost one in three people in the United States lived in the WUI and that it was the fastest-growing residential region in the country. Covering 10 percent of the map, the WUI runs through the fringes of suburbs and exurbs and in the gaps they never quite fill, but it also creeps into our metropolises. In Los Angeles, where I live, I can see it from my apartment in two different spots: right in the middle of the city where the Santa Monica Mountains run, and again to the east along the San Gabriels.

**A**BOUT A YEAR AGO, an acquaintance recommended that my dad get the Bushnell Trophy Cam. With eight AA batteries and a memory card, the camera—within a third of a second of detecting motion—could power on, capture up to a minute of footage, and store it. It cost around \$150. My dad bought two.

He first pointed them toward a

barren patch of hill where he had noticed a particular pile of scat, which always appeared in the same spot. After leaving the cameras on only one night, he checked. Most of the time, they misfire, capturing more mundane but still ghostly movement—usually branches bobbing in a silent wind. But this first night, right in

front of a bench where he'd attached one camera, a fox arrived. It trotted precisely to the center of the sight line and squatted, briefly, in the exact scat spot. "Can you believe it?" he said, queuing up the video to play for me again.

I could not, yet there it was, plain to see. For me, the pleasure in watch-

ing these videos was that they would never be entirely believable, that the images would always appear to be on the brink of the imaginary. Rather than making the world more knowable, they seem to make it more extraordinary, filled with more life and movement than seems possible in the dead of night. They've taken the familiar—a backyard I know better than any other—and turned it into a place crawling with mystery. It serves as a reminder: In the WUI, the land is still part wild. Wilder than we might care to admit. **R**

“

**In 2010, almost one in three Americans lived within the wildland-urban interface.**



# Laugh Lines

SUNDAE FUNDÆ

This hot fudge  
sundae hasn't killed  
me, so it must be  
making me stronger.

🐦 @ONLYFASTEDDIE

I can't turn water into wine, but I  
can turn ice cream into breakfast.

🐦 @LOUISPEITZMAN

I like to remind  
my kids who's  
boss by putting  
a cherry tomato  
on top of their  
ice cream  
sundaes every  
once in a while.

🐦 @AWESOME\_TODD

If anyone can remember the  
jokes from Popsicle sticks, I'll  
be exposed for the fraud I am.

🐦 @MR\_KAPOWSKI

I dropped my ice cream  
cone on the ground, and it  
landed pointy end up, which  
made the earth, at least for a  
moment, one giant topping.

🐦 @BRIANBOWMAN73

I'm a parent,  
so the only  
warm meal  
I get around  
here is ice  
cream.

🐦 @MARLEBEAN





# Now ... While There's Time

A father learns to embrace the chaos  
of his daughter's toddler years

BY ED BARTLEY

A READER'S DIGEST CLASSIC

"MISSY," I CALLED to my wife, "did you smear Vaseline on my desk?"

"No, honey. Meghan probably did." Just like that. Calm. As I'd feared, she had missed the carefully honed, double-edged irony of the question. I knew she hadn't put it there. The question was rhetorical; its only function was to make clear to her that she hadn't done her job: defend my desk against the aggressor.

I abandoned the conversation. I would deal with Meghan, our 22-month-old daughter, later.

All of that was yesterday. Today I sit here at that same rolltop desk, which I salvaged from a friend's attic two years ago, and stare at the blank sheet inserted in the typewriter. I wait patiently for ideas to come to me, examine questions on Herman Melville for a test I will give my English students

tomorrow. My wife is off to a reunion somewhere, but I am not alone. Our two children keep me company. Ten-month-old Edward cooperates to some degree; he spends most of his day poring over a seemingly endless array of cards, tags, and other assorted pieces of paper, plus a Sears, Roebuck catalog that he tears apart page by page. Occasionally he leans out and flails madly at the piano, which he can just reach.

But it is Meghan whose plans have been destined from all eternity to clash with mine today.

She follows a daily routine that is both time-consuming and challenging. It includes certain basic tasks: watching the “grop.” (That would be the fish.) Sweeping the rug in her room and her crib. (Yes, Meghan sweeps her crib.) Sitting for a few minutes on the bottom shelf of the bookcase to determine whether she still fits there. (She fit yesterday, and the prospects look good for tomorrow.) Checking periodically on Edward. Climbing in and out of the stroller for practice. Testing the sofa springs.

Her constant companion through all of this is Dumpty, a shapeless rag doll whose best days are far behind him. A year ago, he was well stuffed and bursting with good cheer. His perpetual smile endeared him to Meghan immediately. She provides his transportation; he provides her security. The filthier he grows, the more she seems to rely on his wisdom and homespun philosophy.

About a week ago, my wife put Dumpty in the washing machine, hoping at least to make him recognizable. We were not ready for the emaciated creature that emerged. Dumpty had been disemboweled during the rinse cycle. My wife spent 20 minutes picking his foam rubber intestines out of the machine. We thought Meghan might discard this mere shell of a Dumpty. We were wrong. There was no detectable difference in her relationship with him, except that she found him easier to carry while performing her chores.

**I** CAN DO MY OWN work fairly well during most of these chores, and so I concentrate on Melville. (“Discuss the similarity of the alienation theme in *Bartleby the Scrivener* and Kafka’s *Metamorphosis*.”) But I am soon sidetracked. Unfortunately, I had not counted on the arrival of the “bib-bibs.” (“Bib-bibs” are birds.)

“Bib-bibs, bib-bibs!” shrieks Meghan, her eyes alive with expectation. She insists that I go with her to the window.

“In a second. Just let me finish this question. Have you read Kafka’s *Metamorphosis*, Meghan? You haven’t? You’d really enjoy it.”

The sarcasm leaves no mark, and she pulls me by the hand (two fingers, actually) toward the window. I see myself as a slow-wit in some novel, being led oaflike to watch the bib-bibs. And we do watch them. They chatter

incessantly and leap back and forth on the lawn just outside our apartment window. Meghan is absorbed, but as I watch them, I wonder whether I parked the car under a tree last night.

Suddenly she bolts from the room (she seldom walks), and I hear her naked feet slapping against the wooden floor outside. She returns with Dumpty. She holds him up to the window, stretching him out by his two pathetic, triangular arms and whispering into his nonexistent ear, "Bib-bibs, Hindy, bib-bibs!" Dumpty smiles. It's a much wider smile than it used to be.

I leave them in conversation and return to my desk. Within five minutes she appears before me, wearing her mother's shoes. She reaches up to the typewriter keys and depresses four of them simultaneously.

"No, thank you, Meghan. Daddy's seen your work. He'll do it himself."

She backs off. Out of the corner of my eye, I can see her in the kitchen watching the gop swim around in his circular world. I can see that the water in his bowl needs to be changed.

Back to the test. Determined. ("Discuss illusion and reality in *Benito Cereno*.")

"Don't even ask, Meghan. Not today." She stands in front of me with her shoes and socks in her hands. I

know the pattern. First the shoes and socks. Then the stroller. And pretty soon we're in the park. She'll want me to pick her a dandelion or a leaf from a tree. And she'll clutch that leaf or dandelion the way she always does when we walk to the park. Oh, yes, I know the pattern.

She rests her head on my leg, just as she did when she first learned to walk. She used to bring her plastic comb or her hairbrush and rest her head on my leg while I combed her hair. That ritual, however, ended after only a few months—much too soon for me.

Finally she leaves, and I watch her frustration as she sits on the floor and tries for several minutes to put on one of her socks. The art proves too elusive. In years to come, she'll put on stockings or leotards with the ease and grace of a ballerina. But today, a tiny pair of socks defeats her.

She sees me looking! Back to work. ("What is the significance of the motto carved on the bow of Benito Cereno's ship?")

She pats the wicker chair, the comfortable one we sit in together to watch TV or to read, and she hastily gathers her books: *The Poky Little Puppy*, *The Magic Bus*, *The Cat in the Hat*, even that ancient copy of *National Geographic* with the penguin

***I see her standing quietly near the sofa, tears running down her cheeks.***



on the cover ... Good Lord, she's got them all. With her free hand, she tugs at my sleeve.

"No, Meghan," I snap irritably. "Not now. Go away and leave me alone. And take your library with you."

**T**HAT DOES IT; she leaves. She makes no further attempt to bother me. I can finish the test easily now without interference. No one trying to climb onto my lap; no extra fingers helping me type.

I see her standing quietly with her back against the sofa, tears running down her cheeks. She has two fingers of her right hand in her mouth. She holds the tragic Dumpty in her left. She watches me type and slowly brushes the tip of Dumpty's anemic arm across her nose for comfort.

At this moment, only for a moment, I see things as God must—in perspective, with all the pieces fitting. I see a little girl cry because I haven't time for her. Imagine ever being that important to another human being! I see the day when it won't mean so much to a tiny soul to have me sit next to her and read a story, one that means little to either of us, realizing somehow that it is the sitting next to each other that means everything. And I see the day when the frail, loyal, and lovable

Dumpty will vanish from the life of a little girl who has outgrown him.

I resent Dumpty for an instant. He's consoling my girl, and that is my job. She and I have few enough days like this to share. So the paper slips gently into the top drawer; the hood slides over the typewriter. The test will get done somehow. Tests always get done.

"Meghan, I feel like taking a walk down to the park. I was wondering if you and Edward would care to join me. I thought you might like to go on the swings for a while. Bring Dumpty—and your red sweater too. It might be windy down there."

At the word *park*, the fingers leave the mouth. She laughs excitedly and begins the frantic search for her socks.

Melville will have to wait, but he won't mind. He waited most of his life for someone to discover the miracle of *Moby-Dick*—and died 30 years before anyone did. No, he won't mind.

Besides, he'd understand why I must go right now—while bib-bibs still spark wonder and before dandelions become weeds and while a little girl thinks that a leaf from her father is a gift beyond measure. **R**

*Suddenly, I see things as God must—in perspective, with all the pieces fitting.*

**This story originally appeared in the December 1969 issue of *Reader's Digest*. It was the winner of the *Reader's Digest* First Person award.**

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# WHO KNEW

## 13 Things You Didn't Know About Thunderstorms

BY MICHELLE CROUCH

**1** Lightning strikes more than eight million times a day worldwide. That's about 93 times per second.

**2** How hot is a lightning bolt? About 50,000°F—five times hotter than the surface of the sun.

**3** Yes, it really can rain frogs, fish, and other decidedly odd things. It's a rare meteorological event, but scientists say strong winds from a tornado or from a storm can be powerful enough to propel animals and objects high into the air, and they have to come down eventually. A small Australian town reported hundreds of fish falling from the sky in 2010.

**4** Is it a hurricane or a typhoon? They're actually the same type of event. What we call a hurricane in the United States is a typhoon if it forms in the northwestern Pacific. Meteorologists also use the general term *tropical cyclone*.

**5** It is a bad idea to take a shower during a thunderstorm. If lightning hits your house, it can travel through your plumbing and shock anyone who comes into contact with water flowing through it. People have been shocked or killed while bathing, washing dishes, and doing laundry. (This is also why indoor pools often close during storms.)



**6** Rubber tires are not what protect you from lightning when you're in your car. You're protected because when lightning hits a car, it travels around the outside of the metal structure to get to the ground. Just be careful not to touch any metal areas on the interior.

**7** By one measure, Tropical Storm Claudette was the wettest storm in U.S. history. It dumped 43 inches of rain in 24 hours—the most rain ever recorded in one day—on Alvin, Texas, in July 1979.

**8** You can be struck by lightning even when it's not raining. About 10 percent of lightning strikes take place when there's no precipitation.

**9** In the 1980s, NASA flew one airplane through 1,496 thunderstorms. It was struck by lightning more than 700 times. This was part of an effort to improve lightning-protection standards in aviation, and it worked. Today, a commercial airplane will be hit by lightning about once a year on average, typically with no ill effects. It has been

decades since a U.S. airliner has crashed as a result of a lightning strike.

**10** Every day, twice a day, weather trackers simultaneously launch giant balloons from almost 900 locations worldwide (including 92 released by the National Weather Service in the United States and its territories). The balloons measure aboveground weather data such as temperature, humidity, and wind speed, and they provide vital information that meteorologists use to make forecasts and predict storms.

**11** Lightning can strike the same place twice—and it often does, especially objects that are tall, pointy, and isolated. The Empire State Building, for example, is hit almost 100 times a year, according to the CDC.

**12** Covering your windows with tape will not protect them from wind or flying objects. Experts

promoted this idea long ago, before they realized that taping does nothing to strengthen windows and may even increase the potential for harm. (Picture giant taped-together shards of glass flying at you.) Covering your windows with storm shutters or plywood is the only way to prevent them from breaking.

**13** And nothing is going to save you if you get caught in the hailstorm from you-know-where. Ice particles form when water droplets reach cold temperatures in a thunderstorm, but they achieve a measurable size only when a storm's updraft is strong enough to hold the ice aloft as more water droplets freeze onto the initial crystal. The largest hailstone ever recorded in the United States was found in July 2010 in Vivian, South Dakota. It was almost 19 inches around and weighed almost two pounds. Ouch. **R**

Sources: Ron Holle, an expert on lightning data; the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; and Warren Faidley, an extreme-weather photographer, a survival expert, and a tactical EMT



## THE MOST POPULAR SONG IN AMERICA

Since *Billboard* magazine first published its “Hot 100” chart in 1958, 16 different songs titled “Hold On” have made the list (most recently in 2013, courtesy of the Alabama Shakes). In that sense, “Hold On” is the most popular song in American music history.

Source: billboard.com



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Clever scientists are naming new species after some very unlikely pop-culture icons

# Meet David Bowie, The Spider

BY JACOB DUBÉ

FROM MOTHERBOARD.VICE.COM

FOR YEARS, people have been naming their pets—and their kids, in some cases—after pop icons they love. In 2016, 370 people in the United States named their baby girls Khaleesi in honor of a *Game of Thrones* character.

Scientists, too, are constantly naming newly discovered species after celebs. But these names might carry a little bit more weight: While a baby named Khaleesi can get older and decide to legally change her name, scientific names go down in

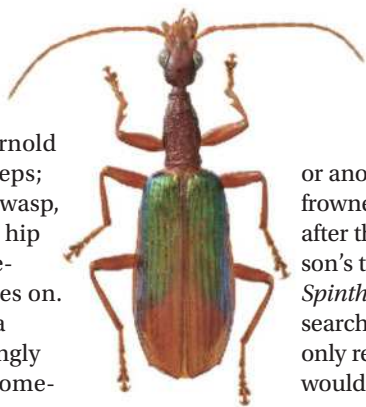


*Heteropoda davidbowie* (left) is a yellow arachnid that just might be mistaken for a spider from Mars.

the history books. There's the *Agra schwarzeneggeri* beetle, named after Arnold Schwarzenegger's biceps; the *Aleiodes shakirae* wasp, named after Shakira's hip and belly dance movements; and the list goes on.

Turns out, there is a method to this seemingly mad nomenclature. Sometimes having a recognizable name attached to what might otherwise be an unremarkable little creature is the only way for the species to get widespread attention. The latest case in point: In September 2017, researchers announced the discovery of 15 new species of spiders in the Caribbean. They named three of them after Leonardo DiCaprio, David Bowie, and Michelle Obama.

Spider expert Ingi Agnarsson is an associate professor of biology at the University of Vermont and was the lead researcher of the Caribbean study, published in *Zoological Journal of the Linnean Society*. He says scientists who discover a new species can basically call it whatever they want, as long as they use the correct genus name. For example, some scientists name a new species after a loved one



*Agra schwarzeneggeri* is a beetle with bulging legs that look like buff biceps.

“

**Identifying a species with a recognizable person is a way to raise awareness.**

or another scientist; it's frowned upon to name it after themselves. Agnarsson's team called one spider *Spintharus skelly*, after a researcher's cat, Skelly. The only real problem, he said, would be if a scientist was

going to receive any sort of potential benefit, such as if a megastore paid a lab to christen a species *walmarti*. (Even when the names don't have traditional Latin translations, Latin-ifying names for species is a common practice in science. Generally, just add an *i* if it's a masculine name and an *ae* if it's feminine.)

Agnarsson, along with four students who participated in the research, named spiders after prominent advocates for animal conservation and action on climate change.

Among the spiders Agnarsson named are *Spintharus davidbowiei* (not the first creature named after Bowie), *S. davidattenboroughi* (not even close to the first creature to be named after David Attenborough), and *S. leonardodicaprio* (*Spintharus* being the spiders' genus).

Agnarsson says some species are named this way because scientists have trouble getting the public interested in their studies. Identifying them with a recognizable person is a way to raise awareness and provide an opportunity to learn about the issues surrounding nature and conservation. It also allows scientists to highlight some humanlike traits in these animals and ultimately

make them a bit more relatable.

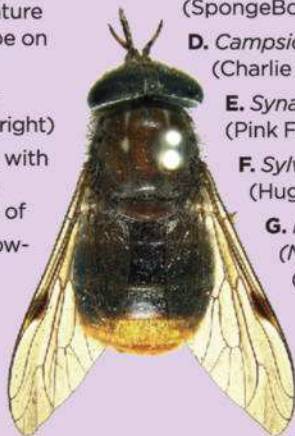
“We’re always trying to find ways of calling attention to major issues in conservation,” Agnarsson says. “This way, the general public will hear about it.” Some real (but obscure) Latin words won’t get many headlines, but the *Neopalpa donald-trumpi* moth and the *Spintharus berniesandersi* spider managed to get people talking. **R**

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## CAN YOU MATCH THE DISCOVERY TO ITS CELEBRITY?

### DISCOVERY

1. Bunny from the Florida Keys
2. Bright orange mushroom that can soak up and wring out water
3. Hippo-like prehistoric animal with massive lips
4. Ancient marine creature with an hourglass shape on its head
5. Horsefly with a gold-colored rear (shown at right)
6. Extinct sea creature with claws Edward Scissorhands would be proud of
7. Fly whose legs go bow-legged when it dies
8. Slime-mold beetle with a helmetlike head
9. Shrimp with bright pink-red claws



### SPECIES NAME

- A. *Scaptia (Plinthina) beyonceae* (Beyoncé)
- B. *Agathidium vaderi* (Darth Vader)
- C. *Spongiforma squarepantsii* (SpongeBob SquarePants)
- D. *Campsicnemus charliechaplini* (Charlie Chaplin)
- E. *Synalpheus pinkfloydi* (Pink Floyd)
- F. *Sylvilagus palustris hefneri* (Hugh Hefner)
- G. *Norasaphus (Norasaphites) monroeae* (Marilyn Monroe)
- H. *Jaggermeryx naida* (Mick Jagger)
- I. *Kootenichela deppi* (Johnny Depp)

Answers: 1-F; 2-C; 3-H; 4-G; 5-A; 6-I; 7-D; 8-B; 9-E

## ASK THE EXPERT



**Jacques Herzog, M.D.**  
Cochlear Medical Advisor

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### **Q** How do implants differ from hearing aids?

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**With hearing loss, you're missing so much more than just your hearing. Don't let hearing loss prevent you from living your life fully.**

### **Q** Are cochlear implants covered by Medicare?

Yes, Medicare and most private insurance plans routinely cover cochlear implants.

### **Q** What does a cochlear implant system look like?

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*Dr. Jacques Herzog, a cochlear implant surgeon and medical advisor to Cochlear, the world leader in cochlear implants, answers questions about cochlear implants and how they are different from hearing aids.*

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IT PAYS TO INCREASE YOUR

# Word Power

*Before you splash in a pool, bask on a beach, or putter in your garden, master this list of summertime words. You won't find a lemonade stand on the next page, but you will find answers.*

BY EMILY COX & HENRY RATHVON

- 1. torrid** ('tohr-ihd) *adj.*—A: blooming. B: scorching. C: perspiring.
- 2. deluge** ('dehl-yooj) *n.*—A: heavy downpour. B: squirt gun. C: greenhouse.
- 3. verdant** ('vurh-dint) *adj.*—A: sandy. B: green. C: buggy.
- 4. tack** (tak) *v.*—A: hook a fish. B: upend a raft. C: change direction when sailing.
- 5. pyrotechnics** (py-ruh-'tek-niks) *n.*—A: sunspots. B: fireworks. C: heat waves.
- 6. chigger** ('chih-ger) *n.*—A: fastball. B: biting mite. C: beer garden.
- 7. estivate** ('eh-stuh-vayt) *v.*—A: lounge outdoors. B: nurture until grown. C: spend the summer.
- 8. pattypan** ('pa-tee-pan) *n.*—A: playground. B: heat rash. C: summer squash.
- 9. alfresco** (al-'freh-skoh) *adv.*—A: with cheese sauce. B: outdoors. C: in a fresh state.
- 10. hibachi** (hih-'bah-chee) *n.*—A: raincoat. B: charcoal griller. C: Asian eggplant.
- 11. pergola** ('per-guh-luh) *n.*—A: umbrella. B: trellis. C: paid vacation.
- 12. glamping** ('glam-ping) *n.*—A: cave exploring. B: glamorous camping. C: sunbathing.
- 13. plage** (plahzh) *n.*—A: lawn tennis. B: lightning strike. C: beach at a resort.
- 14. espadrilles** ('eh-spuh-drillz) *n.*—A: rope-soled shoes. B: hedge pruners. C: pair of matching beach chairs.
- 15. horticulture** ('hohr-tih-kul-cher) *n.*—A: seaside community. B: pond wildlife. C: science of growing plants.

 To play an interactive version of Word Power on your iPad, download the Reader's Digest app.

## Answers

**1. torrid**—[B] scorching. This has been the most *torrid* August I can remember!

**2. deluge**—[A] heavy downpour. Tatiana threw on her black slicker and headed out into the *deluge*.

**3. verdant**—[B] green. Vermont is famous for its *verdant* mountain ranges.

**4. tack**—[C] change direction when sailing. The catamaran had to *tack* quickly to avoid the floating debris.

**5. pyrotechnics**—[B] fireworks. Every Fourth of July, my neighbors set off *pyrotechnics* in their yard until three a.m.

**6. chigger**—[B] biting mite. Miranda doused herself in bug spray before her hike to ward off *chiggers*.

**7. estivate**—[C] spend the summer. After hockey season ends, the Myers family *estivates* by the ocean.

**8. pattypan**—[C] summer squash. Has that pesky rabbit been nibbling my *pattypan* again?

**9. alfresco**—[B] outdoors. “Whose idea was it to dine *alfresco*?” Ira grumbled, flicking an ant off his sandwich.

**10. hibachi**—[B] charcoal grill. Come on over—I’m going to throw some burgers on the *hibachi* tonight.

**11. pergola**—[B] trellis. Legend has it that couples who kiss under this *pergola* will live happily ever after.

**12. glamping**—[B] glamorous camping. Hayden goes *glamping* with every amenity, then tells everyone he “roughed it.”

**13. plage**—[C] beach at a resort. I never hit the *plage* until I’m completely slathered in sunscreen.

**14. espadrilles**—[A] rope-soled shoes. Melissa used to live in flip-flops every summer, but now she prefers *espadrilles*.

**15. horticulture**—[C] science of growing plants. The coveted *Horticulture Award* is a statuette of a green thumb.

### THE IDIOMS OF SUMMER

When it comes to coining notable phrases, baseball is *in a league of its own*. If you think that claim is *off base*, we’ll list the evidence *right off the bat*. Consider *in the ballpark*, *throw a curveball*, *pinch-hit*, and every shopper’s favorite: *rain check*. Still think we haven’t *covered our bases*? Then *step up to the plate* and name another sport that has hit more syntactical home runs.

### VOCABULARY RATINGS

**9 & below:** warm  
**10–12:** hot  
**13–15:** blazing

# Humor in Uniform



*"Watkins, you remember I said be prepared for the unexpected."*

**MY GRANDDAUGHTER'S** husband was complaining about how spell-check changes the meaning of e-mails when an Air Force officer told him this story: He'd sent a message to 300 of his personnel addressed to "Dear Sirs and Ma'am's." It was received as "Dear Sirs and Mamas."

PHYLLIS HOWARD, *Lincoln, Missouri*

**AS MY SUPERVISOR** and I left the headquarters building, the lawn sprinklers, which had been showering the walkway, stopped. After he

realized that he had forgotten something, we went back inside. With that, the sprinklers started again. "There must be a motion sensor controlling the spray," we said, and decided to test it by walking in and out the front door. After several laps, I began looking around for the sensor. By the side of the building, instead of a sensor, I saw a very confused gardener, his hand on a water faucet.

Source: gcfi.net

**Your military anecdote might be worth \$\$\$! For details, go to [rd.com/submit](http://rd.com/submit).**

# Quotable Quotes



**You can make waves  
or be a wave rider.  
You can never do both  
at the same time.**

**MARK MOTONAGA, designer**

**MAKE A BUCKET LIST;  
DO EVERYTHING ON  
THAT BUCKET LIST; MAKE  
ANOTHER BUCKET LIST.**

**KATE HUDSON, actor**



**Success is a lousy teacher.  
It seduces smart people into thinking  
they can't lose.** **BILL GATES, business leader**

**WHEN I SAY "MY  
HUSBAND," I FEEL  
LIKE I'M DOING  
THE IMPRESSION  
OF A MARRIED  
PERSON.**

**JAMIE LEE, comedian**



**If you have three  
people in your life  
that you can trust,  
you can consider  
yourself the  
luckiest person in  
the whole world.**

**SELENA GOMEZ, singer**

**MAN'S MOST VALUABLE TRAIT IS A JUDICIOUS  
SENSE OF WHAT NOT TO BELIEVE.**

**EURIPIDES, playwright**

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