

# Reader's Digest

**WIN!**  
Great  
Holiday  
Gifts  
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EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

## MICHELLE OBAMA'S FAMILY VALUES

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### The Year in Miracles

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Here's how to  
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Feeling great  
starts here PAGE 180

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# Reader's Digest

DECEMBER 2011/JANUARY 2012

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As she starts her fourth year in the White House, First Lady Michelle Obama is passionate about the needs of America's military families and about creating a brighter, healthier future for our kids. And she wouldn't mind coffee in bed.

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JOE KITA

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FROM THE LOS ANGELES TIMES

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Five stories of amazing resilience and miraculous recoveries.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY TAMARA REYNOLDS

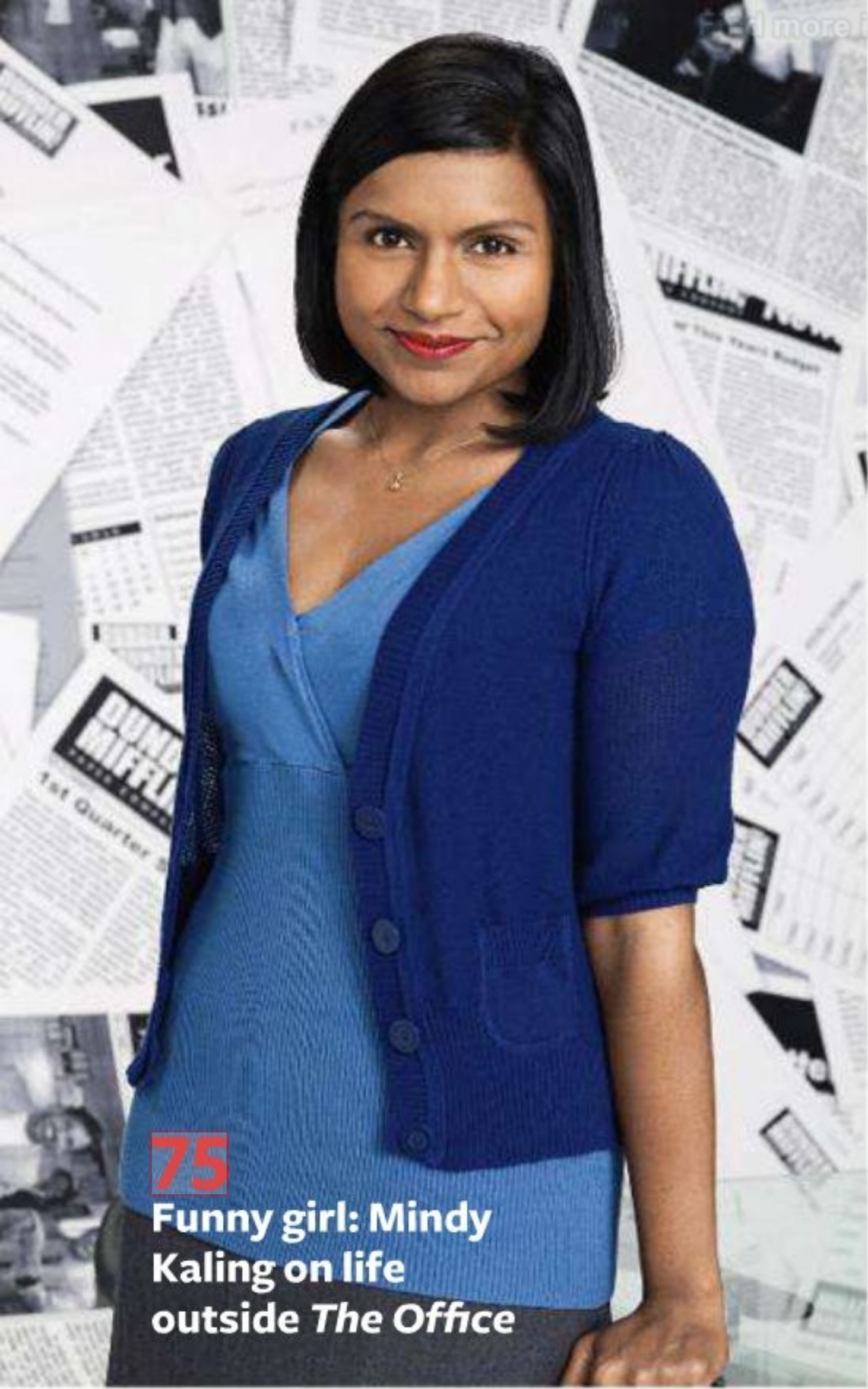
ON THE COVER: PHOTOGRAPHED BY BEN BAKER/REDUX;  
HAIR BY JOHNNY WRIGHT, MAKEUP BY DERRICK RUTLEDGE



# Reader's Digest

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**Does the holiday season stress you out?**



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### MOIST AND SAVORY STUFFING

Prep: 10 min. Cook: 10 min. Bake: 30 min. Serves: 10

- 2½ cups Swanson® Chicken Broth (Regular, *Natural Goodness*® or Certified Organic)
- Generous dash ground black pepper
- 2 stalks celery, coarsely chopped
- 1 large onion, coarsely chopped
- 1 pkg. (14 oz.) *Pepperidge Farm*® Herb Seasoned Stuffing

1. Heat broth, black pepper, celery and onion in 3-qt. saucepan over medium-high heat to a boil. Reduce heat to low. Cover and cook 5 min. or until vegetables are tender. Add stuffing and mix lightly.
2. Spoon stuffing mixture into greased 3-qt. shallow baking dish. Cover baking dish.
3. Bake at 350° F. 30 min. or until stuffing mixture is hot.

Tip: For crunchier stuffing, bake stuffing uncovered.



The secret is 

[CampbellsKitchen.com/SwansonBroth](http://CampbellsKitchen.com/SwansonBroth)

## Fightin' Words

Tom Junod's essay about marriage conflicts hit home ("The Good Fight"). A marriage should be a blend of two personalities whose separate characteristics and beliefs are still distinguishable. I love my husband not despite our differences but because of them. He has helped to harden my "pushover" personality, while I have helped to soften some of his rough edges. We both still stand firm for our individual beliefs, and this just adds fuel to our fire!

L. W., Nacogdoches, Texas

Why should there be fights in every marriage? I've been married 60 years, and I know something about having a good relationship with a wife.

When we have a disagreement, I stop and think, Is this something that is important? If it's not, I let it pass. If it is, a little reasoning, and the matter is done—without a fight. The result: We get along just fine with love and kisses. *Augie Gessert Jr., Warren, Michigan*

## Two Views

Relegating chiropractic treatment to the "Mad Medicine" section is disappointing ("Fringe Benefits"). I would expect *Reader's Digest* to have more discretion than to perpetuate a claim from a doctor that several of his patients suffered



Arguing is not a matter of winning or losing. Winning at the expense of love and respect is not the solution. The solution is forgiveness.

*John Talerico, Middletown, New Jersey*

strokes after chiropractic treatment without any references or studies to back it. In 30 years, not one patient of mine has had an adverse event. If chiropractic is so dangerous, why is my malpractice insurance less than the average MD's?

*E. F., Washington, D.C.*

Recently, I went for a regular visit to my chiropractor and left with a lot of neck pain. After several days of intense pain, my husband insisted that I get my neck examined. A CT scan

## IF YOU COULD CHANGE ONE THING ABOUT CHRISTMASTIME, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

We asked our Facebook followers to share what they would do differently to spread holiday cheer.

■ Reduce airfare!

H. M., Munich, Germany

■ It should come more often than just once a year.

E. H., Wyckoff, New Jersey

■ Bring back simpler times and get rid of the commercialism.

D. W., Brackney, Pennsylvania

■ More family, fewer gifts.

D. G., Temecula, California

■ Take the humbug out of it!

M. T., Tecumseh, Michigan

■ Every business closed for the day, like they used to.

A. T., Kingston, Pennsylvania

■ Ask stores to stop selling Christmas merchandise before Halloween.

D. P., Burton, Michigan

■ Heal the past to bring my family together again.

J. D., Amity, Oregon

■ Mom knowing that not everything needs to be perfect.

W. L., Madera, Pennsylvania

■ All would remember the reason for the season.

L. W., Elkhart, Indiana

■ More than one paid day off.

E. J., Gurnee, Illinois

was followed by an ultrasound, and I was diagnosed with a dissected carotid artery, which usually results in stroke or death. There are other ways to tear a carotid artery, and I can't prove that's what happened when my neck was adjusted. If I go back to a chiropractor again, I guarantee no one will touch my neck!

Susan Johnston, Bend, Oregon

## IHNIWYTA!

I found your texting cheat sheet helpful (Family Digest). To practice, I wrote a story: IMY @ \*\$. DQMOT but IMNSHO \*\$ BG (LQTS). IDK if you KWIM. Said ILY to girl. She, said IMHO you should MYOB! I said JK. She HMUside the head! Then she was ROFL (W/E). IDC. I asked "What's up." She said IDK, NMU? Have fun! UW.

Paul Reardon, Peoria, Illinois

## Face Your Finances

Being in debt is not a game to win against your creditors ("13 Things a Debt Collector Won't Tell You"). It's a serious and unfortunate predicament that many people face. A debt collector has to tell consumers what they don't want to hear: You need to pay back your creditors before you buy a gym membership, your daily latte, or a \$300 pair of shoes.

M. D., Atlanta, Georgia

It appears that *Reader's Digest* is giving people step-by-step instructions on how to avoid paying back their debt or how to pay as little as



possible. Wouldn't an article on ways to rein in personal spending be more appropriate?

*Barb Borden, Waukesha, Wisconsin*

## The Real Loser

I enjoyed the story on Leymah Gbowee ("She Dreamed of Peace") but was appalled by the young American boy who told her, "Go back to your country, loser." How disappointing that this young man did not appreciate Ms. Gbowee coming to share her experiences. Above all, how utterly sad that he feels free to speak to others this way.

*Stacia Roesler, Alexandria, Virginia*

*Editors' Note: In October, Leymah Gbowee was awarded the 2011 Nobel Peace Prize, along with Liberian president Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and Yemeni opposition leader Tawakkul Karman. The three were hailed as deeply courageous and visionary leaders who have peacefully sparked reform in societies usually dominated by men.*



## Your Cheers Can Help Your Town Win!

**In 2011**, the *Reader's Digest* "We Hear You, America" campaign donated over \$7.5 million in promotional support and cash to local communities across the country for important civic projects. More than half the towns in the United States participated.

As *Reader's Digest* launches its second annual "We Hear You, America" campaign, we want to hear from even more of you. The winning towns will receive cash and free publicity and be included in our annual "Best of America" issue in May 2012.

It's easy to participate: Just go to **readersdigest.com/america** and give a "cheer" for your town. You can also check your town's ranking and share what makes it so terrific. Each participating town will get its own page, and you can even play our Best of America online game. Could your town be a winner?

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- Include your full name, address, e-mail, and daytime phone number. We may edit letters and use them in all print and electronic media.

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### Submissions

For short humor items, please see [page 84](#). We regret that we cannot accept or acknowledge unsolicited artwork, photographs, or article-length manuscripts.

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As a regular reader of this magazine, you've seen the logo at the bottom corner of this page appear in *Reader's Digest* many times over the last several months.

This logo represents a new and very special relationship between Reader's Digest and Humana — a national leader in healthcare coverage. Together we've partnered to introduce a line of Medicare insurance products under the **Humana Reader's Digest Healthy Living Plan** name.

Whether you're choosing a Medicare plan for yourself, a family member, or someone in your care, no other Medicare plans can offer this unique value to you. The **Humana Reader's Digest Healthy Living Plans** provide the coverage you need along with practical tools to help you live a healthier life, including **special publications with trusted health information from *Reader's Digest*, available only to plan members.** And, we're working with Humana to make Medicare simpler than ever with a **special communication that can make your plan easier to use and understand.**

We're very proud to be partnering with Humana to bring you Medicare plans you can understand from partners you can trust. More information is available in this issue on pages **53-68**, at **1-800-798-9948** or at **[Humana-medicare.com](http://Humana-medicare.com)**.

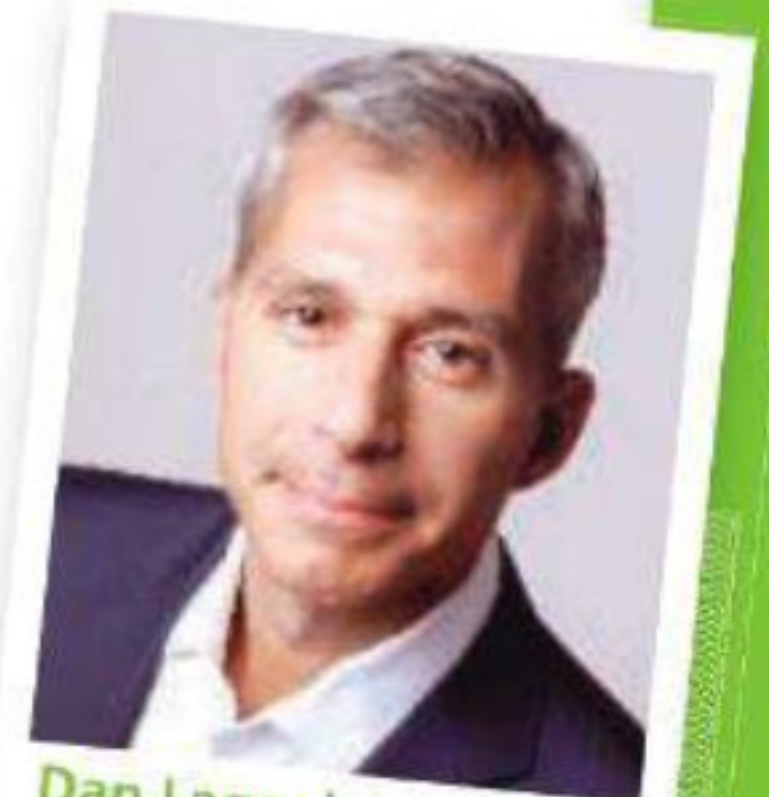
To a healthy 2012!



Dan Lagani  
President, Reader's Digest North America

The Humana family has health plans with a Medicare contract. These plans are not available in all areas. Contact Humana for more information.

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**Dan Lagani**  
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North America





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Look at this bunch. This family you created. You started all this, you know. Now enjoy every moment with them.

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# The Digest

Simply put

**Food**  
page 12

**Family**  
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**Home**  
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**Health**  
page 39

**Tech**  
page 70

**Misc**  
page 75

## Let Us Eat Cake

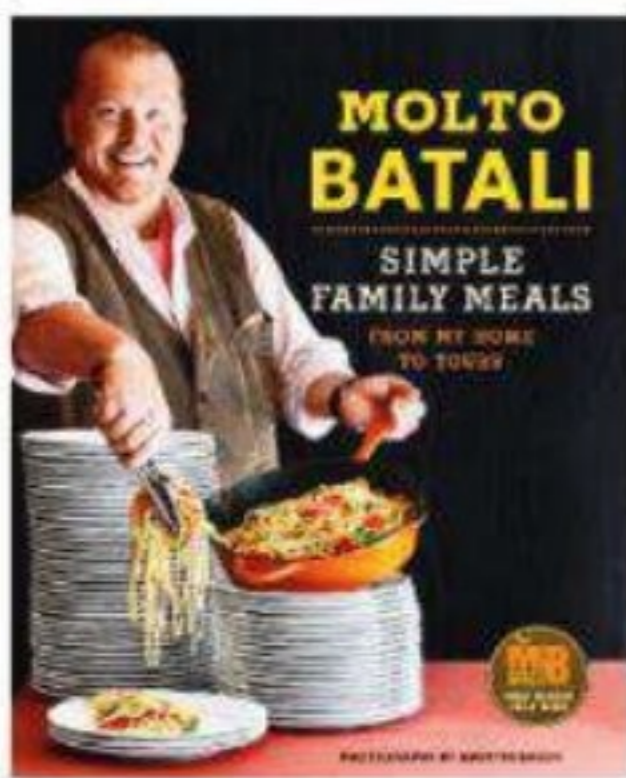
Make a great French dessert without wearing a toque or cowering in the face of 26-step recipes. In *The Art of French Baking*, by **Ginette Mathiot** (**Phaidon, \$45**), the steps are simple, the results stunning—like this festive jelly roll (recipe, [page 14](#)).



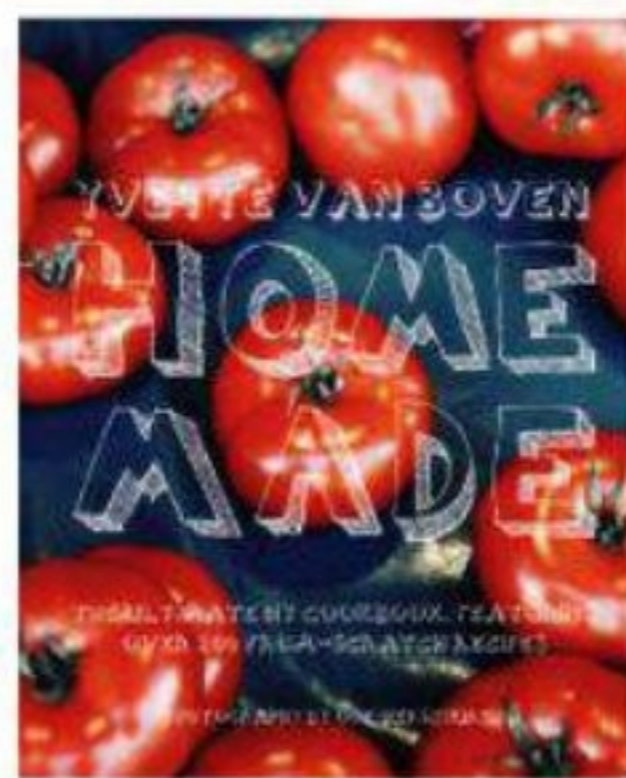
## A Year of Cooking Deliciously

BY LAUREN GNIAZDOWSKI

A roundup of the tastiest new cookbook titles, plus the dishes that make us want to go shopping and start chopping



**Molto Batali**  
by Mario Batali  
(Ecco, \$29.99)



**Home Made**  
by Yvette Van Boven  
(Stewart, Tabori & Chang, \$40)



**Cook This Now**  
by Melissa Clark  
(Hyperion, \$29.99)

Subtitled *Simple Family Meals from My Home to Yours*, Batali's latest book is divided into months, each with an entrée, a soup, side dishes, pastas, and a dessert. The focus is on vegetables and grains this time out, "with less reliance on protein at the center of the plate."

One of the most beautiful books of the year, this one is subtitled *The Ultimate DIY Cookbook, Featuring over 200 From-Scratch Recipes*. With everything from easy breads to smoked meats, it's a kitchen manual that will satisfy the dreams of cooks from novice to expert.

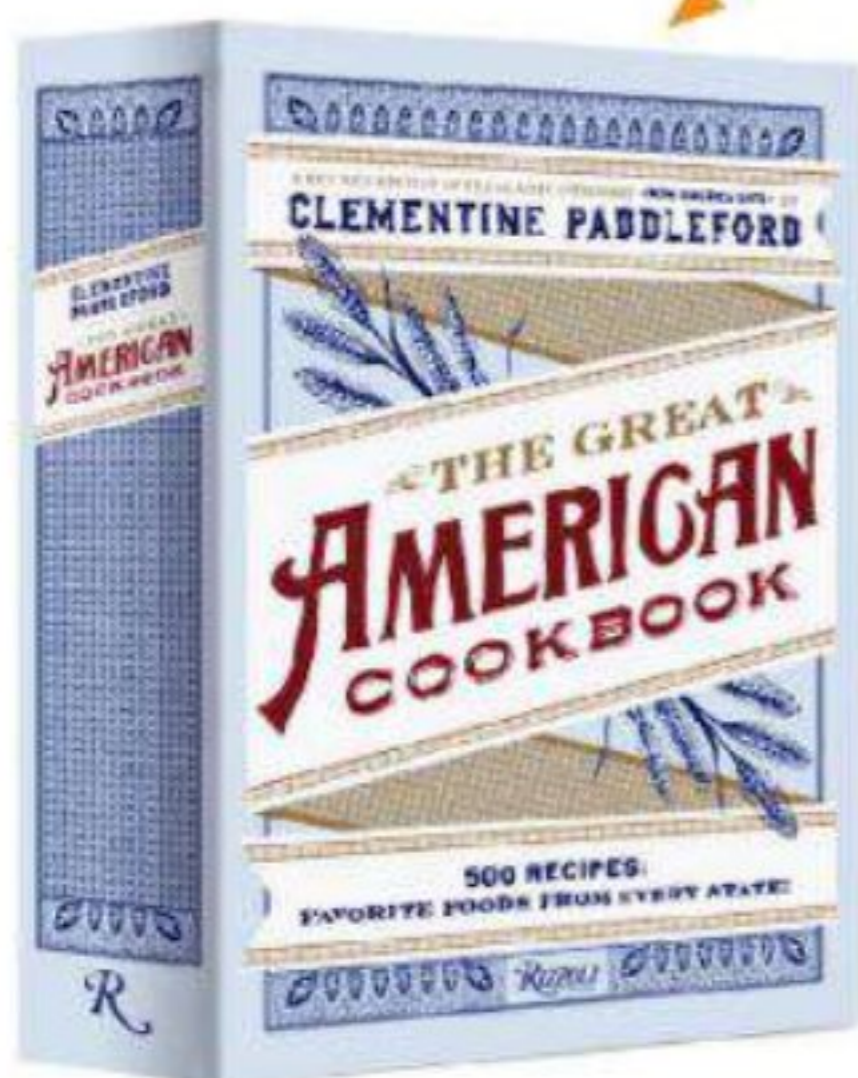
Clark's book is also organized month by month to highlight what's in season. After all, at the farmers' market, she writes, "the possibility of discovery is always there." And no matter what this *New York Times* food columnist finds as she forages, she makes a meal of it.

Try these recipes

Spaghetti with Toasted Breadcrumbs and Oregano

Lamb Chops in a Crust of Lemon, Mint, and Pistachio Nuts; Apple Sorbet

Chile-Coconut Braised Beef Short Ribs; Devil's Food Cake with Butter Rum Frosting

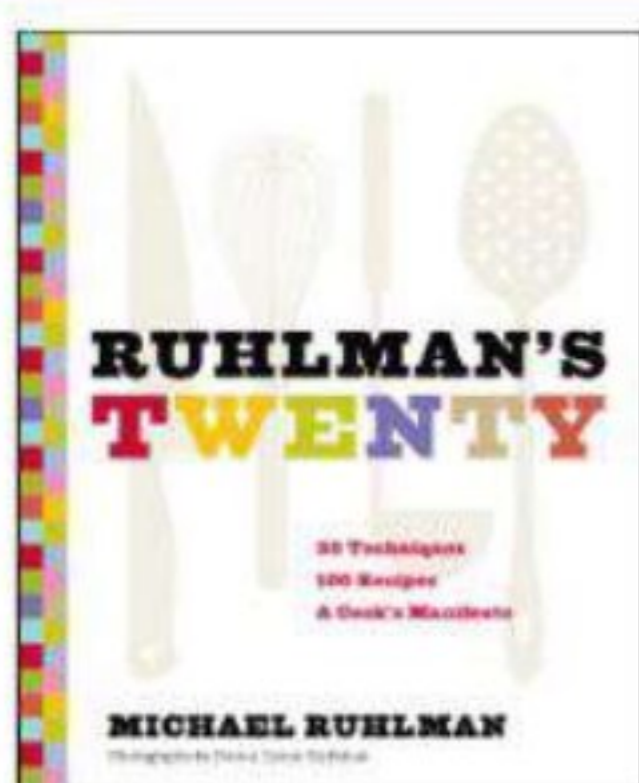


### **The Great American Cookbook**

by Clementine Paddleford (Rizzoli, \$45)

This volume of Paddleford's 1960 classic, *How America Eats*, has been updated by Kelly Alexander, with 500 recipes from all 50 states. Some are for gelatin molds. Some use cream-of-mushroom soup. Trendy and uppity it's not. But it *is* deliciously all-American.

**Try these recipes:** Williamsburg Inn Old-Fashioned Turkey Soup (Virginia), Mrs. George Eschback's Pearadise Pie (Washington)



### **Ruhlman's Twenty**

by Michael Ruhlman  
(Chronicle, \$40)

These 20 cooking basics will have newcomers and seasoned pros sautéing and braising better in no time. The step-by-step photos show how to master each technique, and Ruhlman's thorough and practical instruction ends with sweet and savory results.

**Sautéed Chicken Breasts with Tarragon Butter Sauce**

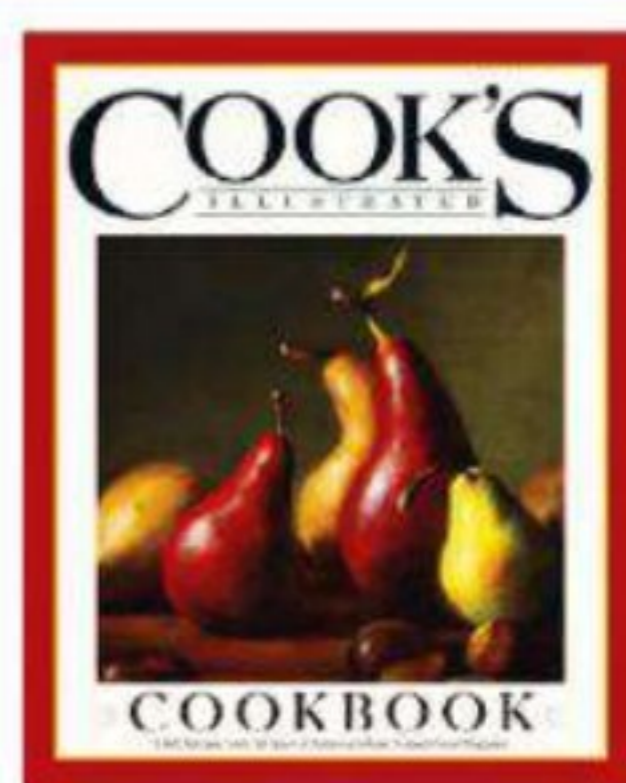


### **The Neelys' Celebration Cookbook**

by Pat and Gina Neely  
(Alfred A. Knopf, \$28.95)

The hosts of the Food Network show *Down Home with the Neelys* have every type of party covered—March Madness, tailgating, New Year's, graduation, even movie night. And the Neelys' recipes for southern home cooking serve up comfort food in style.

**Roasted Broccoli with Garlic and Cherry Tomatoes; Bourbon Bread Pudding**



### **The Cook's Illustrated Cookbook**

(America's Test Kitchen, \$40)

The editors at *Cook's Illustrated* have compiled the ultimate collection: over 2,000 of their best, thoroughly tested recipes—and all the tips that go along with them. The helpful "Why This Recipe Works" notes throughout explain pitfalls and virtually ensure success.

**Old-Fashioned Beef Stew; Foolproof Pie Dough; Ultimate Chocolate Chip Cookies**

## Pork Roast with Sweet Potatoes, Pears & Rosemary

### INGREDIENTS

- 3 1/2 lb. bone-in, center cut loin roast, excess fat trimmed
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 tbsp. chopped fresh rosemary, plus more for serving (or 1 tsp. dried rosemary)
- Salt and fresh ground black pepper
- 2 1/2 lbs. (6 medium) sweet potatoes, peeled, cut lengthwise into sixths
- 3 firm/ripe Bosc pears, cut lengthwise into quarters, cored
- 12 oz. bottle hard cider\*

### DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 450°F. Rub pork with oil. Mix rosemary, 3/4 tsp. salt and 1/2 tsp. pepper in bowl. Rub mixture over pork.

Place pork, bone side down, in large roasting pan. Roast 15 min. Reduce oven to 350°F. Roast 15 min. Add sweet potatoes and pears to pan, stir gently to coat with pan juices, spread evenly around roast. Season with salt and pepper. Roast, occasionally stirring sweet potato mixture, until thermometer inserted in center of roast reads 145°F and potatoes and pears are tender, about 1 hour. Transfer pork to carving board. Place sweet potato mixture in ovenproof bowl, tent with aluminum foil, and keep warm in turned-off oven. Let pork stand 10-15 min.

Heat roasting pan over high heat. Add cider, bring to boil, scrape up browned bits in pan with wooden spoon; boil until reduced to 3/4 c., about 5 min. Pour into sauceboat.

Carve pork. Transfer to serving platter, surround with sweet potato mixture, drizzle with 3 tbsp. cider sauce, sprinkle with rosemary. Serve with remaining sauce on the side.

\*Substitute 1 c. apple juice and 1/2 c. dry vermouth for hard cider, or use all apple juice.

Serves 12



Be inspired<sup>SM</sup>

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### RECIPE

## Jelly Roll

A simple, sweet dessert

● FROM *The Art of French Baking* (see page 11)

Serves 6

- Butter, melted, for greasing
- 4 eggs, separated
- 2/3 cup superfine sugar
- Pinch of salt
- 3/4 cup all-purpose flour, sifted
- 1/2 cup red currant jelly, warmed
- 1 cup blanched almonds, sliced

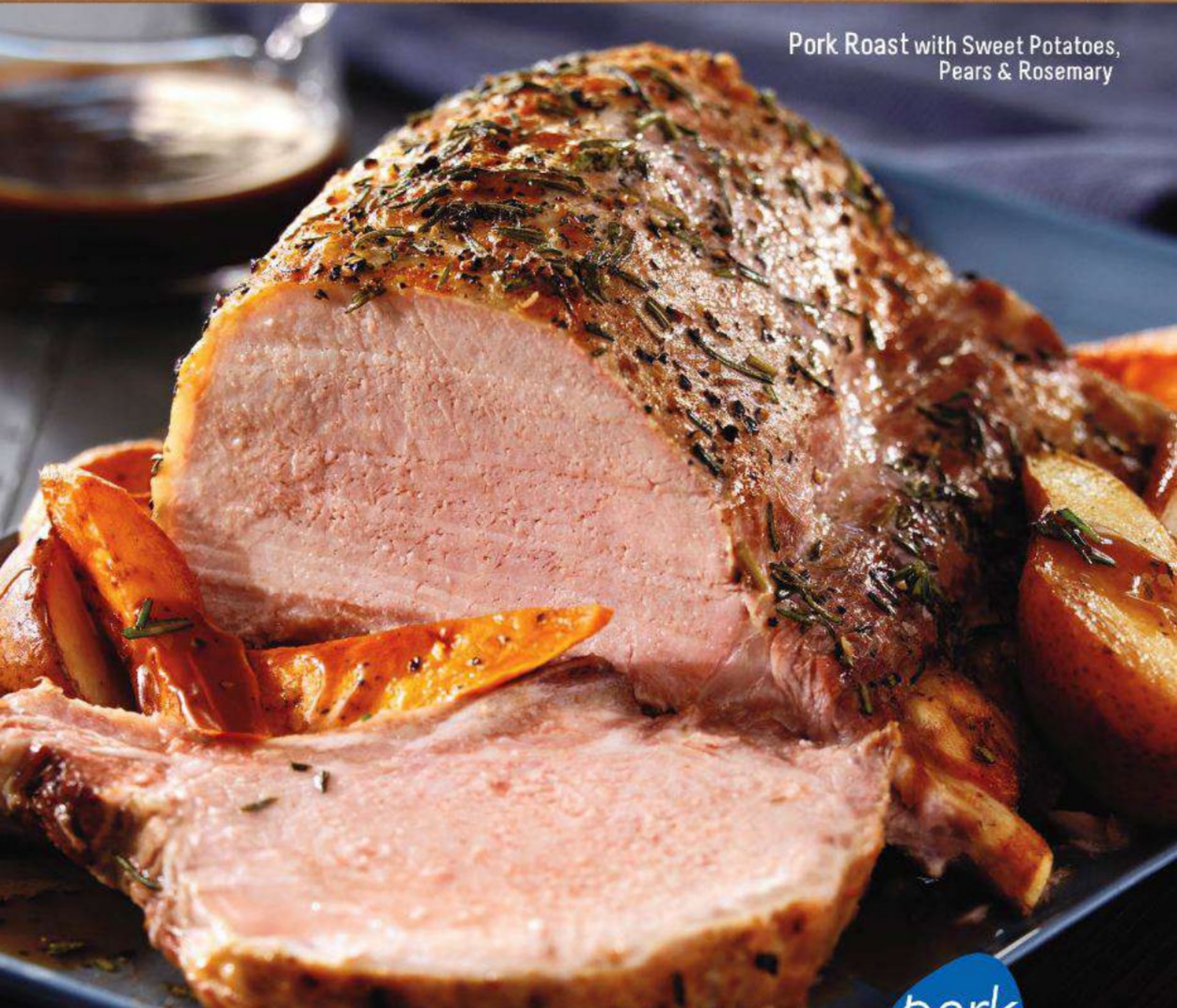
1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Grease Swiss roll pan with melted butter. Line with sheet of parchment paper, and brush paper with melted butter.
2. Whisk egg yolks in bowl with 1/2 cup sugar and pinch of salt for 10 minutes, until pale and tripled in size. Sift in flour in 2 or 3 batches, folding gently into whisked egg mixture.
3. Beat egg whites with remaining sugar to form stiff peaks. Gently mix 1/3 of beaten egg whites into cake batter to lighten it. Fold in remaining egg whites using a figure-8 motion with spoon.
4. Spread batter evenly in pan; bake 8 to 10 minutes. Turn out while still hot onto clean dish towel. Roll up cake with towel still in place, starting with one long edge (this prevents splits and cracks). Let cool.
5. Unroll, peel off paper, and spread layer of red currant jelly over cake. Roll it up once again. Trim both ends evenly. Cover outside and ends with jelly. Sprinkle with toasted almonds.

**TIP:** Brush a little alcohol- or liqueur-flavored syrup on jelly roll before covering with jelly, if desired.



# Be inviting

Pork Roast with Sweet Potatoes,  
Pears & Rosemary



Drizzled with cider sauce, this Pork Roast with Sweet Potatoes, Pears and Rosemary is the perfect centerpiece for your next get-together. Discover your next inspired idea at [PorkBeInspired.com](http://PorkBeInspired.com)

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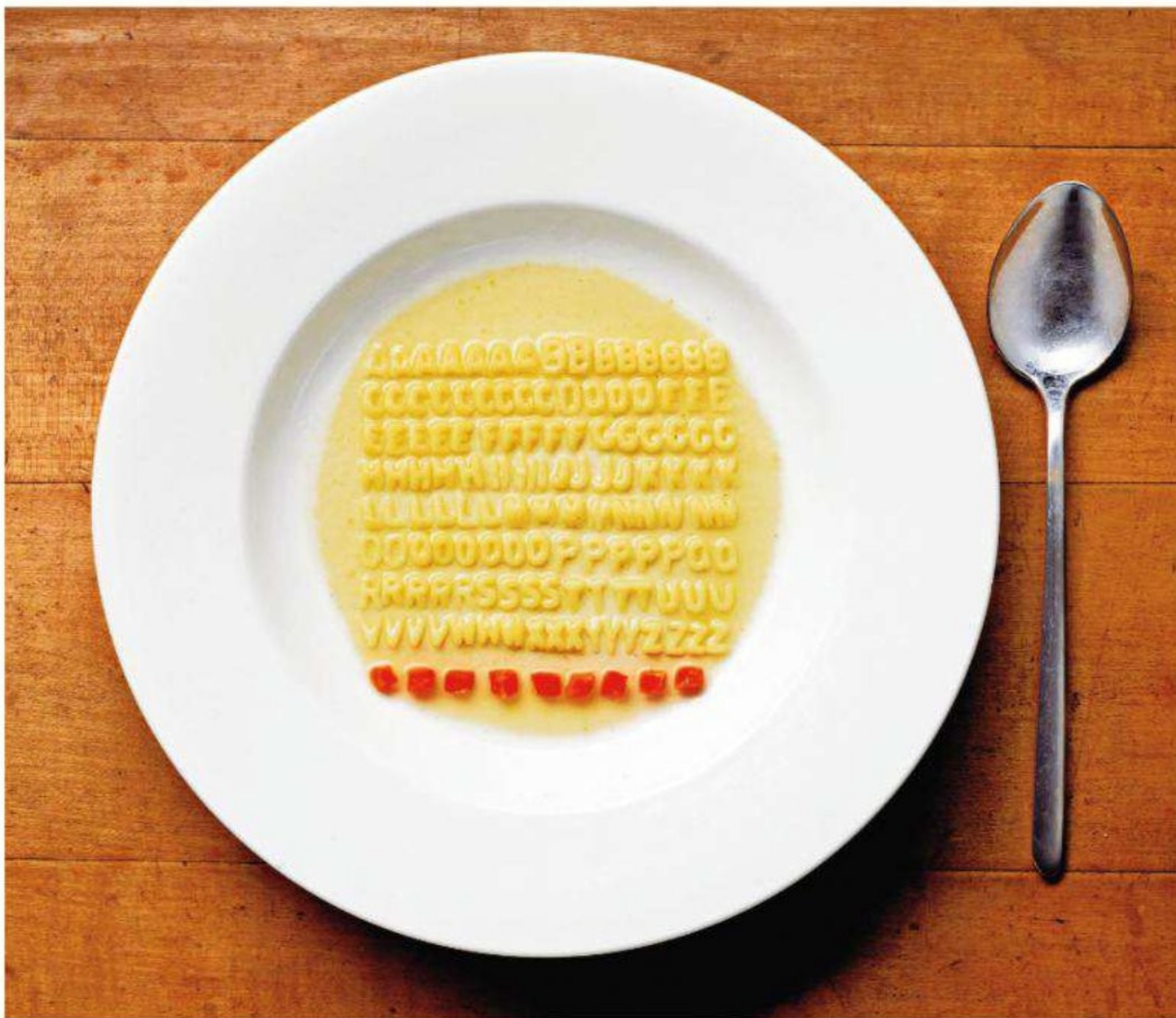
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VISUAL FEAST

## OCD Soup?

**S**wiss artist Ursus Wehrli can organize our sock drawer anytime. Besides this bowl of alphabet soup, his *Tidying Up Art* book series contains neatened-up scenes like car-filled parking lots (organized by color) and people-filled parks (organized by age). Robert Krulwich of npr.org likes Wehrli's re-sorted starry night sky: "totally, wonderfully wrongheaded."



COURTESY URSUS WEHRLI, THE ART OF TIDYING UP © 2011 BY KEIN & ABER VERLAG, ZÜRICH-BERLIN



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## HOW TO

# 5 Kitchen Tips and Picks

### BUY FRESH FISH

To spot the best-quality fish, look at the eyes, body, and color. Famed sushi chef Nobu Matsuhisa explains in *Bloomberg Businessweek* that the eyes should be bright and clear, not cloudy or dull. The body should look metallic and clean and feel firm to the touch. The scales should be perfect—none should be missing—and the gills should be vibrant red.

### HOLD A KNIFE

Kelsey Nixon, host of the Cooking Channel's *Kelsey's Essentials*, tells *Esquire* that she pinches the dull side of the blade with her index finger and thumb near where the blade meets the handle. She wraps her other three fingers around the handle so that her index finger and thumb are on the heel of the blade.

### STORE GRAPES

Wait to wash them. *Cook's Illustrated* recommends storing unrinsed bunches on their stems in the refrigerator. Rinse just before serving.

## NOTABLE QUOTE

“ I don't understand how a young couple can begin life by buying a sofa or a television. Don't they know the table comes first?”

BRITISH CHEF FERGUS HENDERSON, IN *THE TABLE COMES FIRST*, BY ADAM GOPNIK (ALFRED A. KNOPF, \$25.95)



Check the eyes, body, and color before buying, says a sushi chef.

### STORE AVOCADOS

Once an avocado is cut, it doesn't stay fresh—or vibrantly green—for long. Try refrigerating it in a sealed container with some chopped onion. The onion works like a preservative, and *thekitchn.com* says avocados will stay fresh for several days using this method. If you're making guacamole, sprinkle chopped onion over the top and cover with tinfoil to store, then stir in the onions before serving.

### SELECT THE BEST SAUCE

On supermarket shelves, between the Prego and Ragú, are pasta sauces bearing the names of some of today's celebrity chefs. But which of the sauces are worth buying? *Consumer Reports* rated Giada De Laurentiis's Tomato Basil (\$3, Target only) and Mario Batali's Marinara (\$8) excellent in taste tests—balanced, fresh-tasting, and close to homemade.



**INGREDIENTS? YOU'VE GOT 'EM.  
COMPLIMENTS? YOU'LL GET 'EM.**

### **Chicken & Broccoli Alfredo**

**Prep: 10 min. Cook: 20 min. Makes: 4 servings**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| ½ of a 1-lb. pkg. linguine   | 1 can (10¾ oz.) Campbell's® Condensed Cream of Mushroom Soup (Regular, 98% Fat Free or Healthy Request®) |
| 1 cup fresh or frozen broccoli florets                               | ½ cup milk   |
| 2 tbsp. butter   | ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese   |
| 1¼ lb. skinless, boneless chicken breast halves, cut into 1½" pieces | ¼ tsp. ground black pepper   |

1. Prepare linguine according to package directions in 3-qt. saucepan. Add broccoli during last 4 min. of cooking time. Drain linguine mixture.
2. Heat butter in skillet over medium-high heat. Add chicken and cook until well browned and cooked through, stirring often.
3. Stir soup, milk, cheese, black pepper and linguine mixture in skillet and cook until mixture is hot, stirring occasionally. Serve with additional Parmesan cheese.

*Campbell's* **KITCHEN.COM**

**It's amazing what soup can do.®**

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[magazinesdownload.com](http://magazinesdownload.com)





Reporting for (laundry) duty: Lori Volkman with Olivia and Cooper.

## Wish You Were Here

A popular blog has become a voice for military spouses

**L**ori Volkman, an attorney and the wife of a Navy commander, started a blog in 2010 as a diary for her kids. “I kept going because I realized a lot of military families were starving to hear a version of military life that recognized the struggles associated with it,” she says. **Wittylittlesecret.com** is now

one of the most popular “milblogs” out there. Here’s a post that went viral—a fake order addressing Volkman’s husband in the Middle East as he prepared to come home. His reaction to being teased? “He laughed,” she says. *Beth Dreher*

**To read more military spouse blogs, go to [readersdigest.com/milblogs](http://readersdigest.com/milblogs).**

# Operation Order to My Deployed Husband

## I. SITUATION

Civilian Home Group, West (**CIVHOMGRU**), has recently identified threat “military brain,” aka **MILBRAIN**, a condition that hinders communication and family reintegration and that requires immediate and ongoing resolution. Current unit is composed of:

- Civilian leader **MOM**
- Two rogue operatives known as **Operative–1st Born** and **Operative–2nd Born**
- **DAD** (deployed)

## II. MISSION

Prepare for reintegration of **DAD** into **CIVHOMGRU** by:

- Disintegration of **MILBRAIN**
- Introduction of counter-components **DADBRAIN** and **HUSBANDBRAIN**
- Reintroduction of concept “feel”
- Suppression of dictatorial hierarchy, oligarchy, and misogyny

Accomplish **DAD** homecoming 2011 with goal of fostering mental and emotional health of the family unit and avoiding any further loss of spousal consortium.

## III. EXECUTION

It is the intent of these maneuvers to prepare all members of the team for reintegration.

**A. MOM, Operative–1st Born, and Operative–2nd Born** will each practice elimination of all expectations related to basic everyday interactions. This will be accomplished by standing in front of a brick wall and attempting to engage it in conversation and elicit sympathy and/or compassion and attempting to get it to respond to external stimuli, touch, and/or tears.

**B. DAD** will increase situational awareness of social and nonverbal communications of others. This will be accomplished by standing in front of a mirror, making eye contact, and practicing **HOME** phrases such as “I’m sorry,” “Let’s get through this together,” and “I understand what you’re saying.”

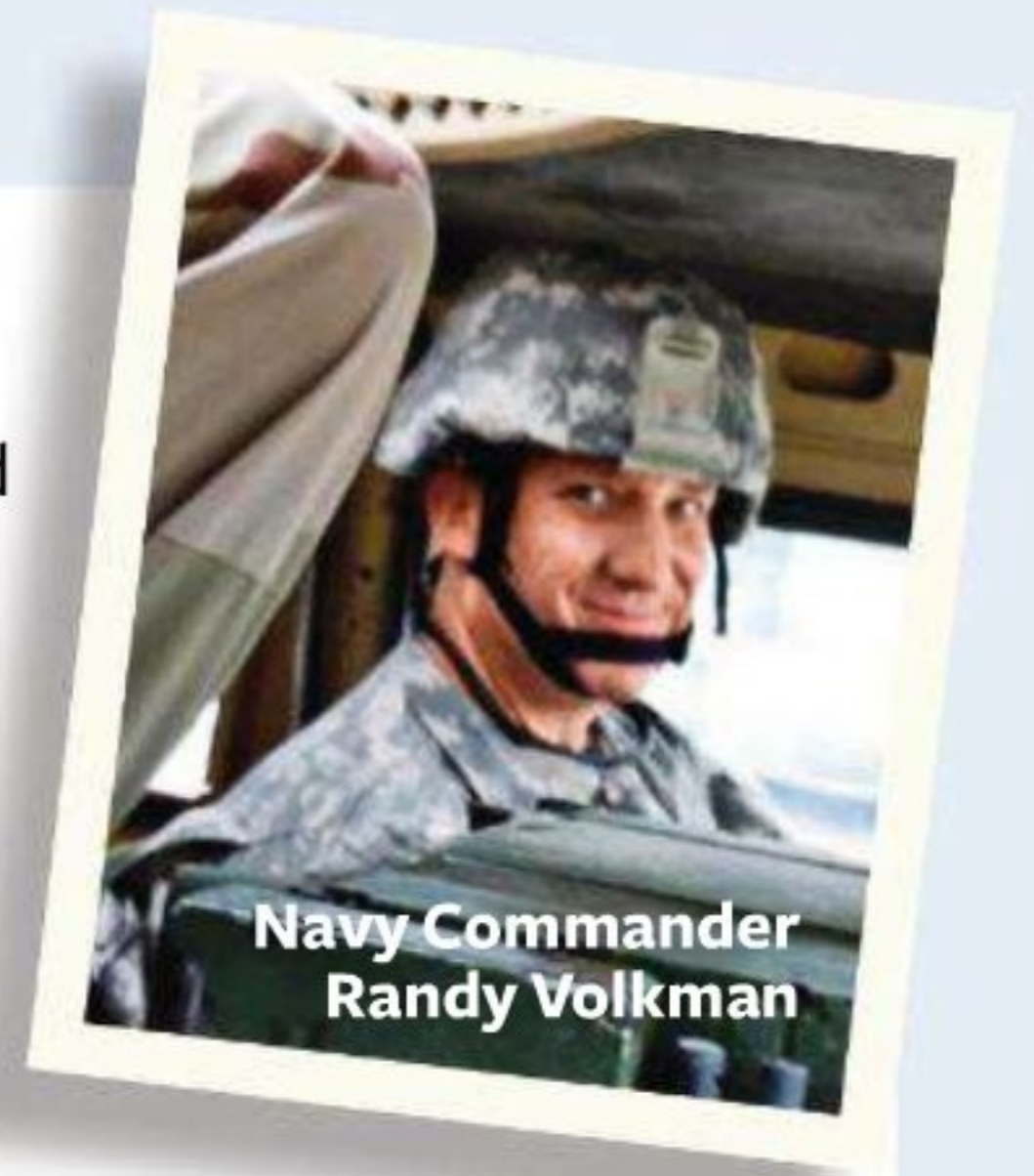
Upon completion of these basic maneuvers, **DAD** should progress to more advanced maneuvers such as **SMIRK** and **WINK**, the “**HUBBA-HUBBA**” (two successive eyebrow raises), and **NODDING**.



## IV. SERVICE SUPPORT

The critical supporting actors and services required to sustain the unit during this operation include:

- **DAD**'s emotive alter ego, which has been suppressed for the past year
- **MOM**'s noncontrolling alter ego, which has been suppressed for the past year
- **Operative-1st Born** and **Operative-2nd Born**'s obedient alter egos, which have been suppressed for the past year



Navy Commander  
Randy Volkman

Upon reentry to the **CIVHOMGRU**, **DAD** should consider the following services and materials for future maneuvers **DATE** and **WOO**:

- **Class I** (subsistence): fine-dining establishments, wine bars, candlelight, or sunset-view venues
- **Class II** (individual equipment): razor, aftershave, deodorant, mouthwash, elbow cream, and civilian clothing
- **Class III** (major end items): flowers, jewelry, chocolate, handwritten notes or cards, and perfume

In preparation for such availability of services, **DAD** may spend time on the Internet reviewing what these items look like, how they are utilized, and where they can be obtained upon delivery to the assembly point.

## V. COMMAND AND CONTROL

Upon reintegration, unit commanders **MOM** and **DAD** are expected to operate in a **JOINT ENVIRONMENT** for all operational and tactical maneuvers.

### A. Command

The higher unit commander is **GOD**. If you suffer from the delusion that you are **GOD**, then knock it off. You are not. Your spouse and children are not subordinates; they are your support.

### B. Signals

This operation specifically prohibits use of the following signals: silence, thousand-mile stare, dirty looks, shark eyes, loss of consciousness during conversation, and drama (aka "pyrotechnics") of any kind.

Signed,

**Mom, COMMANDER, CIVHOMGRU, WEST**





www.freshstep.com

Cats everywhere are having a hard time smelling their litter boxes.

[freshstep.com](http://freshstep.com)

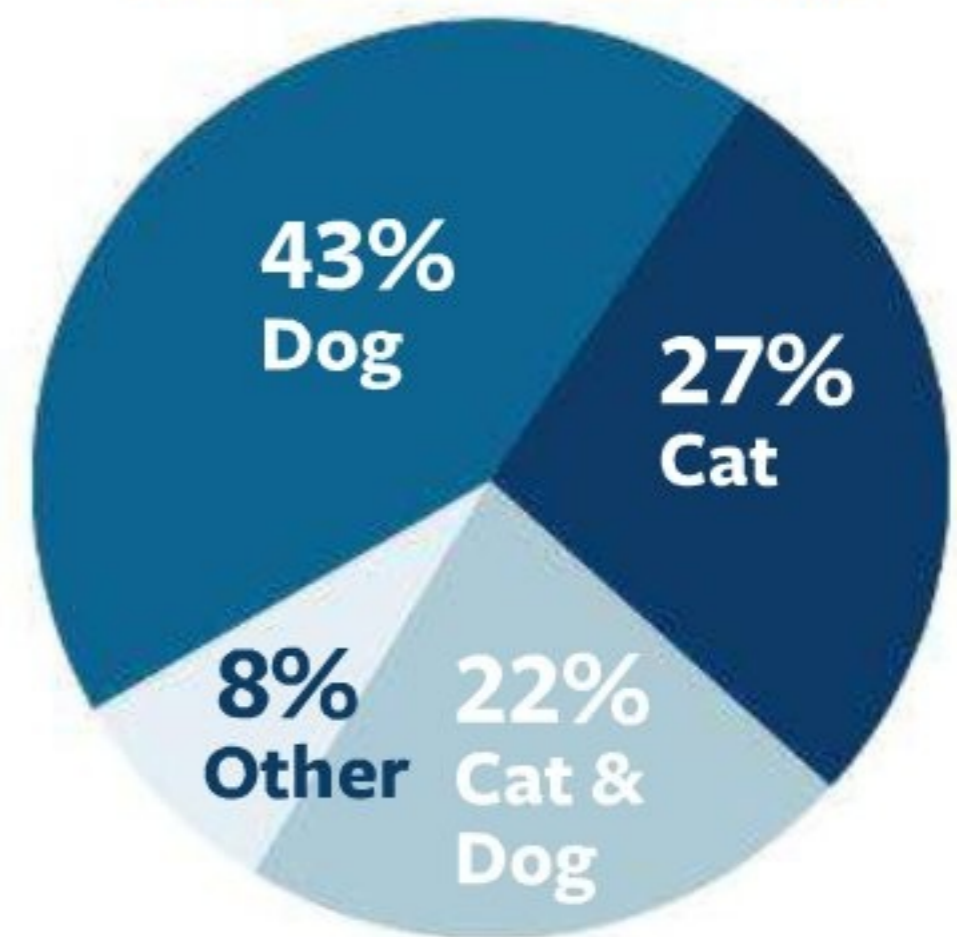


**60%** of U.S. households own a pet. Here's who has what:

**GO FIGURE**

## The Four-Legged Race

**Hunch.com** recently polled more than 200,000 pet owners to find out if they were dog people or cat people. The site then crossed those responses with lifestyle surveys and arrived at the following conclusions. Anything sound familiar?





### Dog People **VS.** Cat People



<b>15%</b> more likely to be <b>extroverts</b>	<b>11%</b> more likely to be <b>introverts</b>
<b>36%</b> more likely to use a <b>pop song</b> as a ringtone	<b>14%</b> more likely to <b>cling to friends</b> at a party
<b>67%</b> more likely to <b>call animal control</b> if they happen upon stray kittens	<b>21%</b> more likely to try to <b>rescue</b> stray kittens
<b>11%</b> more likely to say they'd support <b>cloning</b> , but only for animals or pets	<b>17%</b> more likely to have completed a <b>graduate degree</b>
<b>18%</b> more likely to consider <b>Paul McCartney</b> their favorite Beatle	<b>25%</b> more likely to consider <b>George Harrison</b> their favorite Beatle
<b>9%</b> more likely to think of <b>zoos</b> as <b>happy places</b>	<b>10%</b> more likely to send messages on <b>Twitter</b>
<b>30%</b> more likely to enjoy <b>slapstick humor and impressions</b>	<b>21%</b> more likely to enjoy <b>ironic humor and puns</b>

**Both Cat and Dog People ...**

- Talk to animals of all kinds
- Are equally likely to have a four-year degree
- Dislike animal-print clothing

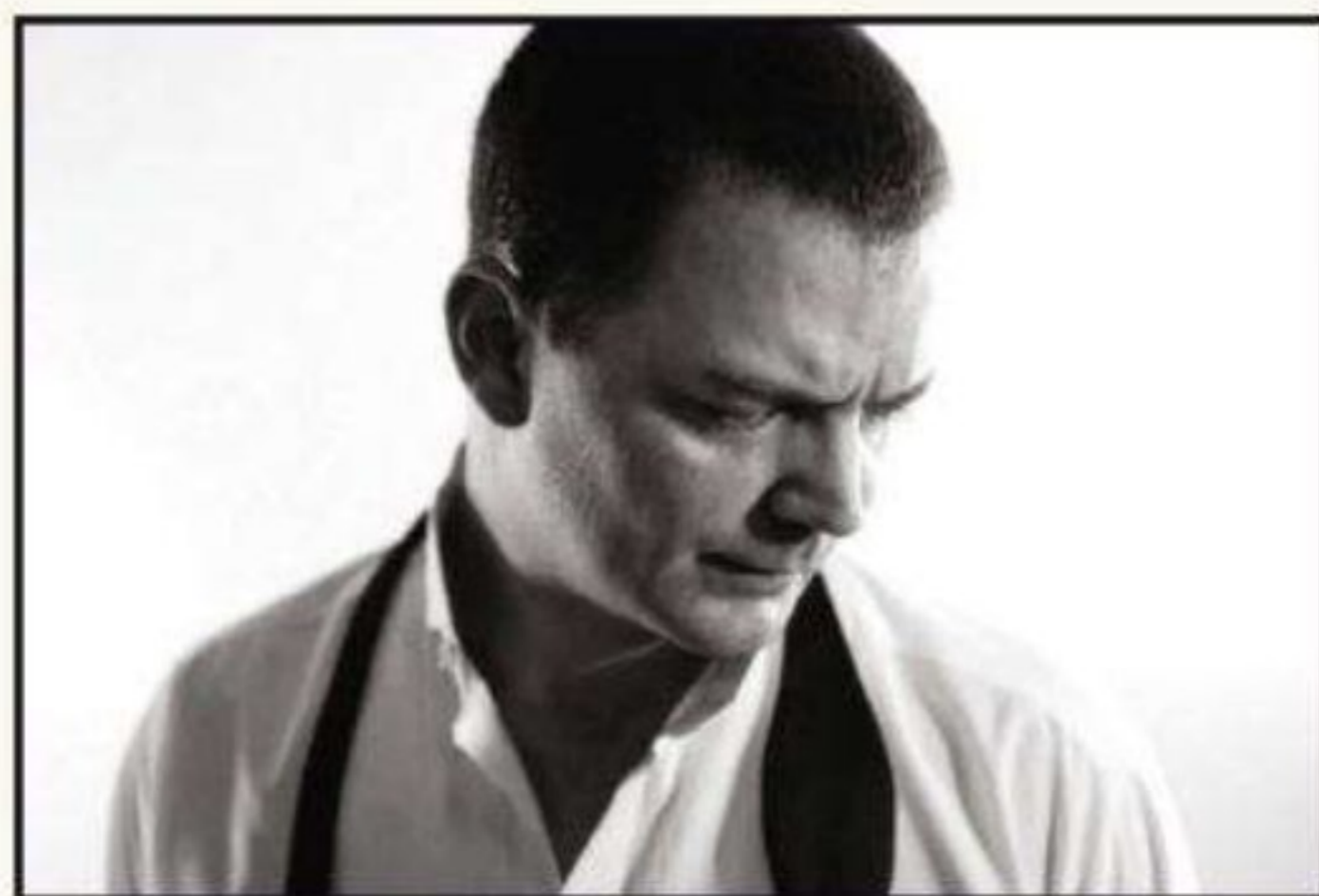
ILLUSTRATED BY COLUMN FIVE

IF YOU LOVE BASEBALL ...

YOU'RE GOING TO LOVE THIS  
NEW SONG, ABOUT THE MOST  
BEAUTIFUL PLACE ON EARTH

# "At Fenway"

THE NEW SONG BY CROONER BRIAN EVANS



Produced by Grammy Award-winning producer Narada Michael Walden (producer of Whitney Houston's "The Bodyguard" soundtrack, as well as Mariah Carey, Aretha Franklin, among others).

Look for the new album by Brian Evans, produced by Narada Michael Walden.

**THIS HOLIDAY, ADD A STOCKING STUFFER YOUR  
BASEBALL FAN IS SURE TO LOVE – "AT FENWAY"**

**DOWNLOAD IT AT iTunes® OR BUY THE CD AT  TODAY!**

**ORDER** an autographed copy at [brianevans.com](http://brianevans.com)!

**VISIT** [www.brianevans.com](http://www.brianevans.com)

**LISTEN** at [www.atfenwaysong.com](http://www.atfenwaysong.com)

Check out the internet  
sensation on YouTube!

## MAKE THE HOLIDAYS EXTRA SWEET



### McCormick® White Chocolate Kissed Gingerbread Cookies

#### INGREDIENTS

3 cups flour  
2 tsp. McCormick Ground Ginger  
1 tsp. McCormick Ground Cinnamon  
1 tsp. baking soda  
¼ tsp. McCormick Ground Nutmeg  
¼ tsp. salt

¾ cup (1 ½ sticks) butter, softened  
¾ cup firmly packed brown sugar  
½ cup molasses  
1 egg  
1 tsp. McCormick Pure Vanilla Extract  
¼ cup granulated sugar  
60 white and milk chocolate swirled  
kiss-shaped candies



**MIX** flour, ginger, cinnamon, baking soda, nutmeg and salt in large bowl. Beat butter and brown sugar in large bowl with electric mixer on medium speed until light and fluffy. Add molasses, egg and vanilla; beat well. Gradually beat in flour mixture on low speed until well mixed. Press dough into a thick flat disk. Wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate 4 hours or overnight.

**SHAPE** dough into 1-inch balls. Roll in granulated sugar. Place 2 inches apart on ungreased baking sheets.

**BAKE** in preheated 350°F oven 8 to 10 minutes or until edges of cookies just begin to brown. Immediately press a chocolate candy into center of each cookie. Remove to wire racks; cool completely. Store cookies in airtight container up to 5 days.

Makes 5 dozen.

Homemade holiday treats are a great way to share the joy of the season. McCormick gives you the tools and inspiration to create delicious gifts, giving your friends and family a taste of the holidays that will have them asking for more.

Get more helpful baking tips at [mccormick.com](http://mccormick.com)

VISIT US AT [FACEBOOK.COM/MCCORMICKSPICE](https://www.facebook.com/mccormickspice) FOR EXCLUSIVE INFO!



Live deliciously™





live deliciously<sup>®</sup>

# THE FLAVOR

THAT MAKES YOU

*believe.*

## McCormick<sup>®</sup> Spiced Holiday Sugar Cookies

### INGREDIENTS

2 ¼ cups flour  
1 tsp. baking soda  
1 tsp. McCormick Ground Cinnamon  
¼ tsp. McCormick Ground Nutmeg  
¼ tsp. salt  
1 ¼ cups sugar  
1 cup (2 sticks) butter, softened  
1 egg  
2 tsp. McCormick Pure Vanilla Extract  
Colorful Cookie Icing  
(Visit [mccormick.com](http://mccormick.com) for Icing recipe)

**MIX** flour, baking soda, cinnamon, nutmeg and salt. Beat sugar and butter in large bowl with electric mixer on medium speed until light and fluffy. Add egg and vanilla; mix well. Gradually beat in flour mixture on low speed until well mixed. Refrigerate 2 hours or overnight until firm.

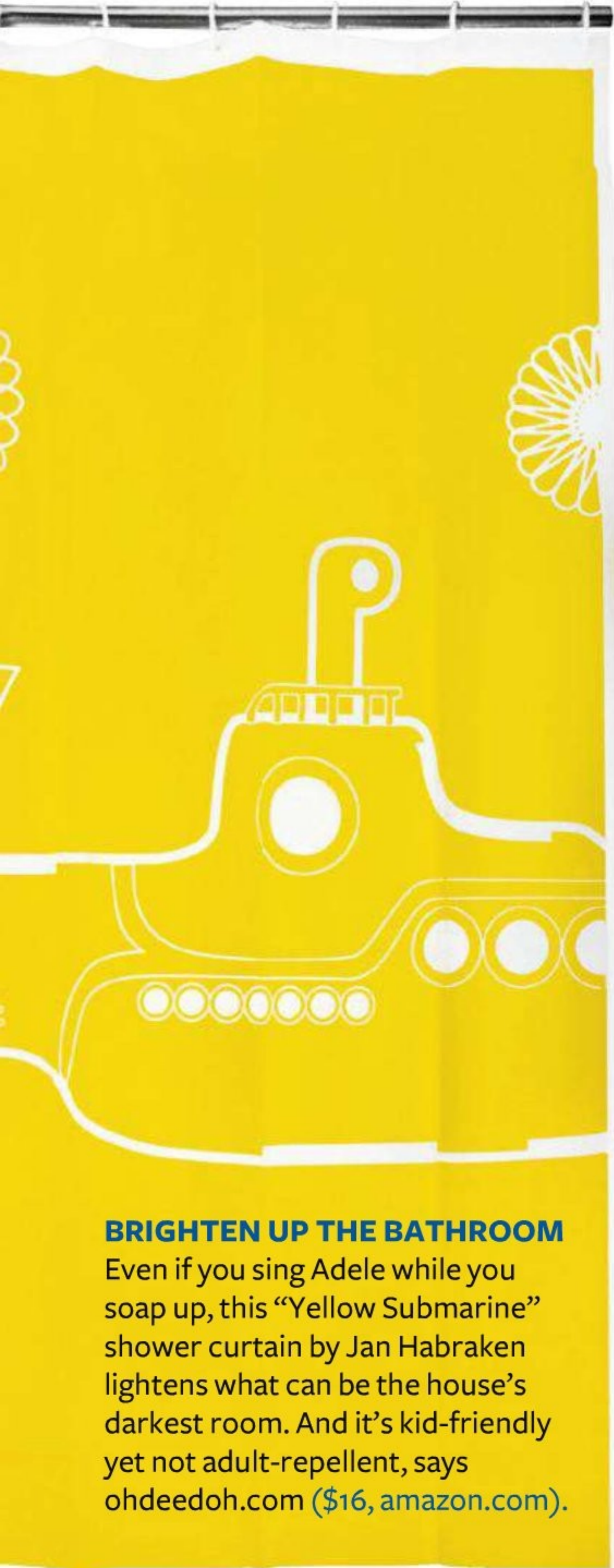
**ROLL** out dough on lightly floured surface to ¼-inch thickness. Cut into shapes with cookie cutters. Place on greased baking sheets.

**BAKE** in preheated 375°F oven 8 to 10 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool on baking sheets 1 minute. Remove to wire racks; cool completely. Decorate cookies with Colorful Cookie Icing. Place on wire rack to dry.  
Makes 6 dozen.



Choosing our rich, distinctive McCormick Pure Vanilla Extract will put your treats at the top of everyone's list. For more great-tasting recipes, visit [mccormick.com](http://mccormick.com) or call 1-800-MEAL-TIPS

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## BRIGHTEN UP THE BATHROOM

Even if you sing Adele while you soap up, this “Yellow Submarine” shower curtain by Jan Habraken lightens what can be the house’s darkest room. And it’s kid-friendly yet not adult-repellent, says ohdeedoh.com (\$16, amazon.com).

## 5 Mini Makeovers for Busy People

Practically point-and-click, these tweaks won’t make you break a sweat—or the bank—as you prepare your home for holiday visitors

### ▼ STOW YOUR STUFF

Sweep off those surfaces in time for guests, suggests ohdeedoh.com. The felt storage bins at West Elm are 16 inches square and can hold unopened mail, unread magazines, unfiled papers, and more (\$16, westelm.com).



FAR LEFT: COURTESY KIKKERLAND

► **PUT OUT THE WELCOME MAT**

Maine’s lobstermen must now replace their “float rope” with “sink rope” to avoid entangling sea creatures, reports [charlesandhudson.com](http://charlesandhudson.com). The Maine Float-Rope Company keeps float rope out of landfills by making it into doormats. Solid or striped, they’ll add some summer to your doorstep beneath the graying skies of winter (\$49.95, [mainefloatrope.com](http://mainefloatrope.com)).



◀ **TAME THE BEDSIDE TABLE**

That jumble of drinking water, reading material, writing implements, and ringing alarm clock next to your bed can coexist, says *Martha Stewart Living*. The Ferm Living “one-bedroom apartment cabinet” (\$121, [huset-shop.com](http://huset-shop.com)) gives you additional bedside storage—and lets you prop your open book on top when your eyelids start drooping.



► **ADD SEATING**

At around \$800, this chair is a splurge, says [thisoldhouse.com](http://thisoldhouse.com). But the nostalgia value of the Grand Leather Bean Bag Chair may be worth it. Upholstered in leather, this could become the go-to perch for those who enjoy sinking into a chair—and who can get back up ([restorationhardware.com](http://restorationhardware.com)).



FROM TOP: COURTESY THE MAINE FLOAT-ROPE COMPANY; COURTESY HUSET; COURTESY RESTORATION HARDWARE



“Timber!”  
is the last  
thing you want  
to hear (or see)  
in the living  
room.

## HOW TO

# Whoa, Christmas Tree!

**S**hort of a gym membership from your spouse, it's the holiday surprise no one wants: the ornament-laden Christmas tree that tips over and crashes to the floor. Luckily, it's easy to avert this annoying (and potentially dangerous) disaster. Just follow these suggestions, culled from all over the Web:

- **Invest in the right stand.** Ditch the flimsy crossbar type and pony up for a sturdier model. About.com likes Grinnen's Last Stand (\$45, [xmas911.com](http://xmas911.com)), which uses straps and ratchets to hold the tree straight and features a 30-inch base for added stability. Two other solid choices, recommended by [suite101.com](http://suite101.com), are the Omega Tree Stand (\$40, [buy.com](http://buy.com)), which replaces old-school screws with a clamping system, and the Krinner Christmas Tree Genie (\$70 to \$110, [acehardware.com](http://acehardware.com)). The latter's pedal

lets you tighten a cable around the trunk.

- **Set up your tree properly.** According to the National Christmas Tree Association, you shouldn't whittle or taper the trunk to fit the stand, as this makes it less stable and more difficult to hold upright. And be sure the trunk is straight before you screw, clamp, or ratchet it in place. (It's a good idea to have someone eyeball it while you mount it in the stand.)

- **Anchor it if necessary.** If you're using an old-

fashioned screw stand, consider weighting your tree or tethering it to the wall or ceiling. The blog [Made It on Monday](http://MadeItOnMonday.com) suggests placing a 35-pound flat weight on each side of the tree, as close to the wall as possible, and tying both to the tree with rope. (A tree skirt can help to hide them.) Or, reports [helium.com](http://helium.com), you can install cup hooks into the walls on either side of the tree and fasten the tree to them with clear fishing line. You can even insert a hook into the ceiling and anchor the tree with fishing line there, advises [acmehowto.com](http://acmehowto.com).



# Introducing your cold symptoms' worst nightmare.



New Fast-Max™ Liquids are the only multi-symptom liquids for adults from Mucinex®. Their mucus busting power and maximum strength medicines help you feel better and move on.

## Mucinex®

Mucinex in. Mucus out.®



Santa can't get down a chimney clogged with creosote.

## JUST IN CASE

# Light Your Fire

'Tis the season for safety when it comes to hearths and heat

**N**othing adds warmth and festiveness to those family gatherings like giving Aunt Edna three hot toddies and building a fire in a fireplace. Before you strike a match, though, make sure you check this safety list.

- Install a chimney cap to keep out debris and animals.
- Always use a metal screen or glass fireplace door.
- Have your chimney inspected annually and cleaned as necessary by a qualified specialist. As it burns, wood can leave a deposit called creosote along chimney walls, and it can catch fire if not removed regularly.
- Burn well-seasoned hardwood that has been split for a minimum of six months. Never burn Christmas trees or treated wood.
- Never burn cardboard, newspapers, or trash in your fireplace.
- Keep furniture, decorations, and other potentially flammable material at least two feet from the fireplace.

flammable material at least two feet from the fireplace.

- Keep a fire extinguisher handy. *David Noonan*

Sources: U.S. Fire Administration; Chimney Safety Institute of America; Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association

## GO FIGURE

# 95%

**Percentage of Italian men who have never operated a washing machine**

Source: Ariel Levy, "Basta Bunga Bunga," the *New Yorker*

## Don't Let Mold Move In!

Mold and mildew never stop looking for ways to sneak into your home and spread out. So take a moment to learn about mold's effect on you and how to evict these unwanted guests before they settle in!

### Do I have mold in my home?

Nearly 100 percent of American homes contain mold. Look for discolored patches, such as black streaks in grout or a red stain on your shower curtain. Mold also thrives in less visible places like windowsills and refrigerator seals. A musty odor is a good indicator that there's mold hanging around that you can't see.

### Is mold bad for my health?

While low levels of mold will generally have little effect on you, exposure to indoor mold can aggravate asthma and trigger allergies. More extreme infestations can contribute to a range of respiratory conditions. And remember, just because you can't see mold doesn't mean it isn't there.

### How do I permanently kill mold?

Soap and detergents can remove mold stains but do not actually kill or prevent mold. Regular cleaning with a bleach-based product like Tilex® Mold and Mildew Remover instantly and effectively kills mold as well as mildew, letting you breathe a little easier.



Get more tips for keeping your home safe from mold and mildew at [facebook.com/Tilex](https://facebook.com/Tilex)



EVERY HOME HAS **MOLD**. TILEX® SENDS IT PACKING.



The Archipod home office measures about ten feet in diameter.

## VISUAL FEAST

# AN OFFICE OF ONE'S OWN

Thinking of adding on a room? Maybe a home office, so you won't have to pay bills or telecommute each morning from somewhere amidst the dirty cereal bowls? Check out the prefabricated Garden Office Archipod ([archipod.com](http://archipod.com)), which lets you plop an energy-efficient workspace in the backyard and plug in your computer. The cedar-shingled polycarbonate dome, manufactured in the United Kingdom, comes with power outlets and data ports and allows for plenty of natural light and ventilation. The standard model costs roughly \$34,000 plus delivery. That may sound steep, but you won't need to pay for an architect or cost overruns—or suffer through an endless, dusty remodeling. Besides, who wouldn't want to walk 30 seconds to work and enter through a DeLorean-esque gull-wing door?



## Keep Mold and Other Unwanted Guests OUT of Your Bathroom!

Once you've cleared your bathroom of mold with Tilex<sup>®</sup> Mold & Mildew Remover, make sure it never comes back. Try these simple tips to keep your bathroom sparkling every day.

**Spritz for success** After each use, spray your shower and bath walls, glass door and curtain with a daily shower cleaner to prevent the growth of mold on wet surfaces.

**Disinfect daily** Routinely sanitize the surfaces of your tub, sink and toilet to keep them germ-free and kill microbes that can feed mold.

**Be ready** Keep Tilex<sup>®</sup> Mold & Mildew Remover on hand for when you need a little extra help. It is specially formulated to kill mold and mildew, keeping your bathroom beautiful and germ-free every day.

**Stop mold at the source** Soap and detergents can remove mold stains, but do not actually kill or prevent mold. Regular cleaning with a bleach-based product like Tilex<sup>®</sup> Mold & Mildew Remover effectively kills mold as well as mildew at the source.

**Get some fresh air** Leave the bathroom fan on or open a window after showering to lower humidity and discourage mold growth.

**Reflect your effort** You spend time in front of the mirror every day, and you don't want to see grime, so make sure to clean it often.

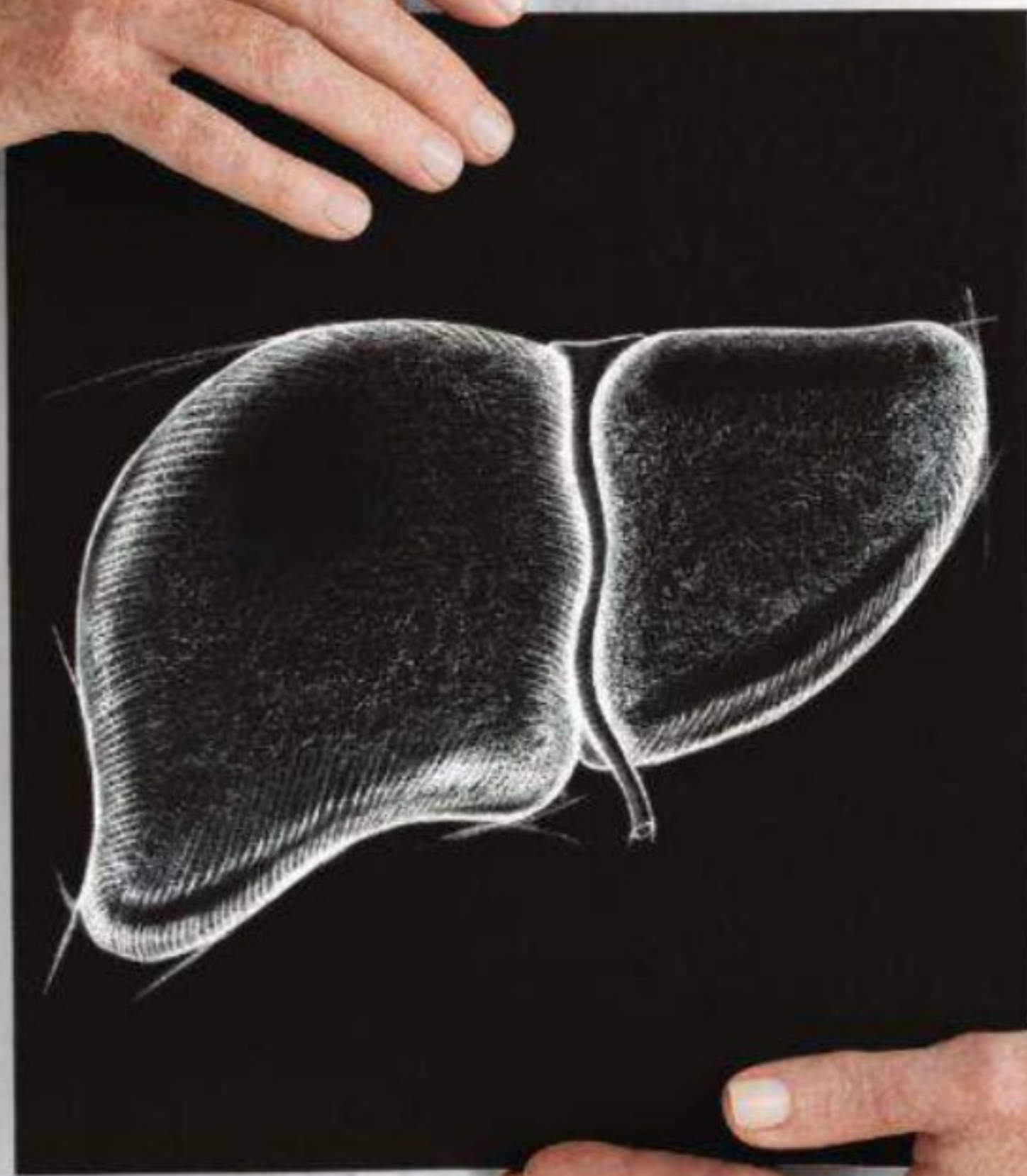
Send those uninvited stains, mold and germs packing for good with Tilex<sup>®</sup>.

 Want more cleaning tips?  
Visit [facebook.com/Tilex](https://www.facebook.com/Tilex)



EVERY HOME HAS **MOLD**. TILEX<sup>®</sup> SENDS IT PACKING.

Something you rarely  
see in an ad for a  
cholesterol-lowering medication.  
Your liver.



**Select Safety Information about your liver and LIVALO.**

Anyone with active liver disease should not take LIVALO. Your doctor should do blood tests to monitor your liver function before starting LIVALO, and then at 12 weeks following the start of LIVALO, after any increase in dose, and periodically (e.g., every 6 months) thereafter.

**Visit [www.LivaloRx.com](http://www.LivaloRx.com) to download a voucher for a free 30-day trial of LIVALO.**

LIVALO® is a registered trademark of the Kowa group of companies.

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You might be aware that cholesterol is made in the liver. But did you know approximately 75% of all drugs processed in the body share a common metabolic pathway in the liver? When drugs that share this pathway are taken together or with other drugs that affect this pathway, a drug interaction may occur.

**LIVALO® (pitavastatin) reduces your cholesterol, but it's not dependent on this pathway in order to be processed. Why is this important? Because knowing how drugs are processed in the body may help avoid certain interactions.**

To learn more about potential drug interactions that may occur with LIVALO or other medications, talk to your doctor and ask whether LIVALO may be right for you.

### **What is LIVALO?**

- LIVALO is a prescription medicine that, along with diet, has been approved for the treatment of high cholesterol. LIVALO has not been studied to evaluate its effect on reducing heart-related disease or death.

### **Drug Interactions with LIVALO**

- If you are taking cyclosporine, you should not take LIVALO.
- Caution should be taken when using LIVALO in combination with other cholesterol drugs like niacin and fibrates, as this may increase your risk of serious muscle problems.
- Some drugs, like erythromycin and rifampin, may lead to drug interactions requiring a lower maximum daily dose of LIVALO, when used in combination.

### **Important Safety Information for LIVALO® (pitavastatin) Tablets**

#### **Who should NOT take LIVALO?**

LIVALO is not right for everyone, including:

- Those who have had an allergic reaction to LIVALO
- Anyone with active liver disease
- Women who are nursing, pregnant, or who may become pregnant
- Anyone currently taking cyclosporine

#### **What should I talk to my doctor about?**

- If you take LIVALO, tell your doctor right away if you experience any unexplained muscle

pain, tenderness, or weakness, particularly if accompanied by fever or a general feeling of discomfort. This could be a sign of a rare but serious side effect.

- Your doctor should do blood tests to monitor your liver function before starting LIVALO, and then at 12 weeks following the start of LIVALO, after any increase in dose, and periodically (e.g., every 6 months) thereafter.
- Please talk to your doctor about your alcohol use.
- Tell your doctor about all the medications you take including nonprescription medicines, vitamins, or herbal supplements.

### **What are the most common side effects of LIVALO?**

The most common side effects of LIVALO in clinical studies were:

- Back pain
- Constipation
- Diarrhea
- Muscle pain
- Pain in the legs or arms

This is not a complete list of side effects.

### **Other Important Information about LIVALO**

- LIVALO has not been studied to evaluate its effect on reducing heart-related disease or death.
- LIVALO is available by prescription only.

**Please see the accompanying Brief Summary or the Full Prescribing Information available at [www.LivaloRx.com](http://www.LivaloRx.com).**

PS73370 LIV-RA-0032 8/2011

### **What else should I know about LIVALO?**

- LIVALO can be taken with or without food. It's even okay to continue drinking grapefruit juice.
- LIVALO is available in 1-mg, 2-mg, and 4-mg doses.

**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.**

 **Livalo**<sup>®</sup>  
(pitavastatin) tablets

*Kowa* *Lilly*

# LIVALO® (pitavastatin) tablets (LIV-ah-lo) – Consumer Brief Summary Information.

## Information for Patients about LIVALO® (pitavastatin) tablets:

Please read this information carefully before you, or your family member, start taking LIVALO and each time your prescription is refilled in case anything has changed or new information has become available. This information is not meant to take the place of discussions with your healthcare provider. Talk with your healthcare provider or pharmacist if there is something you do not understand or if you want to learn more about LIVALO. Always follow your healthcare provider's instructions for taking LIVALO.

### What is LIVALO?

- LIVALO is a prescription medicine that belongs to a group of cholesterol-lowering medicines called "statins".
- LIVALO, along with diet, lowers, total cholesterol, "bad" cholesterol (LDL-C) and triglycerides. It can also raise "good" cholesterol (HDL-C).
- The effect of LIVALO on cardiovascular morbidity and mortality has not been determined.

### What is the most important information I should know about LIVALO?

- Muscle Problems called myopathy and rhabdomyolysis may occur at any time. Muscle problems may increase with higher doses, as you get older, with kidney or some thyroid problems, and when LIVALO is used with some other medications.
- Liver tests may become abnormal. Your doctor should do liver tests before you start and while you are taking LIVALO.

### Who should NOT take LIVALO?

- Anyone known to be allergic or hypersensitive to LIVALO or any of its ingredients.
- Anyone who has active liver problems, this may include some unexplained, abnormal liver test results.
- Women who are pregnant or may become pregnant, or are nursing mothers.
- Anyone who is taking cyclosporine.

### What are the possible side effects of LIVALO?

#### Serious side effects may include:

- **Muscle problems** may be an early sign of a rare problem that could lead to serious kidney problems.  
Call your doctor right away if you have any unexplained muscle pain, tenderness, or weakness, particularly if accompanied by fever or a general feeling of discomfort.
- **Liver problems** may occur. Your doctor should do liver tests before you start and while you are taking LIVALO.

#### Common side effects include:

- Back pain
- Constipation
- Diarrhea
- Muscle aches and pains
- Pain in the legs or arms

This is not a complete list of side effects of LIVALO. Talk to your health care professional for a complete list.

### Can other medications affect your treatment with LIVALO?

**Yes, other medications may affect LIVALO, you should consult with your doctor if you take any of the following:**

- Erythromycin
- Rifampin
- Other drugs for high cholesterol (i.e., fibrates, niacin)

### What should I tell my doctor before taking LIVALO?

Tell your doctor if you:

- are allergic to LIVALO or any of its ingredients (You may get a full list of ingredients from your doctor or pharmacist.)
- are pregnant, think you are pregnant, are planning to become pregnant, or are breast-feeding.
- are having or have been told you have active liver or kidney disease.
- are taking other medications. Discuss all medication, both prescription and over-the-counter, with your doctor.
- consume alcoholic beverages.

### How should I store and take LIVALO?

- Store LIVALO at room temperature, in a dry place, protected from light, and keep out of the reach of children.
- LIVALO can be taken at any time of day, with or without food.
- Swallow the tablet whole. Do not split, crush, dissolve, or chew.
- If you take too much LIVALO or you or someone else takes an overdose, call your doctor and/or local Poison Control Center.

**The information provided is not complete. Please see the Full Prescribing Information available at [www.LivaloRx.com](http://www.LivaloRx.com).**

LIVALO® is a trademark of the Kowa group of companies. LIVALO is available by prescription only.

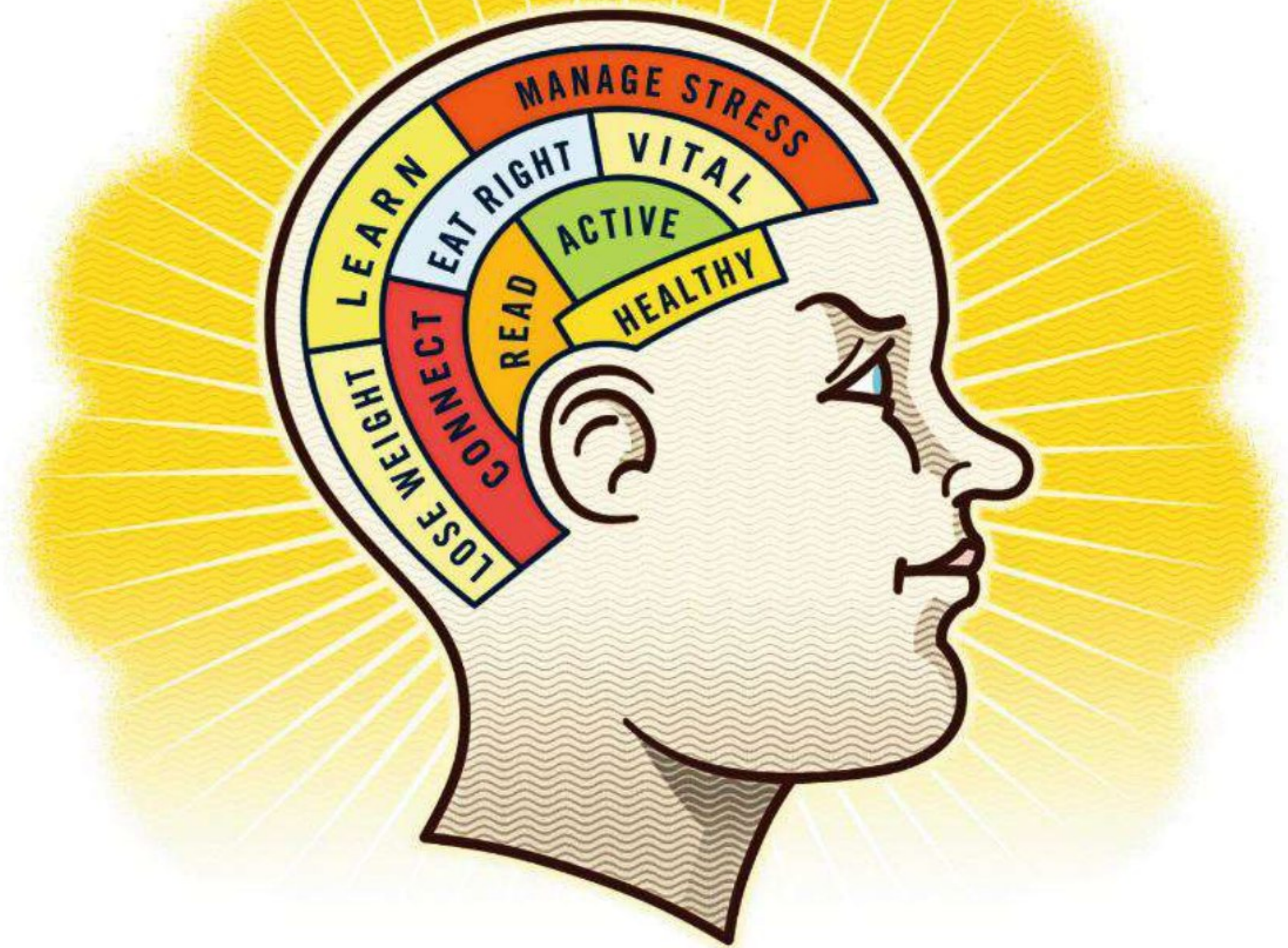
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LIVALO® (pitavastatin) tablets  
LIV-RA-0033 – PS73369 08/2011





## Protect Yourself from Alzheimer's Disease

Three simple steps that can keep your mind sharp

If everyone in the United States added just one healthy habit, it might prevent or delay a million cases of Alzheimer's disease that would otherwise be expected to occur over five years, says psychiatrist Gary Small, MD, director of the UCLA Longevity Center. Research hasn't yet proved that lifestyle

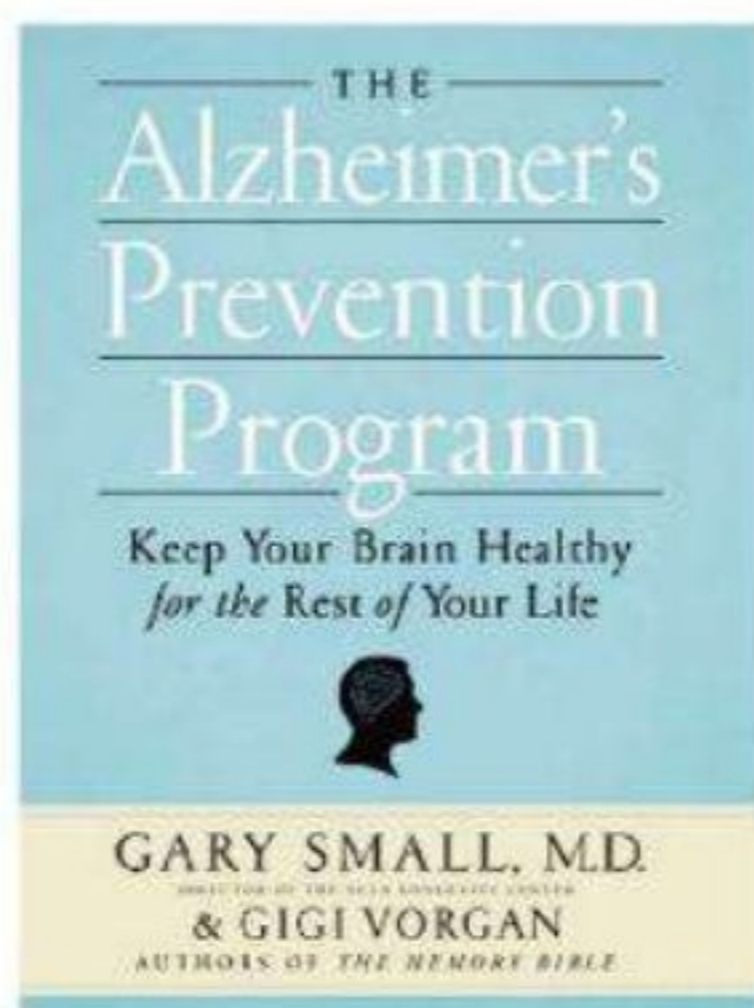
changes can ward off the disease, he says in his new book, *The Alzheimer's Prevention Program* (Workman, \$24.95)—“but if you read the small print, the evidence is compelling.” With the oldest baby boomers reaching their mid-60s, when Alzheimer's risk starts to climb, we asked him what changes matter most. >>

## ● **Get some exercise.**

Sure, that's always the Answer to Everything, but studies have shown that when couch potatoes start a fitness program, it's not just arm and leg muscles that bulk up; key portions of the brain do too. "You can build brain muscle," Dr. Small says. "You don't have to become a triathlete—park your car a bit of a distance from your destination. Take one flight of stairs. Start slowly and build up."

## ● **Stretch your mind.**

Crossword puzzles get all the attention, but mental challenges of every



sort appear to help ward off Alzheimer's, Dr. Small says. Take a class, or talk politics with a friend. As long as you avoid alienating each other, you'll reap double benefits, since studies suggest that having a network of friends can lower the risk of dementia by as much as 60 percent.

## ● **Feed your brain.**

Want to keep all your marbles? Eat well, just not too much: "If you're overweight at midlife, it doubles your risk for dementia," Dr. Small says. "If you're obese, it quadruples it." A Mediterranean-style diet >>

DANIEL HURST/GETTY IMAGES

## Smart Pills

Some supplements may help ward off Alzheimer's disease. What the doctor recommends:

### **Definitely take: A MULTIVITAMIN**

"As we get older, we don't always absorb all the nutrients we need," Dr. Small says. "I see it as insurance."

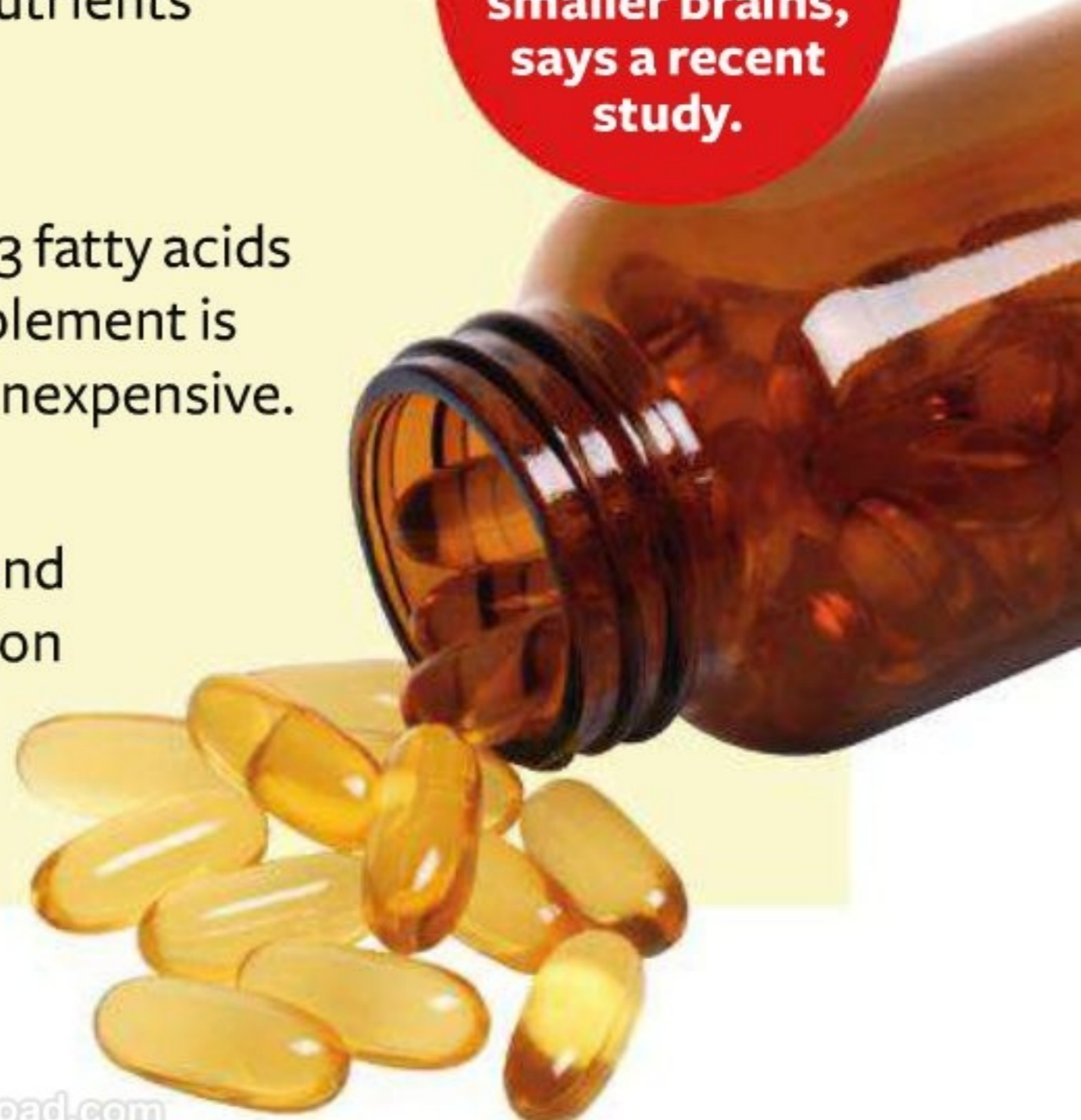
### **Worth considering: FISH OIL**

People who get lots of anti-inflammatory omega-3 fatty acids have a lower risk of Alzheimer's disease. The supplement is safe (if you don't take megadoses) and relatively inexpensive.

### **Looks exciting: CURCUMIN**

More research is needed, but this compound, found in turmeric, appears to lower levels of inflammation throughout the body—and, like fish oil, may prevent brain changes linked to Alzheimer's.

Older people low in B<sub>12</sub> had smaller brains, says a recent study.





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Reader's  
**Digest**

(heavy on produce, whole grains, and fish) is good because it lowers the risk of diabetes—and diabetes is a major risk factor for Alzheimer's.

## ● Manage your stress.

One study found that people who were easily stressed were twice as likely as calmer sorts to develop Alzheimer's over about a five-year

period. Meditation can help; studies show it can actually increase the size of parts of your brain that control memory. But so can tai chi, getting a massage, and taking an after-dinner walk with a friend. Whatever you do, *don't* stress about your Alzheimer's prevention plan, Dr. Small says. Little steps will take you a long way.

### WHAT WORKS

## Stand Tall, Kill Pain

BY KAREN RAVN

**Posture isn't just about how you look.**

It also has a powerful effect on how you feel—and on what you do. Want to eat less? Stick to your budget? Ease your back pain? Researchers in the growing field of “embodied cognition” suggest you assume these positions:

**To lose weight, make a muscle.**

You really do want to exercise and eat sensibly—but your resolve keeps going wobbly? Try clenching your hand, gritting your teeth, or standing on tiptoe. Flexing your muscles can make your willpower stronger, according to a study published last year. “You're telling yourself, ‘I am strong. I can resist this temptation,’” says coauthor Aparna

**To boost confidence, take more space, new studies suggest.**



Labroo, PhD, who studies decision making at the Rotman School of Management in Toronto. “The cumulative effect can be quite large over time.”

**To hurt less, stand tall.**

Your back is killing you, so you curl up into a ball. But a study published earlier this year found that an expansive posture—for instance, standing up straight, shoulders back, chest out—makes people less sensitive to pain. A dominant posture may help you breathe more deeply and can even affect hormone levels, says coauthor Scott Wiltermuth, PhD, at the USC Marshall School of Business. “But we think it's mostly about changes inside the head. You feel more powerful, and that increases your tolerance for pain.”

# CONSTIPATED?

CHOOSE RELIEF THAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU.

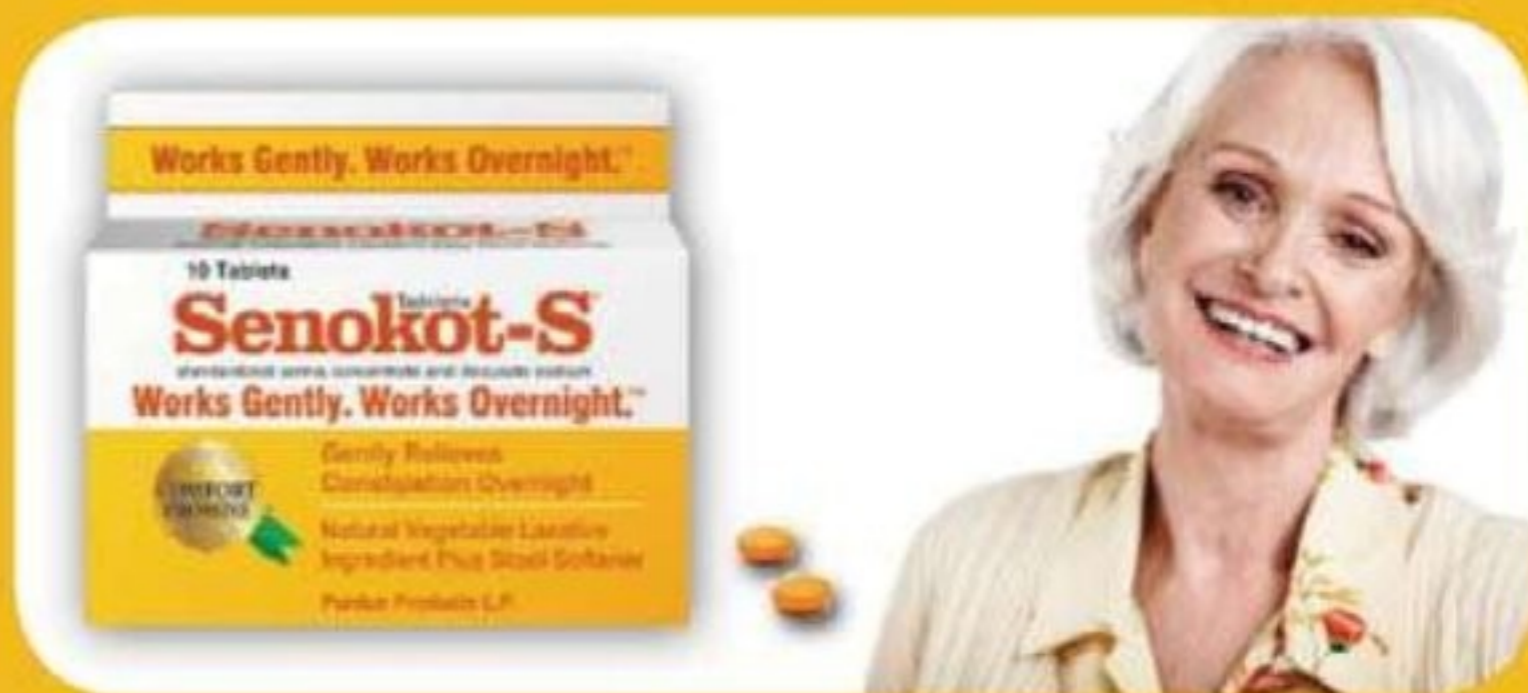


For occasional constipation associated with travel, stress, or dietary changes, a natural choice for gentle, overnight relief is

**SENOKOT® TABLETS.**

For occasional constipation associated with certain medications, get relief with the leading brand that combines a natural vegetable laxative ingredient plus the comfort of a stool softener,

**SENOKOT-S® TABLETS.**



For occasional constipation that results in painful bowel movements, get predictable, convenient, overnight relief with

**PERI-COLACE® TABLETS.**



For occasional constipation associated with conditions such as IBS, hemorrhoids, surgery or post-childbirth\*, get comfortable relief with the stimulant-free, #1 doctor and pharmacist recommended brand,

**COLACE® CAPSULES.**

\*If pregnant or nursing please consult with your doctor before use.



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**COLACECAPSULES.COM**

Please read full product label before use.



UNCOMMON SENSE

## Holiday Survival Guide

How to avoid three seasonal scourges

### STRESS

Shopping/wrapping/spending got you down? **Try planning your day, keeping your desk neat, and making a to-do list.** People emphasize the wrong things when they try to cut down on stress, says psychologist Robert Epstein, PhD. Meditation and yoga are useful, he said recently in *Scientific American Mind*—but what made the biggest difference for the 3,300 people in his study were the nuts and bolts of life management. Researcher Elissa Epel, at the University of California, San Francisco, tells *New Scientist* magazine that taking a few minutes a day to focus on breathing can be a big help. And guess what: There's an app for that. Developed by the Defense Department for soldiers, Breathe2Relax (free) will guide you through a breathing exercise, monitor your breath rate, and help you keep it at a healthy level.

### HANGOVERS

**“There is no such thing as a hangover cure,”** Meredith Melnick writes on time.com. “In a review of 15 clinical trials ...

a team of researchers publishing in the *British Medical Journal* found that not a single one worked.” So don't expect miracles, whether you knock back raw eggs or pricey new remedies like an amino-acid-rich elixir called Mercy. What does work: prevention. Sigh. If you remember the merits of that approach too late to use it, don't overdo the painkillers the day after. “Alcohol plus acetaminophen puts a double dose of stress on the liver,” writes Emily Sohn in the *Los Angeles Times*. And ibuprofen and similar drugs can irritate the lining of the stomach, just like alcohol does, raising the risk of bleeding.

### HEARTBURN

Solve heartburn and hangovers at once: Go easy on alcohol, which relaxes the muscle that keeps stomach acid out of your esophagus. **Fatty food is another trigger,** says health.com, so when the holiday turkey comes around, pick white meat, not dark (and lay off the gravy). And WebMD points out that chocolate is a particular offender. The obvious solution? Christmas cookies—just a couple.



**MEET ORANGE.  
RED'S DELICIOUS COUSIN.**



New Harvest Orange Tomato soup. Different color. Wonderfully different flavor.

**It's amazing what soup can do.®**



**STELARA® is a prescription medicine approved to treat adults 18 years and older with moderate or severe plaque psoriasis that involves large areas or many areas of their body, who may benefit from taking injections or pills (systemic therapy) or phototherapy (treatment using ultraviolet light alone or with pills).**

### **IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION**

STELARA® is a prescription medicine that affects your immune system. STELARA® can increase your chance of having serious side effects including:

#### **Serious Infections**

STELARA® may lower your ability to fight infections and may increase your risk of infections. While taking STELARA®, some people have serious infections, which may require hospitalization, including tuberculosis (TB), and infections caused by bacteria, fungi, or viruses.

- Your doctor should check you for TB before starting STELARA® and watch you closely for signs and symptoms of TB during treatment with STELARA®.
- If your doctor feels that you are at risk for TB, you may be treated for TB before and during treatment with STELARA®.

You should not start taking STELARA® if you have any kind of infection unless your doctor says it is okay.

Before starting STELARA®, tell your doctor if you think you have an infection or have symptoms of an infection such as:

- fever, sweats, or chills
- muscle aches
- cough
- shortness of breath
- blood in your phlegm
- weight loss
- warm, red, or painful skin or sores on your body
- diarrhea or stomach pain
- burning when you urinate or urinate more often than normal
- feel very tired
- are being treated for an infection
- get a lot of infections or have infections that keep coming back
- have TB, or have been in close contact with someone who has TB

After starting STELARA®, call your doctor right away if you have any symptoms of an infection (see above).

STELARA® can make you more likely to get infections or make an infection that you have worse. People who have a genetic problem where the body does not make any of the proteins interleukin 12 (IL-12) and interleukin 23 (IL-23) are at a higher risk for certain serious infections that can spread throughout the body and cause death. It is not known if people who take STELARA® will get any of these infections because of the effects of STELARA® on these proteins.

#### **Cancer**

STELARA® may decrease the activity of your immune system and increase your risk for certain types of cancer. Tell your doctor if you have ever had any type of cancer.

#### **Reversible posterior leukoencephalopathy syndrome (RPLS)**

RPLS is a rare condition that affects the brain and can cause death. The cause of RPLS is not known. If RPLS is found early and treated, most people recover. Tell your doctor right away if you have any new or worsening medical problems including: headache, seizures, confusion, and vision problems.

#### **Serious Allergic Reactions**

Serious allergic reactions can occur. Get medical help right away if you have any symptoms such as: feeling faint, swelling of your face, eyelids, tongue, or throat, trouble breathing, throat or chest tightness, or skin rash.

#### **Before receiving STELARA®, tell your doctor if you:**

- have any of the conditions or symptoms listed above for serious infections, cancer, or RPLS
- have recently received or are scheduled to receive an immunization (vaccine). People who take STELARA® should not receive live vaccines. Tell your doctor if anyone in your house needs a vaccine. The viruses used in some types of vaccines can spread to people with a weakened immune system, and can cause serious problems. **You should not receive the BCG vaccine during the one year before taking STELARA® or one year after you stop taking STELARA®.** Non-live vaccinations received while taking STELARA® may not fully protect you from disease.
- are receiving or have received allergy shots, especially for serious allergic reactions
- ever had an allergic reaction to STELARA®
- receive phototherapy for your psoriasis
- have any other medical conditions
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if STELARA® will harm your unborn baby. You and your doctor should decide if you will take STELARA®
- are breast-feeding or plan to breast-feed. It is thought that STELARA® passes into your breast milk. You should not breast-feed while taking STELARA® without first talking to your doctor.

**Tell your doctor about all the medicines you take**, including prescription and non-prescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Especially tell your doctor if you take:

- other medicines that affect your immune system
- certain medicines that can affect how your liver breaks down other medicines

**Common side effects of STELARA® include:** upper respiratory infections, headache, and tiredness.

These are not all of the side effects with STELARA®. Tell your doctor about any side effect that bothers you or does not go away. Ask your doctor or pharmacist for more information.

**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.

**Please read the Medication Guide for STELARA® and discuss any questions you have with your doctor.**





**Stelara**<sup>®</sup>  
(ustekinumab)



If you suffer from **moderate or severe plaque psoriasis...**  
*Imagine the possibilities of clearer skin*

*4 doses a year  
after 2  
starter doses*

Discover a proven psoriasis therapy. In a medical study, 7 out of 10 STELARA<sup>®</sup> patients saw at least 75% clearer skin at 12 weeks, and 6 out of 10 patients had their plaque psoriasis rated as cleared or minimal at 12 weeks. *Individual results may vary.*

The safety and effectiveness of STELARA<sup>®</sup> have not been evaluated beyond two years.

Discover a convenient psoriasis therapy. STELARA<sup>®</sup> is an injection given under the skin by a healthcare provider as directed by your doctor at weeks 0, 4, and every 12 weeks thereafter. Each injection is given using a small needle. STELARA<sup>®</sup> is available in 45 mg or 90 mg doses; your doctor will choose the right dose for you. Make sure you keep all your scheduled follow-up appointments.

**Ask your dermatologist about STELARA<sup>®</sup>**

**Please read the Important Safety Information on the adjacent page.**



**Learn more about STELARA<sup>®</sup>**

Text STELARA to 80800,  
call 1-866-709-1050,  
or visit [www.STELARAinfo.com](http://www.STELARAinfo.com)

## MEDICATION GUIDE FOR STELARA® INJECTION

Read this Medication Guide before you start taking STELARA® and each time before you get an injection. There may be new information. This Medication Guide does not take the place of talking with your doctor about your medical condition or treatment with STELARA®.

### What is the most important information I should know about STELARA®?

STELARA® is a medicine that affects your immune system. STELARA® can increase your chances of having serious side effects, including:

**Serious Infections:** STELARA® may lower the ability of your immune system to fight infections and may increase your risk of infections. Some people have serious infections while taking STELARA®, including tuberculosis (TB), and infections caused by bacteria, fungi, or viruses. Some people have to be hospitalized for treatment of their infection.

- Your doctor should check you for TB before starting STELARA®.
- If your doctor feels that you are at risk for TB, you may be treated with medicine for TB before you begin treatment with STELARA® and during treatment with STELARA®.
- Your doctor should watch you closely for signs and symptoms of TB during treatment with STELARA®.

You should not start taking STELARA® if you have any kind of infection unless your doctor says it is okay.

**Before starting STELARA®, tell your doctor** if you think you have an infection or have symptoms of an infection such as:

- fever, sweats, or chills
- muscle aches
- cough
- shortness of breath
- blood in your phlegm
- weight loss
- warm, red, or painful skin or sores on your body
- diarrhea or stomach pain
- burning when you urinate or urinate more often than normal
- feel very tired
- are being treated for an infection
- get a lot of infections or have infections that keep coming back
- have TB, or have been in close contact with someone who has TB

**After starting STELARA®, call your doctor right away** if you have any symptoms of an infection (see above).

STELARA® can make you more likely to get infections or make an infection that you have worse.

People who have a genetic problem where the body does not make any of the proteins interleukin 12 (IL-12) and interleukin 23 (IL-23) are at a higher risk for certain serious infections. These infections can spread throughout the body and cause death. It is not known

if people who take STELARA® will get any of these infections, because of the effects of STELARA® on these proteins in your body.

### Cancers:

STELARA® may decrease the activity of your immune system and increase your risk for certain types of cancers. Tell your doctor if you have ever had any type of cancer.

### Reversible posterior leukoencephalopathy syndrome (RPLS):

RPLS is a rare condition that affects the brain and can cause death. The cause of RPLS is not known. If RPLS is found early and treated, most people recover. Tell your doctor right away if you have any new or worsening medical problems including:

- headache
- seizures
- confusion
- vision problems

### What is STELARA®?

STELARA® is a prescription medicine used to treat adults 18 years and older with moderate or severe psoriasis that involves large areas or many areas of their body, who may benefit from taking injections or pills (systemic therapy) or phototherapy (treatment using ultraviolet light alone or with pills).

STELARA® may improve your psoriasis but may also lower the ability of your immune system to fight infections. This may also increase your risk for certain types of cancer.

It is not known if STELARA® is safe and effective in children. It is not known if taking STELARA® for more than two years is safe and effective.

### What should I tell my doctor before receiving STELARA®?

#### Before you receive STELARA®, tell your doctor if you:

- have any of the conditions or symptoms listed in the section "What is the most important information I should know about STELARA®?"
- have recently received or are scheduled to receive an immunization (vaccine). People who take STELARA® should not receive live vaccines. Tell your doctor if anyone in your house needs a vaccine. The viruses used in some types of vaccines can spread to people with a weakened immune system, and can cause serious problems. **You should not receive the BCG vaccine during the one year before taking STELARA® or one year after you stop taking STELARA®.** Non-live vaccinations received while taking STELARA® may not fully protect you from disease.
- are receiving or have received allergy shots, especially for serious allergic reactions. Allergy shots may not work as well for you during treatment with STELARA®. STELARA® may also increase your risk of having an allergic reaction to an allergy shot.
- receive phototherapy for your psoriasis.

- have any other medical conditions.
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if STELARA<sup>®</sup> will harm your unborn baby. You and your doctor should decide if you will take STELARA<sup>®</sup>.
- are breast-feeding or plan to breast-feed. It is thought that STELARA<sup>®</sup> passes into your breast milk. You should not breast-feed while taking STELARA<sup>®</sup> without first talking with your doctor.
- ever had an allergic reaction to STELARA<sup>®</sup>. Ask your doctor if you are not sure.

**Tell your doctor about all the medicines you take**, including prescription and non-prescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Especially tell your doctor if you take:

- other medicines that affect your immune system.
- certain medicines that can affect how your liver breaks down other medicines.

Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure if your medicine is one that is listed above.

Know the medicines you take. Keep a list of them to show your doctor and pharmacist when you get a new medicine.

#### **How will I receive STELARA<sup>®</sup>?**

- STELARA<sup>®</sup> is given by injection under the skin (subcutaneous injection).
- STELARA<sup>®</sup> should only be given by a healthcare provider as directed by your doctor.
- Your doctor will decide the right dose of STELARA<sup>®</sup> for you and how often you should receive it.
- Be sure to keep all of your scheduled follow-up appointments.

#### **What should I avoid while receiving STELARA<sup>®</sup>?**

You should not receive a live vaccine while taking STELARA<sup>®</sup>. See "What should I tell my doctor before taking STELARA<sup>®</sup>?"

#### **What are the possible side effects of STELARA<sup>®</sup>?**

STELARA<sup>®</sup> can increase your chances of having serious side effects.

- See "**What is the most important information I should know about STELARA<sup>®</sup>?**"
- **Serious Allergic Reactions.** Serious allergic reactions can occur with STELARA<sup>®</sup>. Get medical help right away if you have any of the following symptoms of a serious allergic reaction:
  - feeling faint
  - swelling of your face, eyelids, tongue, or throat
  - trouble breathing, throat tightness
  - chest tightness
  - skin rash

#### **Common side effects of STELARA<sup>®</sup> include:**

- upper respiratory infections
- headache
- tiredness

These are not all of the possible side effects of STELARA<sup>®</sup>. Tell your doctor about any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away. 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.

You may also report side effects to Centocor Ortho Biotech Inc. at 1-800-457-6399.

#### **General information about STELARA<sup>®</sup>**

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes other than those listed in a Medication Guide.

This Medication Guide summarizes the most important information about STELARA<sup>®</sup>. If you would like more information, talk with your doctor. You can ask your doctor or pharmacist for information about STELARA<sup>®</sup> that was written for healthcare professionals.

#### **What are the ingredients in STELARA<sup>®</sup>?**

Active ingredient: ustekinumab

Inactive ingredients: L-histidine, L-histidine monohydrochloride monohydrate, polysorbate 80, and sucrose.

Prefilled Syringe Manufactured by: Centocor Ortho Biotech Inc., Horsham, PA 19044, License No. 1821 at Baxter Pharmaceutical Solutions, Bloomington, IN 47403

Vial Manufactured by: Centocor Ortho Biotech Inc., Horsham, PA 19044, License No. 1821 at Cilag AG, Schaffhausen, Switzerland

Revised October 2010

This Medication Guide has been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

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25ST10222

WHO'S RIGHT?

## Should You Cut Back on Salt?

BY CHRIS WOOLSTON



Some experts think it's a killer—but others worry about a rush to reduce.

### WHAT YOU'VE ALWAYS HEARD

**We're eating way too much salt.** It's not just chips that are loaded with the stuff—so are dietary mainstays like bread. The average American gets about 3.4 grams of sodium every day, far more than the upper limit of 2.3 grams recommended by the USDA or the 1.5 grams recommended by the American Heart Association. The worry: Too much salt could raise blood pressure, a major step toward heart disease. The Institute of Medicine estimates that reducing sodium intake nationwide could prevent 100,000 deaths every year.

### THE HEADLINES NOW

**It's time to get tough.** The New York City health department recently kicked off a national effort to cut the amount of salt in packaged and restaurant food by 25 percent over five years. Eighty percent of the salt in the average person's diet comes from those sources, not from the saltshaker.

### BUT WAIT

**The benefits of salt reduction are surprisingly murky.** At least 13 studies have tried to tease out what happens to people who choose to eat salty or not-so-salty food—and the results have pointed in every conceivable direction, epidemiologist

Michael Alderman, MD, pointed out in an editorial in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. Some studies suggest that cutting salt protects the heart; others suggest that zealous salt reduction can actually increase heart problems. What's needed, Dr. Alderman says, is a randomized, controlled trial, in which people are put on different diets and followed for years. It's the only way to get a reliable answer, but it's never been done.

### SO WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

**Go easy on processed foods and eat more produce.** Those changes will improve your diet in a variety of ways and cut the amount of sodium you consume. If your blood pressure is high, work with your doctor to control it with drugs and lifestyle changes. If your blood pressure is healthy? Some doctors will squawk, but at this point, there's no convincing reason for you to count every grain.

### GO FIGURE

# 42%

**Percentage of primary-care doctors who think their own patients receive unnecessary medical care**

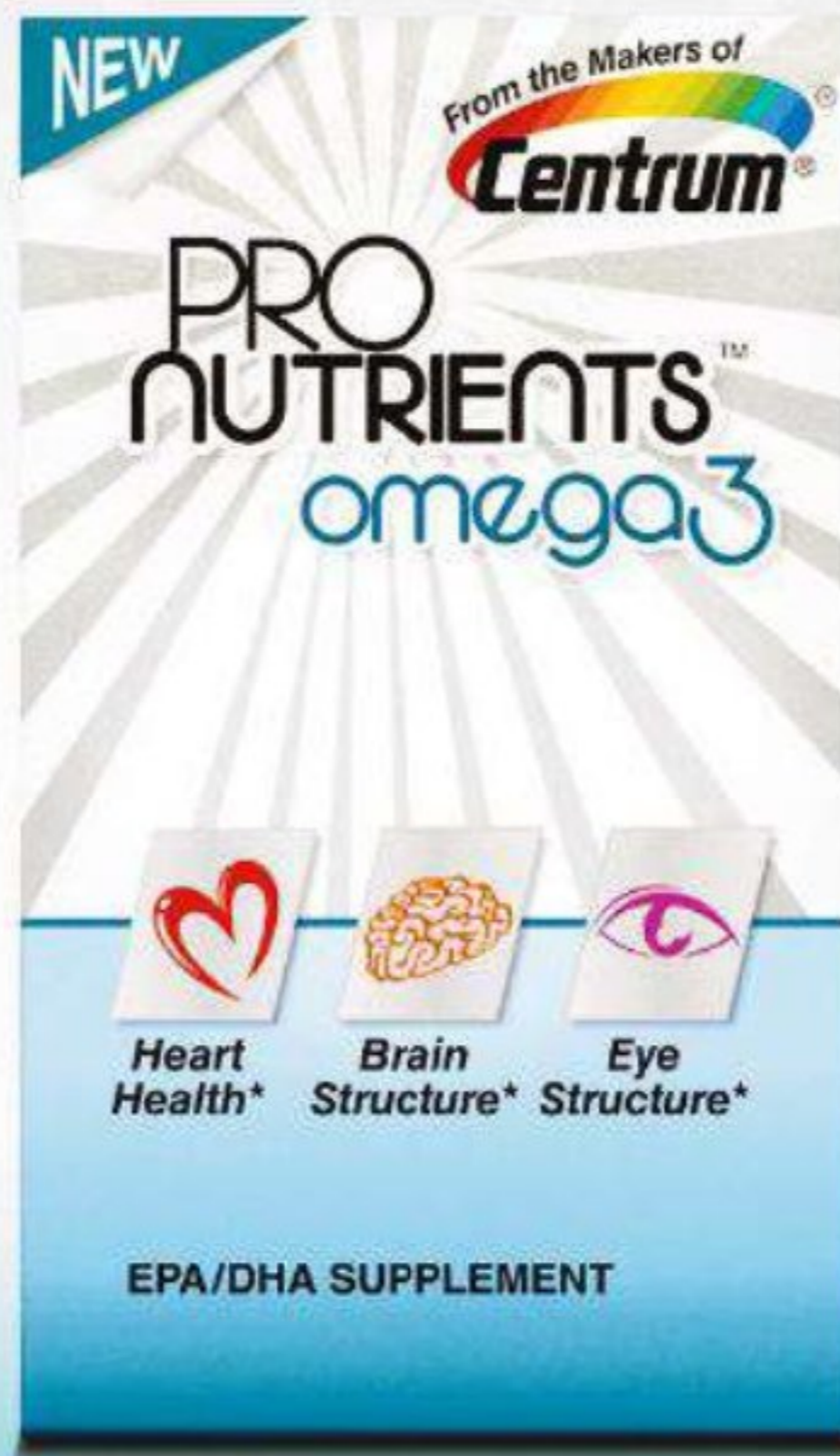
Source: *Archives of Internal Medicine*



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## New ProNutrients™ Omega-3 from the makers of Centrum®

ProNutrients triple-action Omega-3 works with your multivitamin to go beyond heart health to also support your brain and eyes.\*  
And it's an ultra-concentrated MiniGel.

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[www.ProNutrients.com](http://www.ProNutrients.com)

ProNutrients Omega-3 MiniGels are smaller than most other Omega-3 softgels.

\*This statement has not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.

## More This, Less That

From the latest research around the world, simple **additions** and **subtractions** that just might result in a healthier life

### + PUMPING IRON

Attention, smokers: In a small study, would-be quitters doubled their chances of success if they did an hour-long strength-training workout twice a week for three months, compared with others who didn't exercise.

### + MODERATE DRINKING

News to toast: Compared with teetotalers, women who indulged in one alcoholic beverage most days of the week were about 20 percent less likely to be hit with a major chronic disease (such as diabetes or cancer) by age 70, according to a recent study.

### + BANANAS AND BEANS

Here's an easy way to cut your risk of stroke: Eat more potassium-rich foods (others include low-fat dairy and vegetables). In a recent analysis of studies, for every 1,000 mg of potassium a person ate, he or she reduced the odds of suffering a stroke by 11 percent.

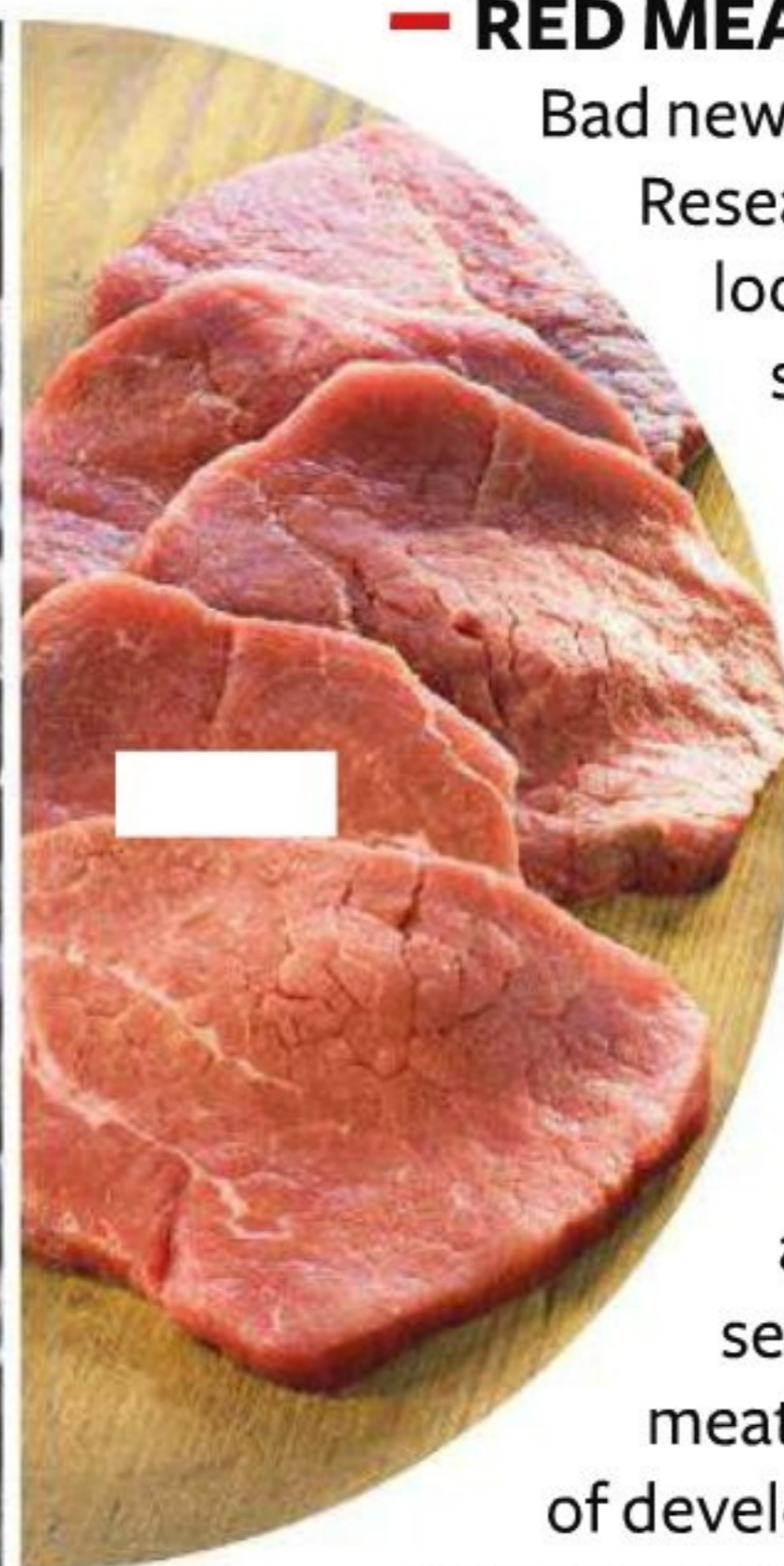


### - SAW PALMETTO

Men who are bothered by reduced urine flow and other signs of an enlarged prostate often try a saw palmetto supplement. But new research on one brand found that even high doses didn't work any better than a placebo.

### - RED MEAT

Bad news for carnivores: Researchers who looked at the results of three large studies found that those who ate the most red meat were more likely to develop type 2 diabetes. In fact, for each additional daily serving of red meat, a person's risk of developing type 2 diabetes increased 14 percent.



### - ANTIBIOTICS

There's a new reason not to use antibiotics unnecessarily: A recent study suggests that using the drugs too often could up your risk of developing two serious and painful bowel diseases, Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis.

FROM LEFT: RYAN MCVAY/GETTY IMAGES; TOM GRILL/GETTY IMAGES

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Healthy Living Plan** with  
some easy-to-achieve  
New Year's resolutions.

Humana and Reader's Digest  
have partnered to help you  
achieve total health.

Medicare Advantage HMO and PPO plans  
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# More than you ever expected from a **Medicare Advantage plan.**

Humana and Reader's Digest have teamed up to provide you with a Medicare Advantage plan unlike any other. With the **Humana Reader's Digest Healthy Living Plan**, you'll get all the benefits of a Humana Medicare Advantage plan, plus special health and wellness materials from Reader's Digest. You'll get great coverage when you need it, and easy-to-understand tips to help you live a healthier life. And you'll only get them with the **Humana Reader's Digest Healthy Living Plan**.

**INSIDE: A special preview of just some of the ways we'll support your health when you become a plan member.**

Enroll in the **Humana Reader's Digest Healthy Living Plan** and get health guidance all year long.

**Call 1-877-283-1313 (TTY: 711)**

8 a.m. – 8 p.m., seven days a week.



It's that time of year again. The time when you make your **New Year's resolutions**. And this year, keeping them is easy when you follow these **4 Golden Rules**:

- 1 Measure Up:** How to help keep yourself in good health.
- 2 Move More:** Easy ways to bring exercise into your day.
- 3 Eat Well:** Ways to make healthy eating decisions.
- 4 Enjoy Life:** Tips to relieve stress and live happier.



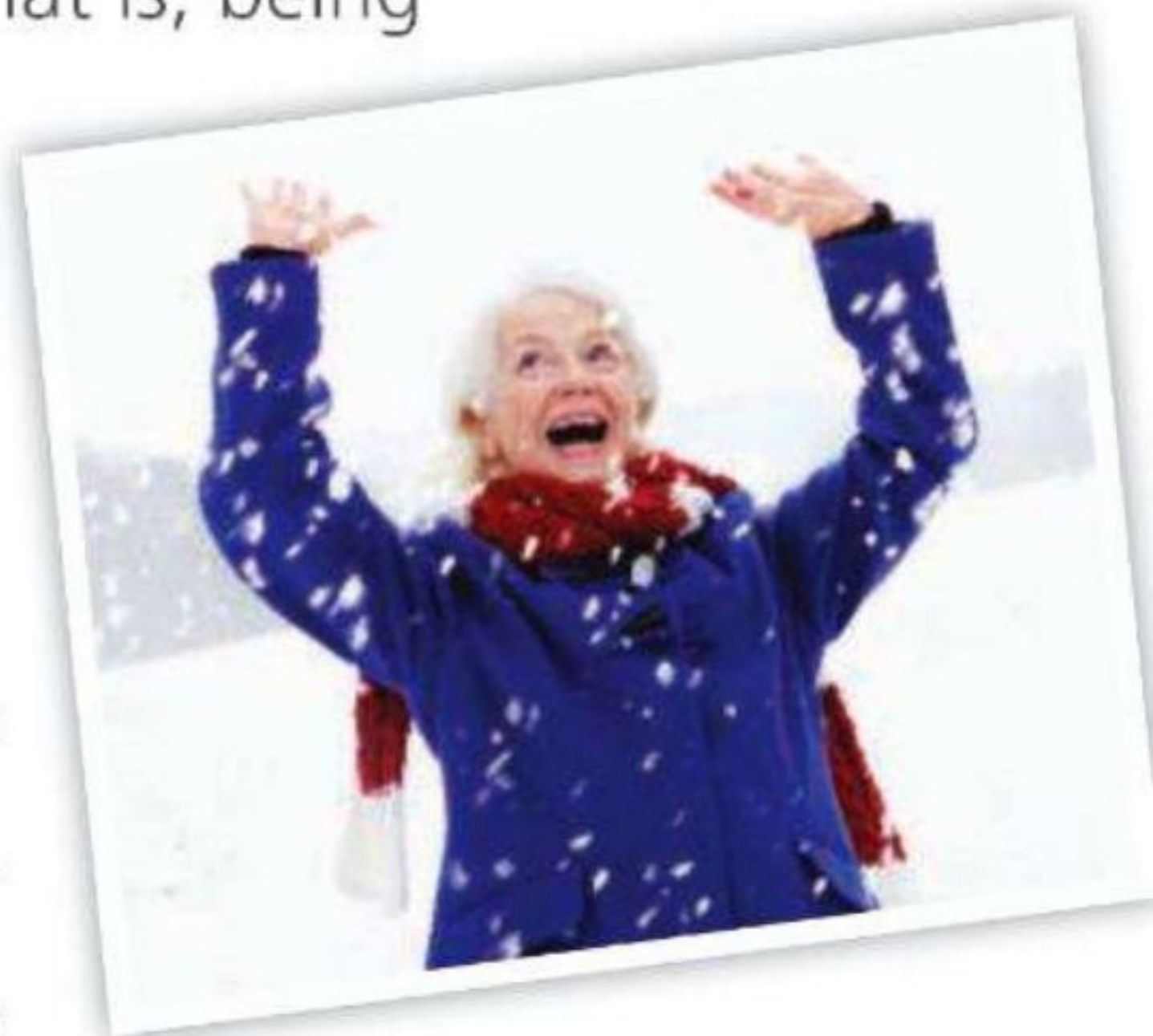
**GOLDEN RULE #1:**

# Measure Up

The first step to great health is merely paying attention to it. To feel and live at your peak, it's essential to stay on top of regular doctor's visits, know key numbers like your blood pressure and cholesterol, and get the tests you need when you need them.

But by "measuring up," we also mean keeping a close eye on how you look, feel, and act each day. To improve daily habits takes mindfulness — that is, being constantly mindful of whether the choices you're making are helping or hurting your well-being. You'll soon find that healthy choices usually make you feel better instantly, whether it's going to bed a little earlier or choosing a piece of fruit for dessert, rather than cake.

There are plenty of ways to tend to the essentials of great health on your own, without having to call a doctor. These small steps can help boost your health and energy.



Enroll in the **Humana Reader's Digest Healthy Living Plan** and get health guidance all year long.

Call **1-877-283-1313 (TTY: 711)**

8 a.m. – 8 p.m., seven days a week.

## Your new, improved resolutions:

- 1** I will get myself a better sleep pillow.
- 2** I will designate someone in my cell phone as my ICE (In Case of Emergency) contact.
- 3** I will memorize my cholesterol and blood pressure numbers.
- 4** I will purge expired medicines from my medicine cabinet.
- 5** I will live as if my doctor were watching.
- 6** I will make a list of the health screenings I should get, and set up those appointments.
- 7** I will wear sunscreen.
- 8** I will change the batteries in my smoke detectors every time I change the clocks.



## GOLDEN RULE #2:

# Move More

Bring the world to your doorstep with TV. Broadcast your life internationally on the Web. The digital world has expanded minds and sparked revolutions. But it's also helped escalate

an epidemic of "sitting disease."

That's accelerated aging that happens thanks to too much time sitting around in a body that's designed to move.

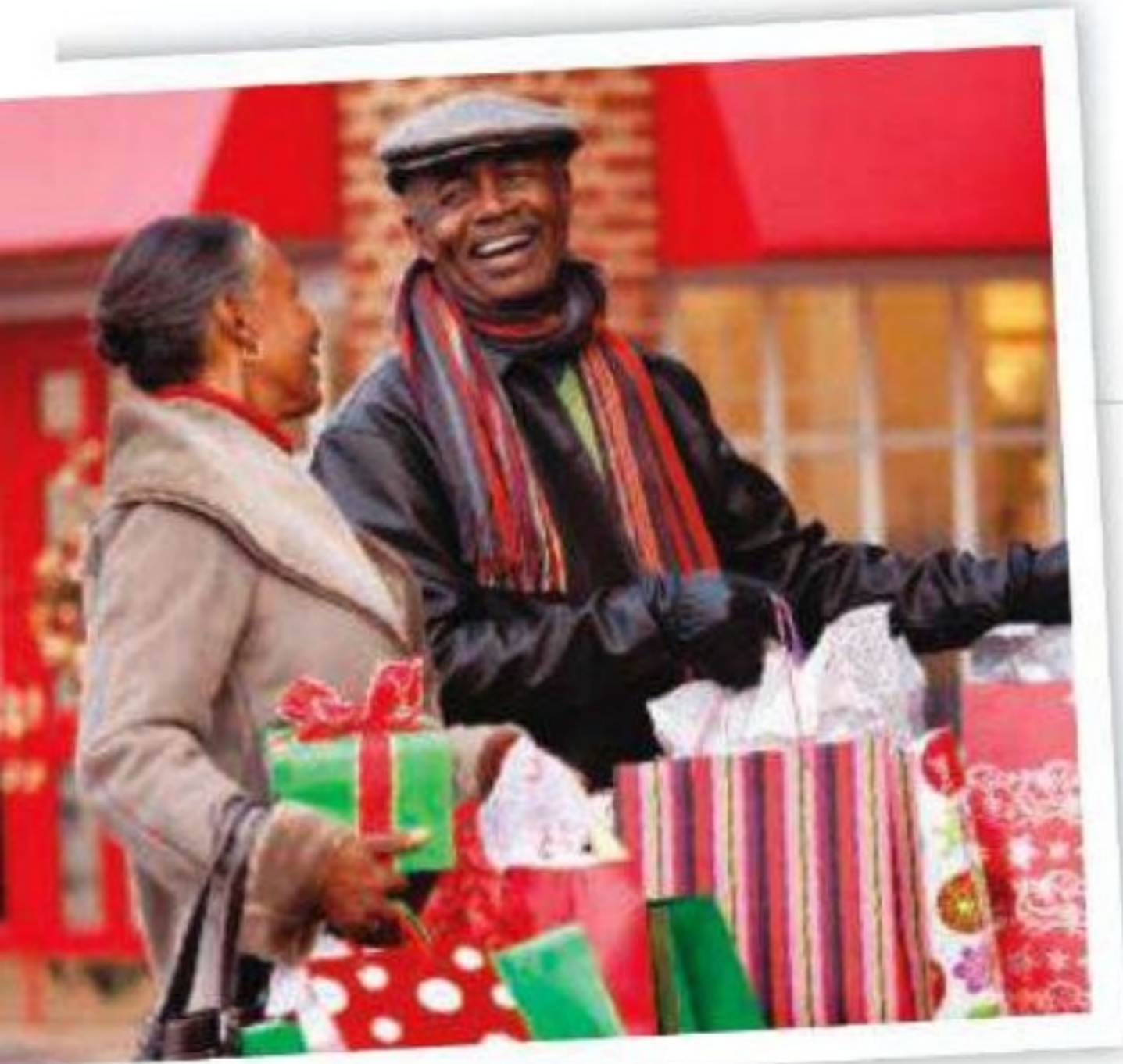
Reverse that with one simple act: Move. Structured exercise is fine, but you don't have to go that far to benefit your heart health, waistline, blood sugar, self-image, and more.

Leisure-time activities, including the simple acts of walking, gardening, and even chopping vegetables by hand, count big. There are hundreds of ways to get a few more steps and a little more movement into your day. Watch your successes build and your energy transform when you resolve to do just one of these (but we bet you'll do more).

Enroll in the **Humana Reader's Digest Healthy Living Plan** and get health guidance all year long.

Call **1-877-283-1313 (TTY: 711)**

8 a.m. – 8 p.m., seven days a week.



## Your new, improved resolutions:

- 1 I will walk, not drive, if possible.
- 2 I will take the stairs whenever I need to go up or down two or fewer flights.
- 3 I will stand when talking on the phone.
- 4 I will spend at least four hours a week outdoors, no matter what the weather.
- 5 I will get up and move during the commercials.
- 6 I will sit less.
- 7 I will ask my favorite neighbor to walk with me for 30 minutes.
- 8 I will walk the dog instead of just letting him out.



### **GOLDEN RULE #3:**

## **Eat Well**

Never eat chocolate again? That's one of those resolutions that sets you up to fail. Somewhere, sometime, there's going to be a piece of chocolate that finds its way to your mouth. And, in fact, there should be.

Eating for great health doesn't mean depriving yourself of flavor and satisfaction. It means filling up on the most delicious and satisfying foods around. It means eating more foods from farms and less from factories. It means adding flavor, taste, and freshness. And take the time to savor your food, instead of rushing through meals. All of this is pretty simple, once you know how to start. Watch these tiny resolutions spin you into a big (and maybe even smaller size) success.



**Enroll in the Humana Reader's Digest Healthy Living Plan and get health guidance all year long.**

**Call 1-877-283-1313 (TTY: 711)**

8 a.m. – 8 p.m., seven days a week.

## Your new, improved resolutions:

- 1 I will eat at least one piece of fruit every day.
- 2 I will avoid eating after 9 p.m.
- 3 I will try at least one new recipe a week.
- 4 I will only eat between meals if I include a fruit or vegetable in the snack.
- 5 I will have veggies take up more room on my plate than grains or proteins do.
- 6 I will eat a salad every day.
- 7 I will eat dinners I wouldn't be embarrassed to share on Facebook.
- 8 I will put my fork down between bites.





#### **GOLDEN RULE #4:**

## **Enjoy Life**

This year, go ahead and load up on everything you love. The big secret is that doing more of what you enjoy, having meaningful relationships, and maintaining a positive outlook all give your health a huge boost. Not just your mental health, but your physical health, too.

And just as importantly, laughter, love, and doing things you find important or meaningful make life worth living. So take a quick inventory. What did you fill up on today? Stress or joy? Tip the balance toward joy and positive living with these options.

**Enroll in the Humana Reader's Digest Healthy Living Plan and get health guidance all year long.**

**Call 1-877-283-1313 (TTY: 711)**

8 a.m. – 8 p.m., seven days a week.



## Your new, improved resolutions:

- 1** I will start planning my next vacation.
- 2** I will say "hello" at least 10 times a day.
- 3** I will clean and organize one drawer or cabinet each week.
- 4** I will make a binding date instead of saying "We should get together sometime."
- 5** I will read a book or two each month, not just read about them.
- 6** I will spend four hours a month volunteering.
- 7** I will listen to live music once a month.
- 8** I will not keep having the same old fight with my significant other.



## The “Every-Year” Resolution



If you celebrate the holidays at home, chances are that by early January you have leftover cake, half-full containers of cookies, partially empty bottles of soda, plastic-wrapped hunks of cheese, sealed containers of ham, glass jars holding the last of those olives, and a few half-empty bottles of wine filling your kitchen. That's thousands of calories and extra holiday pounds. It's easy to just throw it away, and it's even easier to eat it all before it goes bad. Neither one is a good idea. Try a few of these options instead.

Enroll in the **Humana Reader's Digest Healthy Living Plan** and get health guidance all year long.

Call **1-877-283-1313 (TTY: 711)**

8 a.m. – 8 p.m., seven days a week.

## Your new, improved resolutions:

- 1** I will share leftovers at the social clubs I attend.
- 2** I will bring extra food to a homeless shelter or soup kitchen.
- 3** I will send family and friends home with doggie bags.
- 4** I will freeze leftovers instead of eating them all.
- 5** I will donate nonperishables to charity or a place of worship.
- 6** I will give extra food to a neighbor with a large family.
- 7** I will reuse food to make lunch or dinner instead of throwing it away.
- 8** I will host a post-holiday party with my extra food.



# Make your first healthy resolution of the year:

## Enroll in the Humana Reader's Digest Healthy Living Plan.

The **Humana Reader's Digest Healthy Living Plan** is an affordable and easy-to-understand plan that supports your health in so many ways. **Call today to enroll and you'll enjoy all these great benefits:**

- Built-in prescription drug coverage\*
- Coverage for office visits, including annual routine physical exams
- A choice of primary care physicians from the plan network
- A wide selection of doctors and hospitals in the network
- Tools for better health from Reader's Digest: A comprehensive Healthy Living Kit, and quarterly Healthy Living Bulletins featuring the newest health and wellness topics, with practical how-to advice
- Choice of a free book from the Reader's Digest Healthy Living library



\*Not available in some markets.

We hope you enjoyed this preview of the special health and wellness information that comes with the **Humana Reader's Digest Plan**. Enroll today to get a full **Healthy Living Kit** and take advantage of all the plan has to offer.

**Call 1-877-283-1313 (TTY: 711)**

8 a.m. – 8 p.m., seven days a week.



A Health plan with a Medicare contract. The benefit information provided herein is a brief summary, not a comprehensive description of benefits. For more information, contact the plan. There is no obligation. Other plans may be available in the service area.

Medicare beneficiaries may enroll in the plan only during specific times of the year. Contact Humana for more information.

**For more information:**

**Call 1-877-283-1313 (TTY: 711)**

8 a.m. – 8 p.m., seven days a week.



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Photograph by Tamara Reynolds

Last year, Reader's Digest gave millions in prizes and promotional support to improve more than 100 towns across the country. Now yours could be next. Starting November 16th, We Hear You America is coming back and could help make your town an even better place to live.

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Reader's  
**Digest**

# TechDigest

## 13 Things Your TV Salesman Won't Tell You

BY MICHELLE CROUCH

### 1 Buy your new TV in September or January.

That's when the new models come out and the prices go way down on discontinued models. Another time to get a deal: Black Friday, if you're willing to brave the crowds.

### 2 Shoppers' questions boil down to this: LED, LCD, or plasma?

LEDs and LCDs use the same technology, but LEDs are thinner and more expensive. LEDs can also be too reflective in a bright room. Plasmas offer the best picture for your money, especially if you're watching at an angle, but they're thicker than the others, and ghost images can be an issue.

### 3 Which brands do I recommend?

For LCDs, LG, Panasonic, Samsung, and Sony have consistently been among the best in rankings by *Consumer Reports*. Among plasmas, Panasonic tops the list.

### 4 Our margins on TVs are so thin, they're almost nonexistent. The prices are designed to get you in the



store, and then we try to sell you the expensive cords, accessories, and, of course, the **extended warranty**. Don't buy it. Problems are rare, and most repairs happen in the first year, when the standard manufacturer's warranty still covers you.

### 5 And don't spend a lot of money on a fancy HDMI cable. The one you can buy for \$10 online is just as good as the \$100 one in the store.

### 6 Flat screens have beautiful pictures, but the **sound from most is pretty**



**awful.** If you can't afford an expensive audio system, get external speakers.

**7** Want a great deal? **Buy a refurbished set,** a TV previously opened or returned. Check the warranty, though.

**8** We've had customers put a tilt mount for a 50-inch television on the wall, miss a stud or two, and then have the thing **come crashing down.** Come on. These TVs weigh more than 100 pounds. Unless you're a licensed contractor, pay for the professional install.

**9** Yes, the TV we just mounted on your wall is high enough. The center of the screen should be 45 to 50 inches from the floor, **putting it right at eye level.** And don't put it over your fireplace. It's a TV, not artwork.

**10** **Even if you're hanging your TV on the wall, keep the stand.** You never know when you might decide to redecorate and place the TV on a piece of furniture. At least once a month, we get a

call from someone looking for a particular stand, but TV technology changes so quickly that it's a challenge for us to find the one you need.

**11** **3-D TV is just a fad.** Nobody is making content for it, and you've still got to wear the stupid glasses. We're pushing it only because everyone already has a flat panel and we need to get you in the store.

**12** Televisions in the store are set at their **brightest levels** to attract your eye. Adjust yours when you get home or the colors will be distorted.

**13** Don't expect your flat screen to be around forever. You'll be lucky if it lasts five years. **Today's TVs are made to be replaced.**

Sources: David Davis of Davis Audio & Video in Chicago; Dennis Sage, owner of Dennis Sage Home Entertainment in Phoenix; a former TV salesman in Chicago; and *Consumer Reports*.

**For more things your TV salesman won't tell you, go to [readersdigest.com/tvsalesman](http://readersdigest.com/tvsalesman).**

## TREND

# Cloud Storage

If your digital photos and documents are “in the cloud,” there is a computer server somewhere out in the world (not on your desktop) that stores these files so they won't slow down your computer or—worse—disappear in the event of theft, fire, or motherboard meltdown. “Cloud storage services are everywhere these days,” writes Brent Rose on [gizmodo.com](http://gizmodo.com), which recently reviewed almost a dozen of the services. Most offer some free space and charge for additional storage. Yearly costs for 100 GB of space are around \$100 to \$240, depending on the service. The more space you need, the more you pay. Gizmodo's top picks: **SugarSync, Google, Microsoft SkyDrive, and Dropbox.**

## BUYING GUIDE

# Which Tablet Is Right for You?

Sure, the iPad is great, but there are other options smart shoppers should consider

BY ROB PEGORARO

### IF YOU'LL USE IT AS AN ADDITIONAL FAMILY DEVICE

Among buyers looking for a second or third home computer, the **iPad 2** justifiably dominates the field. It has the best selection of apps, it's the simplest to use, and it offers the best battery life. And in most circumstances, the basic \$499, 16 GB, Wi-Fi-only model is all you need.

If you're on a tight budget and need little more than a Web browser, Barnes & Noble's \$249 **Nook Color** is a compelling and cheaper alternative. But Amazon's new \$199 **Kindle Fire** is even less expensive and a good deal faster. Both combine versions of Google's Android operating system with e-book and Web-browsing software, plus a seven-inch screen. The



Memory on Barnes & Noble's Nook Color can be expanded to 32 GB.



The iPad 2 includes an HD video camera and a ten-hour battery.

Fire connects to Amazon's music and video stores, while the Nook Color connects to Barnes & Noble. On the other hand, you may be more likely to run into bugs on the brand-new Fire than on the established Nook Color (although its age also means it's due to be upgraded).

### ... AS A TOOL FOR BUSINESS TRAVEL

Here, also, Apple's **iPad 2** has an edge. Although you can choose from a growing variety of tablets running Google's Android operating system—and in particular, the tablet flavor of Android called Honeycomb—the selection of Android apps built for larger screens remains limited. The **Kindle Fire** and **Nook Color** connect, respectively, to Amazon's and Barnes & Noble's separate app stores, further limiting their selection. Business travelers looking to lighten their carry-on luggage can, however, choose from a good selection of smaller, cheaper Android tablets. Though the late Steve Jobs declared touch screens smaller than ten inches unwieldy,

competitors have shipped numerous models with displays around seven inches. Also, unless your smart phone can share its Internet connection via tethering, you'll need a tablet with its own 3G wireless connection for times when Wi-Fi isn't available. Whatever model you buy, budget for an external keyboard. Your wrists will thank you.

### ... AS YOUR ONLY COMPUTER

Traditionally, the iPad has disqualified itself from this role by requiring a Mac or PC for its setup, backups, and operating-system updates. Apple's new iOS 5 update fills in those blanks—but Apple's past ventures into “cloud” backup and syncing services have fared poorly, and the iPad still can't play Adobe Flash. So for this purpose, **an Android tablet** is the better choice.

However, Honeycomb has shown bugs of its own on devices like Acer's problematic **Iconia Tab A Series A100** and still suffers from a lack of tablet-optimized apps, so you'll have to trust that fixes will come soon. Or you could get a tablet running Amazon's version of Android (for example, Vizio's uncreatively named **Tablet**), provided that its vendor promises an upgrade to the Ice Cream Sandwich edition that supposedly suits both phones and tablets.

### ... AS A PORTABLE ENTERTAINMENT CENTER

The **iPad 2** runs away with this. While there are Android versions of such apps as Netflix and Hulu Plus, they run only on specific devices and versions of Android. It's also easier to synchronize your movies and music from a computer to a tablet using Apple's iTunes with an iPad. And in the case of movies purchased

or rented from the iTunes Store, you have no tablet option besides the iPad. If you plan to download movies regularly or store a massive music library on the tablet, you'd do well to upgrade to the 32 GB or 64 GB version of the iPad.

The **Kindle Fire** looks to be a close second—or a first if you already do all your music or video downloading from Amazon.



The Kindle Fire is less than half the price of an iPad 2.

### ... AS A WAY TO READ MORE AND READ WHEREVER

Forget the iPad/Android debate. Amazon's **Kindle** is the cheapest and simplest e-book reader—starting at just \$79 if you don't mind seeing Amazon's “special offers” ads. And since the Seattle retailer ships Kindle reader apps for most computing platforms, if you do switch to some other company's gadget, the odds are your purchases will still be readable.

#### NOTABLE QUOTE

“Why is Wi-Fi free at cheap hotels but \$14 a night at expensive ones?”

DAVID POGUE, *NEW YORK TIMES*

# Get the lowest Medicare prescription plan premium in the country.\* And focus on what really matters.

Humana Walmart-Preferred Rx Plan (PDP).



## \$15.10

monthly plan premium  
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8 a.m. to 8 p.m.,  
seven days a week.

\*2012 CMS PDP Landscape Report <https://www.cms.gov/PrescriptionDrugCovGenIn/>. †After deductible. Applies only to drugs covered by Part D. ‡Based on Humana and Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services enrollment data for the period 12/31/2010 – 07/31/2011. The Humana Walmart-Preferred Rx Plan (PDP) is a stand-alone prescription drug plan with a Medicare contract available to anyone entitled to Part A and/or enrolled in Part B of Medicare. You may enroll in the plan only during specific times of the year. You must continue to pay your Medicare Part B premiums. You must use network pharmacies except under non-routine circumstances. Other pharmacies are available in the Humana network. Quantity limitations and restrictions may apply. The benefit information provided herein is a brief summary, not a comprehensive description of benefits. Other plans may be available in the service area. For more information contact the plan. The "Spark" Design \*, Walmart and Save money. Live better. are marks and/or registered marks of Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. © 2011 Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.

## WHAT I'M UP TO

# Mindy Kaling

plays Kelly Kapoor on *The Office* and has just written her first book

INTERVIEW BY  
ANDY SIMMONS

## WHAT SHE'S ...

**Reading** “*Complications*, by Atul Gawande. He’s a great medical writer. Actually, he’s just a great writer.”

**Watching** “*Breaking Bad*. I watch more dramas because I can’t stop thinking about the writing when I’m watching another comedy show.”

**Going to online** “My friends Sophia Rossi and Zooey Deschanel started **hellogiggles.com**. It’s a comedy and culture site for girls and young women. I also go to the Museum of Modern Art store site [moma.org]. It has the best presents.”

**Listening to** “*Beyoncé’s 4*. I think she’s a lot of people’s guilty pleasure. But to paraphrase Quentin Tarantino, ‘There are no guilty pleasures, just pleasure.’”

**Plugging** “My book, *Is Everyone Hanging Out Without Me? (And Other Concerns)* [Crown Archetype, \$25]. It’s part humor essays, part memoir. It would make a great holiday

Her  
**READER’S  
DIGEST VERSION**  
of life:

“Just don’t get so fat that you would break a chair. That’s pretty much served me well.”

present for any girl or woman and some really open-minded gay guys. In it, I fret about girls being told that they should be women way earlier than they need to be. Cherish the time you have being a kid and being with your parents. I did.”

## IF SHE RULED THE WORLD, SHE WOULD ...

“After world peace and figuring out Israel, I’d make parking meters and tollbooths **accept pennies**. The government makes pennies, but then they’re, like, We don’t want them. And you’re like, Well, then don’t make them.”

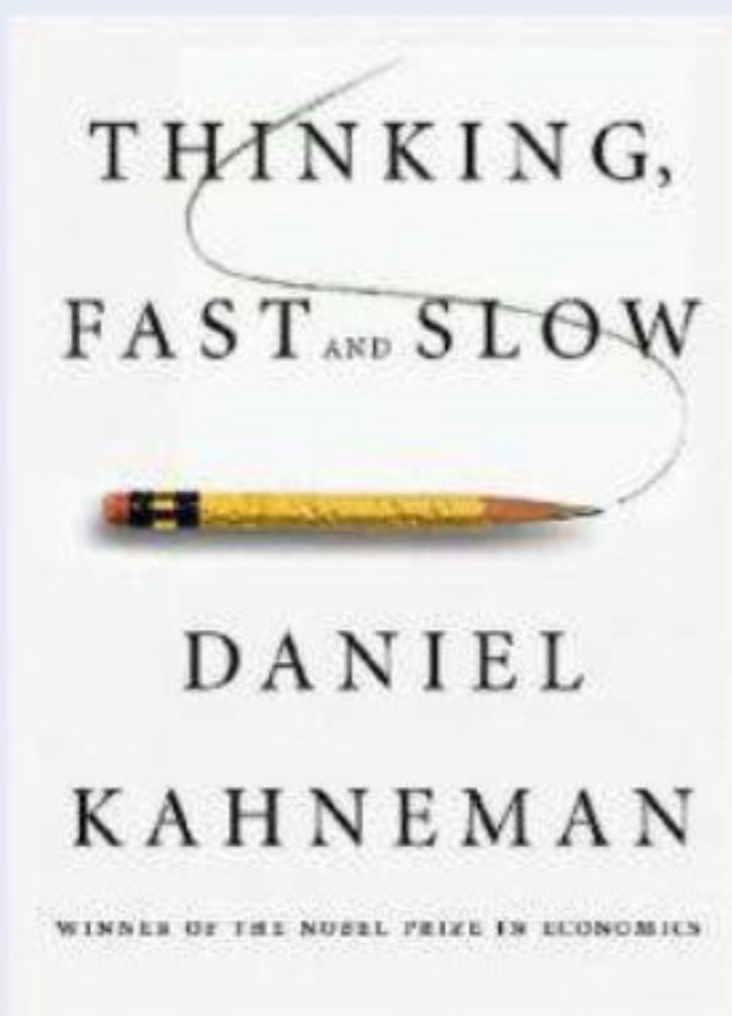
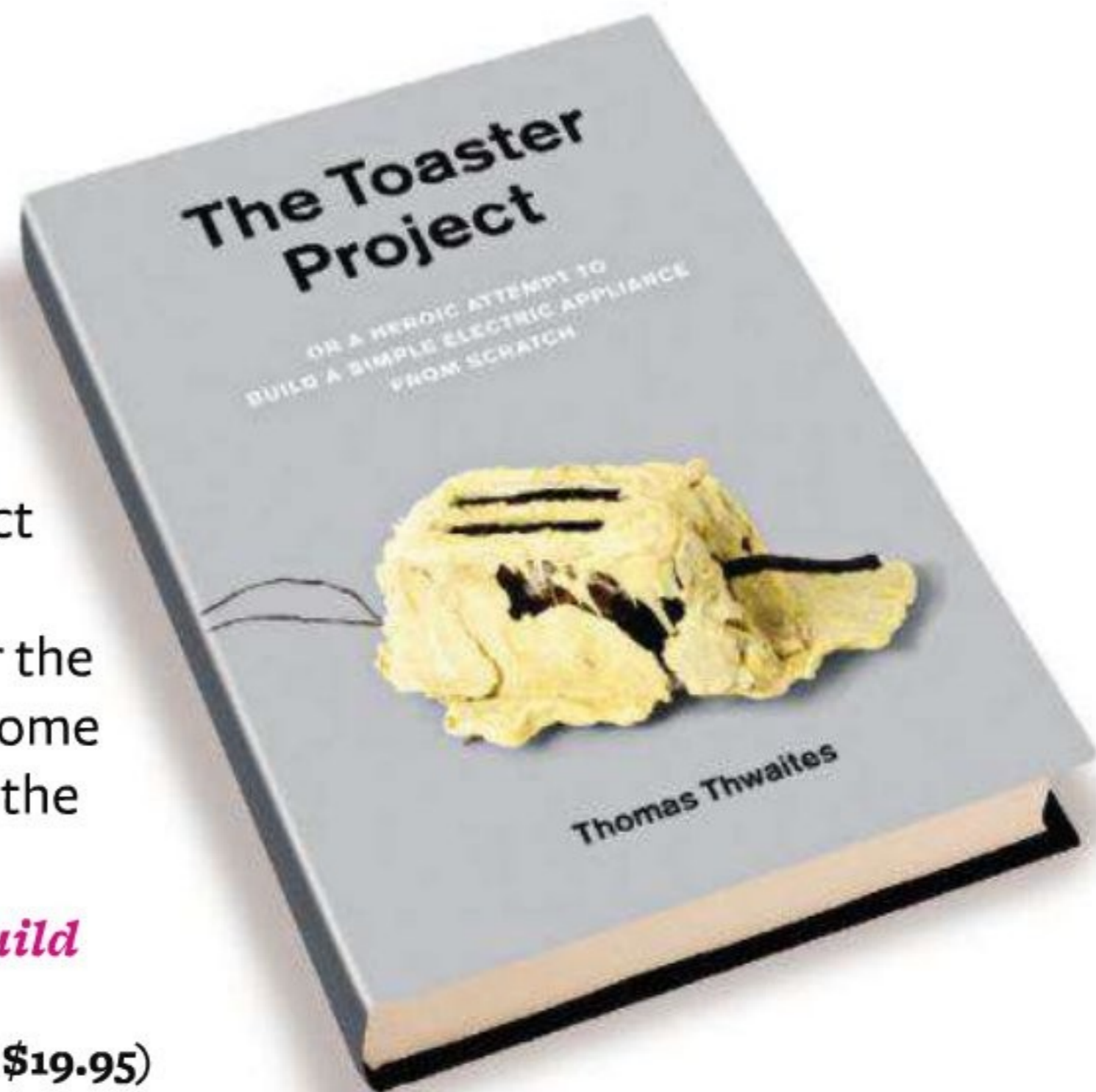
## Mini Book Excerpts

### Science

I'll travel to a mine where iron ore is found, collect some ore, somehow extract the iron myself, and then somehow change it into steel. The same for the mica, copper, and nickel. I'll need to get hold of some crude oil from which to refine the molecules for the plastic case. I'm going to need some advice ...

***The Toaster Project, or a Heroic Attempt to Build a Simple Electric Appliance from Scratch***

by **Thomas Thwaites** (Princeton Architectural Press, \$19.95)



### Economics/Psychology

Speaking of a woman he dislikes, [comedian Danny Kaye] says, “Her favorite position is beside herself, and her favorite sport is jumping to conclusions ...” Jumping to conclusions is not necessarily bad. Indeed, it is quite good if the conclusions are likely to be correct, if the costs of an occasional mistake are acceptable, and if the jump saves much time and effort. Jumping to conclusions is risky when the stakes are high and there is time to collect or analyze more information.

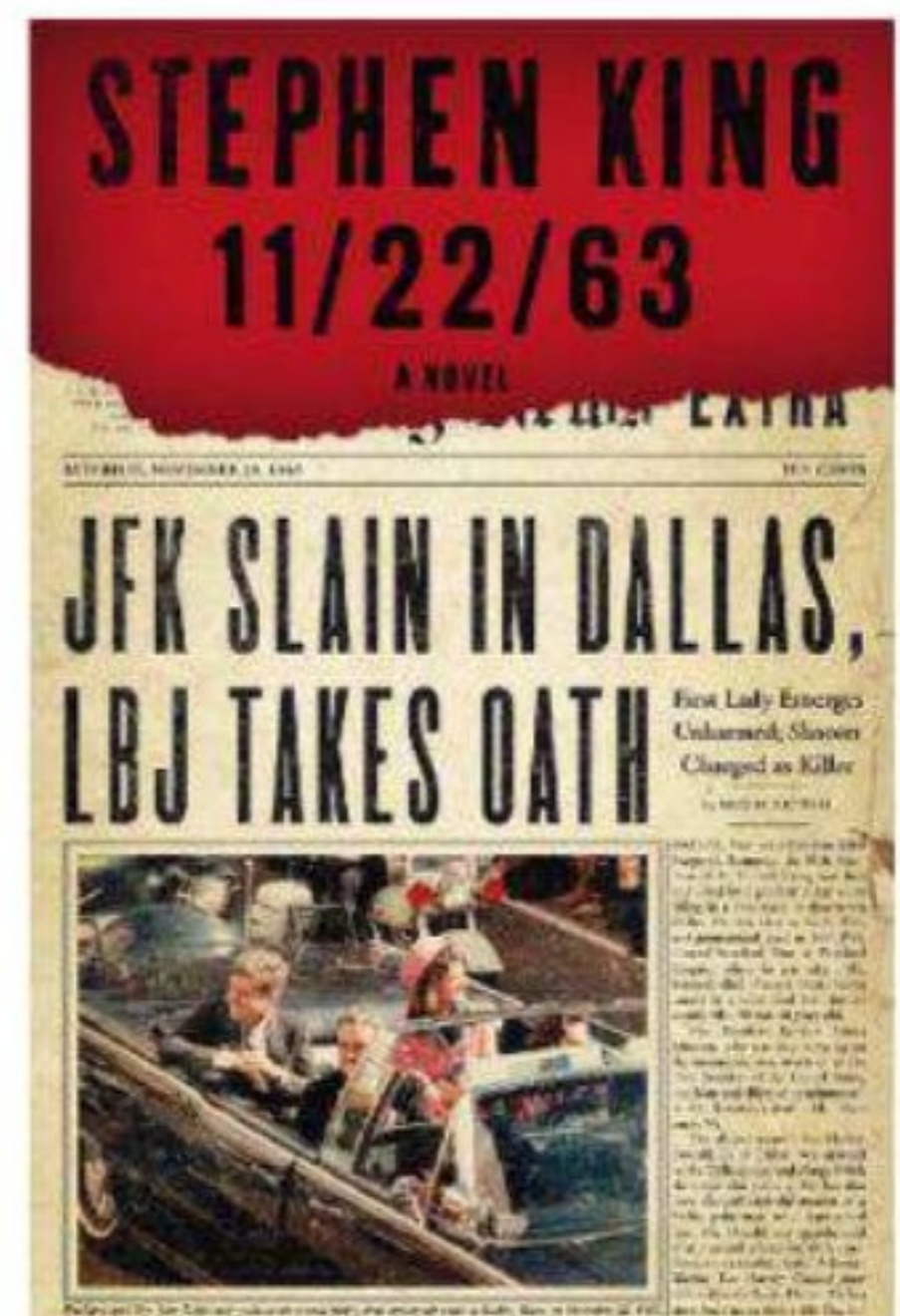
***Thinking, Fast and Slow***

by **Daniel Kahneman** (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, \$30)

### Novel

After discovering what he called the rabbit-hole, Al said, he was at first content to use it to buy supplies, make a few bets with a bookie he found in Lewiston, and build up his stash of fifties cash. He also took the occasional mid-week holiday on Sebago Lake, which was teeming with fish that were tasty and perfectly safe to eat. People worried about fallout from A-bomb tests, he said, but fears of getting mercury poisoning from tainted fish were still in the future ... “If you give a man some time, he can get used to anything, and when the shock finally started to wear off, I started to think I’d found that old rabbit-hole for a reason. That’s when I started to think about Kennedy.”

***11/22/63*** by **Stephen King** (Scribner, \$35)





*I hate heartburn.  
I hate thinking about  
it almost as much.*

Jennifer – endures heartburn 3 or 4 days a week.

# Stop the Madness.



ONE PILL A DAY.  
24 HOURS.

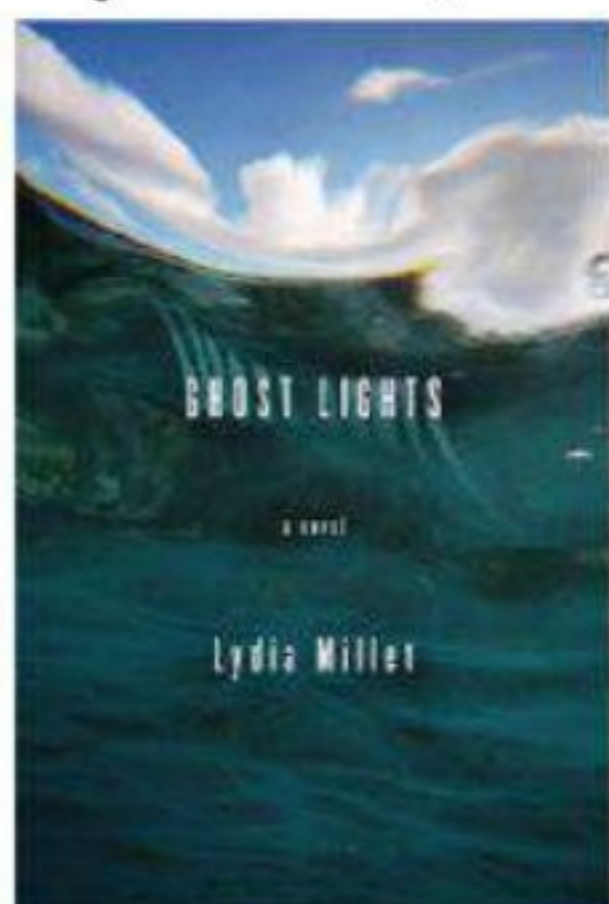
**ZERO HEARTBURN.\***

\*It's possible while taking Prilosec OTC. Use as directed for 14 days to treat frequent heartburn. Do not take for more than 14 days or more often than every 4 months unless directed by a doctor. Not for immediate relief.

© Procter & Gamble, Inc., 2011 PPAD11107

## Novel

The kennel trafficked in a brand of cuteness he could not endorse. He had nothing against pets; in theory, the more pets the better, although he personally did not own one. Not in the sense of unchecked proliferation, feral cats mating all over the place, etc., but in the sense that cats were good, dogs were good. No argument there. But he did not see why this high regard for pets, his or anyone else's, should be represented by photo-



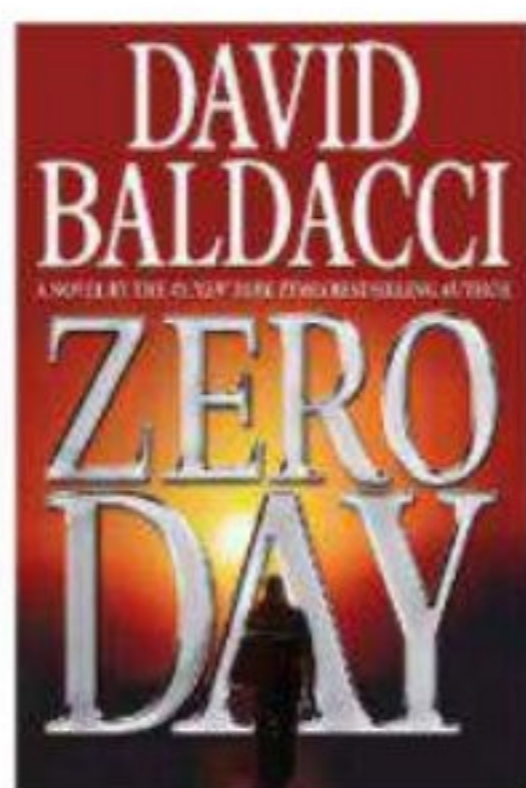
graphs of puppies with word balloons emerging from their mouths—balloons that contained supposedly witty sayings that were, in fact, stupid. There was no call for dachshunds dressed up as the Blues Brothers.

***Ghost Lights* by Lydia Millet**  
(Norton, \$24.95)

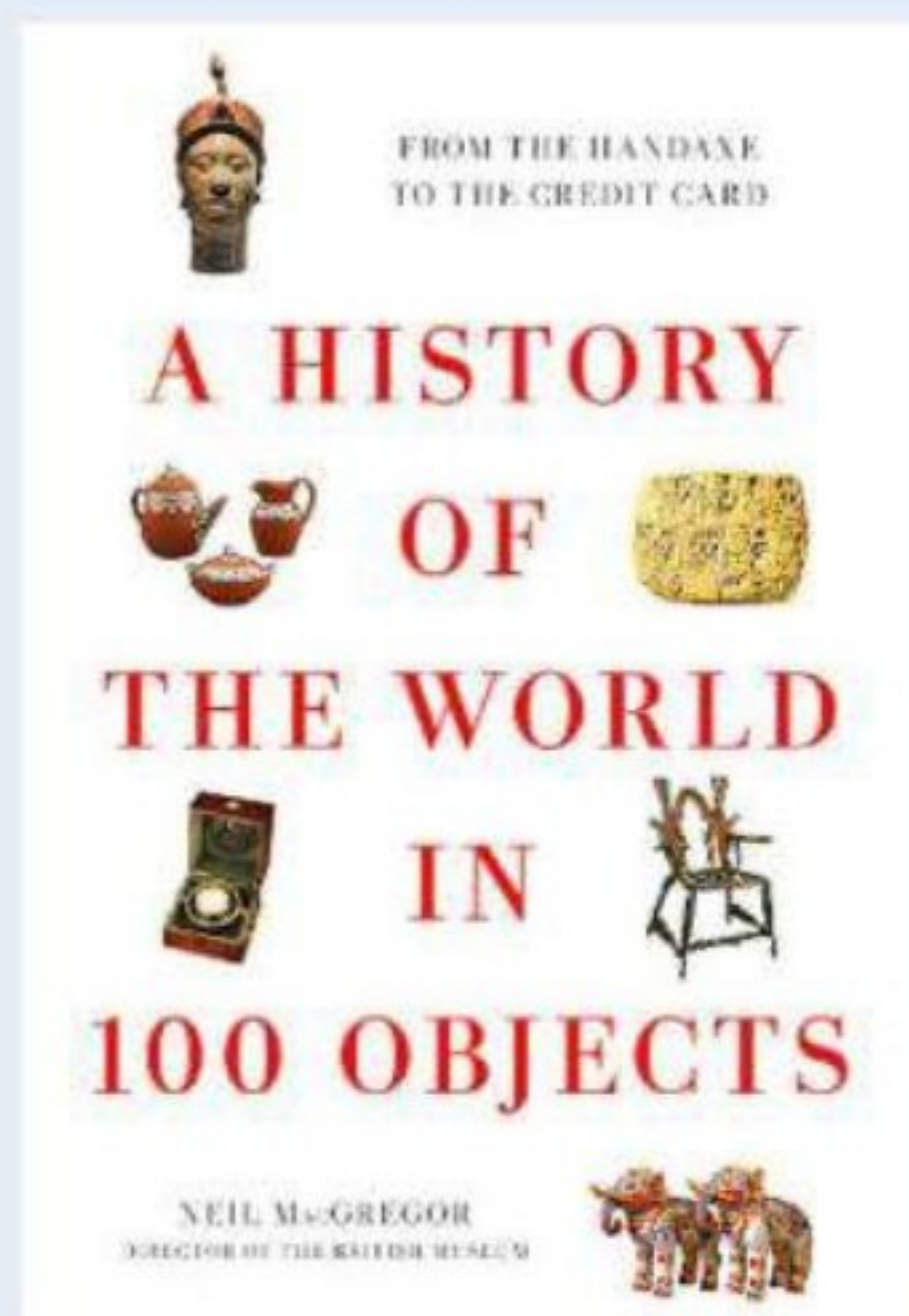
## Thriller

He turned down the road to make his last delivery of the day. It was a package that had to be signed for. He had cursed when he'd picked up his load of mail and seen it. A signature meant he had to actually interact with another human being. All he wanted right now was to scoot over to the Dollar Bar, where every mug of beer on Monday cost a quarter. He would sit on his little worn-down perch at the end of the mahogany slab and try not to think about going home to his wife, who would smell the alcohol on his breath and spend the next four hours lecturing him about it.

***Zero Day* by David Baldacci**  
(Grand Central, \$27.99)



**IPAD EXTRA** To read longer selections from all six books, download the *Reader's Digest* magazine app from the iTunes Store.



## History

North American Buckskin Map: The Native Americans, like everybody else, mapped what mattered to them. Tellingly, although the map includes all the rivers, it shows almost exclusively the settlements of the Indians. Virtually none of the European settlements are there. St. Louis, for example, which was already a great center of trade and communications, just is not shown. European maps of the same area do effectively the same in reverse, showing the European settlements but not the Indian ones, plotting the space not in use. Two quite different readings of the same physical experience: You could hardly have a better demonstration of a central Enlightenment problem, the difficulty of any society in trying to understand another.

***A History of the World in 100 Objects: From the Handaxe to the Credit Card* by Neil MacGregor** (Viking, \$45)





What Stauer Clients Are Saying  
About Our Hybrid Watches



"Great watch... an  
impressive piece  
straight out  
of the box."  
— C. FROM COLORADO

## No More Mr. Nice Watch

*Forget sleek and subtle, the Stauer Colossus Hybrid is one tough timepiece.*

In designing the *Colossus Hybrid Chronograph*, our instructions to the watchmaker were clear: build it as tough as a battleship and fill it full of surprises. Make it a hybrid, because it should work twice as hard as a regular watch. And make it look like a million bucks, because when you put it on, you should get excited about rolling up your sleeves. Mission accomplished.

**A toolbox on your wrist.** It will keep you on schedule, but the *Colossus Hybrid* is about much more than time. The imposing case features a rotating gunmetal bezel that frames the silver, black and yellow face. You'll find a battalion of digital displays on the dial arranged behind a pair of luminescent hands and a bold yellow second hand. Powered by a precise quartz movement, the watch is doubly accurate in analog and digital mode. And it's packed with plenty of handy extras including a bright green EL back-light for enhanced nighttime visibility, a tachymeter along the outer dial and a full complement of alarms and split-second countdown timers. The *Colossus Hybrid* secures with a folded steel

bracelet that highlights a row of striking dark center links.

**Your Satisfaction is Guaranteed.** Wear the *Stauer Colossus Hybrid* for 30 days and if you are not 100% thrilled with your purchase, return it for a full refund of your purchase price. But once you get a taste of more watch for less money, it's likely you'll be back for more... and we'll be waiting.

- Folded stainless steel bracelet fits a 6 3/4"-9" wrist

**Offer Limited to First 5000 Respondents**

**Colossus Hybrid Digital/Analog Watch**  
~~\$395~~ **Now \$79** +S&P **Save \$316**

Call now to take advantage of this limited offer.

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CURATED AND CONDENSED

## Random Ideas from All Over

● **Tax cuts they can agree on.** The conservative National Taxpayers Union and the progressive U.S. Public Interest Research Group reached a consensus on how to cut more than \$1 trillion from the U.S. budget. Ideas for savings: \$160 billion from reforming federal IT operations and using cloud computing, \$18 billion from cancellation of the Navy/Marines Joint Strike Fighter plane, \$64 billion by eliminating direct payments for commodity crops. (Source: *National Journal's* "Influence Alley" newsletter)

● **Streetlights that are less creepy.** LED lamps are replacing the yellowish sodium-vapor ones we're all used to. Instead of the "light from hell," writes Hal Espen in the *Atlantic*, we can all soon



Cutting this jet program could save the U.S. budget \$18 billion.

enjoy prettier, more efficient night lights.

● **The end of books?** IKEA has redesigned its Billy bookcases to be deeper and more hospitable to things besides books. (E-books, after all, now live elsewhere and take up less room.) Says the *Economist*, "The firm reckons customers will increasingly use them for ornaments, tchotchkes, and the odd coffee-table

tome—anything, that is, except books that are actually read."

● **Less painful injections.** Already in use this season: the Fluzone Intradermal microinjector, with a needle that's 90 percent shorter than the one on a typical syringe. Coming soon: a low-pressure plunger that mimics a mosquito's bite and, even less painful, a microneedle patch patients wear like a Band-Aid. (Source: *Popular Science*)

### NOTABLE QUOTE

“ [In 2004] Twitter was a sound, the cloud was in the sky, 4G was a parking place, LinkedIn was a prison, applications were what you sent to college, and for most people, Skype was a typo.”

THOMAS FRIEDMAN ON *MEET THE PRESS*

COURTESY THE F-35 LIGHTNING II PROGRAM/DOD

# BE A CHAMPION FOR YOUR TOWN

*Cheer from here*

*Celebrate your city*

*Make your cause count*

*Show your pride*

*Be heard*

*Spotlight your community*

*Shout for your city*

*Be loud and proud*

*Your hometown needs you*

*Your voice here*

*Speak up*

**Reader's Digest WE HEAR YOU AMERICA 2012**

## IT STARTS WITH A VOTE

Last year, close to 10,000 towns across the nation received votes, and the towns with the most won financial and promotional support for their communities. Starting November 16th, We Hear You America is coming back, and your town could be next.

No purchase necessary to vote or win. Promotion begins November 16, 2011, and closes March 1, 2012. Open to U.S. residents 18 and over. Void where prohibited. To vote and see official rules visit [www.ReadersDigest.com/America](http://www.ReadersDigest.com/America).

**VOTE AT**  
[READERSDIGEST.COM/AMERICA](http://READERSDIGEST.COM/AMERICA)

# Finally, free yourself from back pain.



Laser Spine Institute's minimally invasive procedures are the safe and effective alternative to open back or neck surgery.

Each month, more people come to Laser Spine Institute to relieve their back and neck pain than to any other spine surgery center in the nation.

**Advantages of our endoscopic approach:**

- No lengthy recovery
- No fusions or hardware
- 93.8% patient satisfaction
- Less than 1-inch incision
- Outpatient procedure

**Spine conditions commonly treated:**

- Spinal stenosis
- Sciatica
- Herniated disc
- Degenerative disc disease
- Bone spurs

 **LASER SPINE INSTITUTE**<sup>®</sup>  
THE LEADER IN ENDOSCOPIC SPINE SURGERY



To schedule your complimentary MRI or CT scan review, call **1-866-382-0672** or visit **[www.LaserSpineInstitute.com](http://www.LaserSpineInstitute.com)**

Most insurance accepted.

In the newsletters for the townhouse complex I manage, I always reiterate the rules, especially the one about cleaning up litter and debris. Unfortunately, my choice of words is not always the best. I once wrote “It is the resident’s responsibility to keep their private area clean. Please refer to the rules and regulations if you don’t know where your private area is.”

*Kelly Frampton, Olathe, Kansas*

## Don’t Call Us, We’ll Call You

*A job interview is a place to impress future bosses.*

*These responses to questions posed by hiring managers left the wrong sort of impression:*

- Why should we hire you? “I would be a great asset to the events team because I party all the time.”
- Why are you leaving your current job? “I was fired from my last job because they were forcing me to attend anger-management classes.”



*“You ask an awful lot for a kid who leaves out day-old macaroons and 2 percent milk.”*

- Tell of a time you made a mistake and how you dealt with it. “I stole equipment from my old job, and I had to pay for its replacement.”
- Have you submitted your two weeks’ notice to your current employer? “What is two weeks’ notice? I’ve never quit a job. I’ve always been fired.”

*Rachel Zupek, careerbuilder.com*

**The insurance industry loves its acronyms. The first time I saw the term *proof of ownership* was in a client’s file that read “Insured has POO on damaged items.”**

*Amanda Schaefer, Pleasant Hill, Missouri*

## From the Oops File

Everyone makes mistakes, even newspapers. A selection of the best corrections:

- Last week's column mistakenly misidentified a source. The European Commission president is Romano Prodi, not Buffy the Vampire Slayer.
- There was a typo in lawyer Ed Morrison's ad. His logo is: "Your case is no stronger than your attorney," not "stranger."
- Because of a reporting error, Dr. Arleigh Dygert Richardson III was described in his obituary as favoring tacky pants with tweed jackets and Oxford shirts. Dr. Richardson favored khaki pants.
- Norma Adams-Wade's column incorrectly called Mary Ann Thompson-Frenk a socialist. She is a socialite.

*From The Book of All-Time Stupidest Top 10 Lists by Kathryn and Ross Petras (Workman Publishing)*

**My friend was working** at an amusement park when a couple stopped him. "Excuse me," said the woman, pointing to a pond. "What is that water made out of?"

Bemused, my friend replied, "Two parts hydrogen and one part oxygen."

## You Can Win \$25,000!

**Send us** your funny stories, jokes, quotes, and news items to enter the \$25,000 sweepstakes. **Plus**, if we run your item in a print edition of *Reader's Digest*, **we'll pay you \$100.**

➤ To enter sweepstakes (with or without a joke) and for official rules, go to [readersdigest.com/jackpot](http://readersdigest.com/jackpot) or send your submission or entry to: The \$25,000-Winner-Take-All Prize (#122), Box 946, Newburgh, New York 12550.

No purchase necessary to enter or win. Sweepstakes closes 2/17/12. Open to U.S. residents. Rates subject to change.

"See?" she said to her boyfriend. "I told you it wasn't real."

*Amelia Wines, Chiefland, Florida*

**A letter I received** while presiding over traffic court: "Dear Judge, I am sorry to be so slow in sending in the money for my traffic ticket. But having gotten recently married, I am just getting back on my feet."

*James R. Walton, Fresno, California*

**Scene:** A graphic designer on the phone with his client.

**Designer:** Hi. I'm just updating the copy for your form and was wondering if you meant to say "programs" for the third question.

**Client:** No! What I sent along was completely accurate. Just copy it over exactly as it says. I'll explain it nice and slowly for you.

**Designer:** "Please indicate which *pogroms* you've attended"?

**Client:** Yeah, that should be *programs*.

From [clientsfromhell.net](http://clientsfromhell.net)

ADVERTISEMENT

# New Year New You



Being healthy and happy is a resolution that we want to help you keep. That's why you'll find the information, tips and products that matter to you at Rite Aid.



**Free**  
gift with your  
purchase at Rite Aid

Purchase any one of the featured products at Rite Aid, and receive a FREE make-up pouch from Reader's Digest (value: \$20). Simply log onto [ReadersDigest.com/Connections](http://ReadersDigest.com/Connections) and click on the Rite Aid link. Products must be purchased between November 15, 2011, and January 20, 2012, and receipt information entered by February 13, 2012, to receive your make-up pouch.

This offer is available to U.S. residents and only while supplies last. Limited to the first 3,000 requests. Please allow 6-8 weeks delivery. Note: a gift of equal or greater value may be substituted.

# The Facts on Cough and Cold

Cough and cold season is here, so take a moment and learn how to be healthy this time of year.

## What Makes Me Cough?

Coughing can be caused by irritants in the lungs or the effects of the common cold.

## How Do I Avoid Spreading Germs?

When you cough or sneeze, make sure to cover your nose and mouth with a tissue or the inside of your elbow. Wash your hands and use soap or antibacterial sanitizer regularly to avoid spreading or catching germs.

## How Should I Relieve a Cough or Cold?

If you have a cough, runny nose or are sneezing, here are a few ways that may help relieve your symptoms:

- Get plenty of rest
- Drink lots of fluids
- Try an over-the-counter cough and cold product like Delsym® Night Time

**Delsym®** offers cough and cold relief products for children and adults in a variety of formulas for your needs. Choose the one that's right for you!



Use as directed.  
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Learn more at [www.delsym.com](http://www.delsym.com)



With us, it's personal.





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# Pain-Free In the New Year

We all suffer from aches and pains from time to time. Most of us go to our medicine cabinet and grab a pill. But did you know that topical pain relief patches offer some unique benefits that pills don't?

- Topical pain relief patches work right at the site of pain. They don't have to go through your stomach and get processed by your liver.
- Topical pain relief patches come in a variety of forms and sizes, so regardless of where your body pain is, there's a product for you.
- Topical pain relief patches are the fastest growing method for pain management in the USA.
- SALONPAS® is the largest brand of pain relief patches in the USA.
- SALONPAS® has the only patch on the US market that has gone through the FDA's new drug application process, which means it's been tested and approved like a prescription drug.
- SALONPAS® Pain Relief Patch is the only product that can claim up to 12 hours of relief for mild to moderate pain. Not Icy Hot, not Bengay, only SALONPAS®.

Next time you feel an ache or pain, why not consider trying something new in 2012? You just might find that a patch can provide the relief you've been looking for.

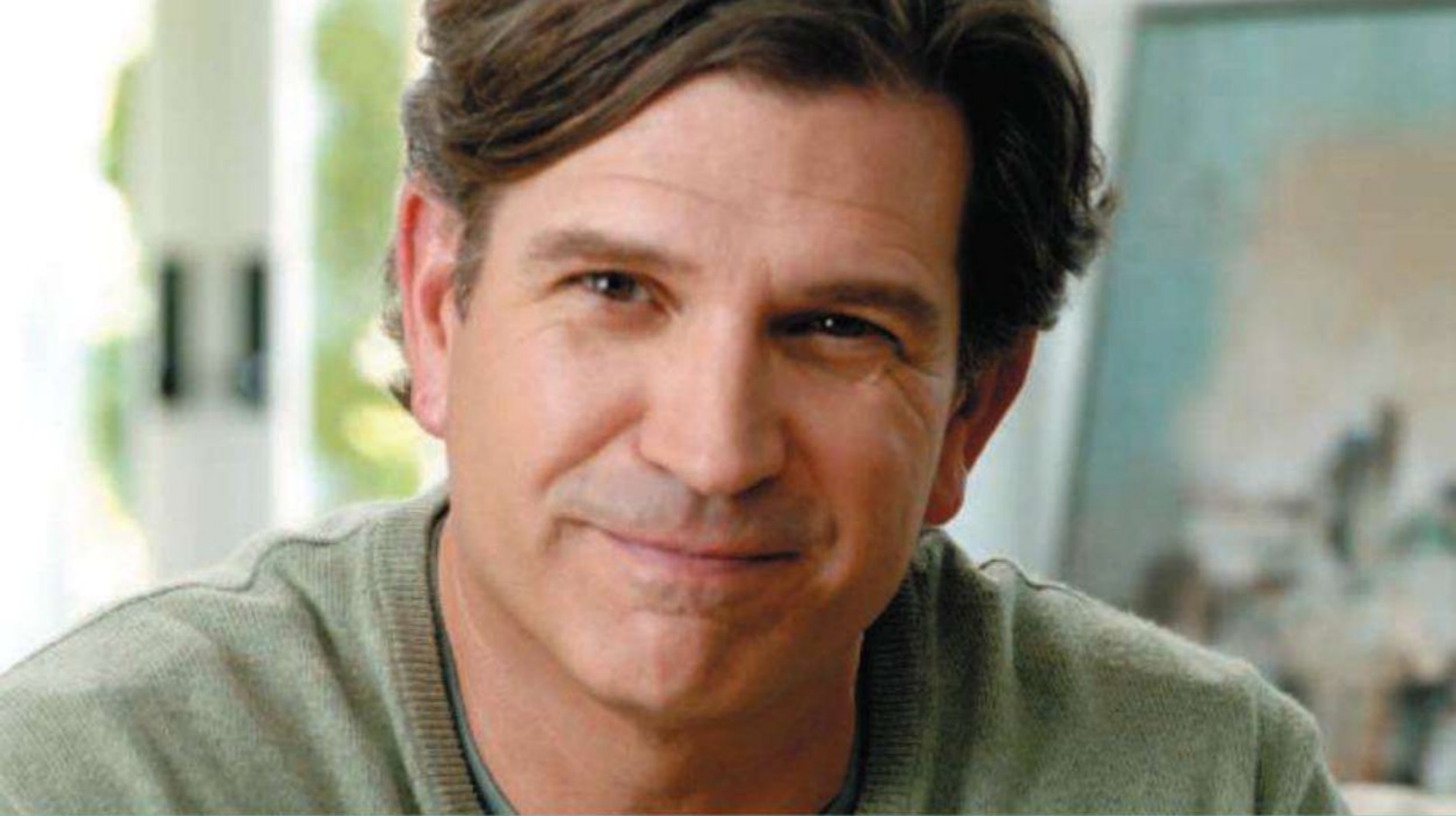


For more information about the SALONPAS® Pain Relief Patch, visit [www.salonpas.us](http://www.salonpas.us)



With us, it's personal.

Find more issues at [magazinesdownload.com](http://magazinesdownload.com)



“Nothing helped me beat my back pain, until I tried Salonpas.”

For powerful, proven and safe pain relief that works for up to 12 hours, try a Salonpas Pain Relief Patch. Salonpas contains two powerful pain fighting ingredients and is the only over-the-counter pain patch approved for sale using the same rigorous clinical testing as prescription pain medications. **Salonpas. Nothing's been proven to beat the relief.**



**\$1 OFF**

This coupon good *ONLY* on purchase of:  
**ONE (1) SALONPAS®  
PAIN RELIEF PATCH 5-PACK**

*One 5-pack per purchase. Limit one per customer.*

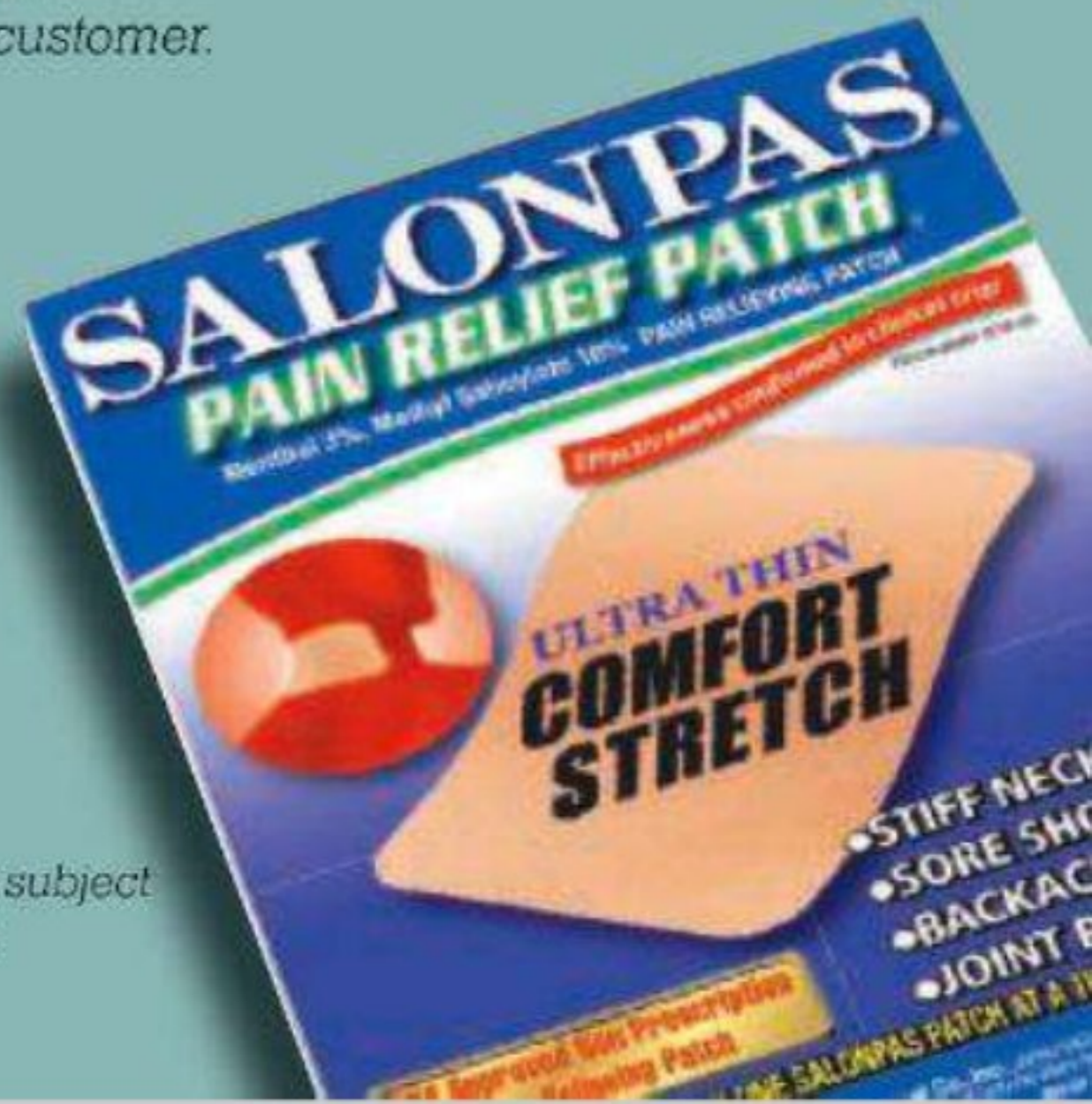
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EXPIRES: 03/31/2012

RETAILER: We will reimburse you the face value of this coupon plus 8¢ handling provided you and the consumer have complied with the terms of this offer. Invoices proving purchases of sufficient stock to cover presented coupons must be shown on request. Any other application may constitute fraud. Coupon void where prohibited, taxed or restricted. Consumers must pay any sales tax. Cash value: .001¢. Reproduction of this coupon is expressly prohibited. Mail to Hisamitsu America, Inc. CMS Dept. #46581, One Fawcett Drive, Dal Rio, TX 76840.



Availability subject to demand.



# Start the Year with Your Best Smile

Answer these questions to see if GUM® PerioBalance® is right for you.

Do you want healthier gums?	YES	NO
Do you have excessive plaque buildup?	YES	NO
Do you have bad breath?	YES	NO
Do you want a quick, convenient way to promote healthy teeth and gums?	YES	NO

If you answered "YES" to any of the above questions, try GUM® PerioBalance®.

To help keep your gums healthy, consider using a dental probiotic like GUM® PerioBalance®. If you have a serious oral health problem, consult your dentist.

SUNSTAR



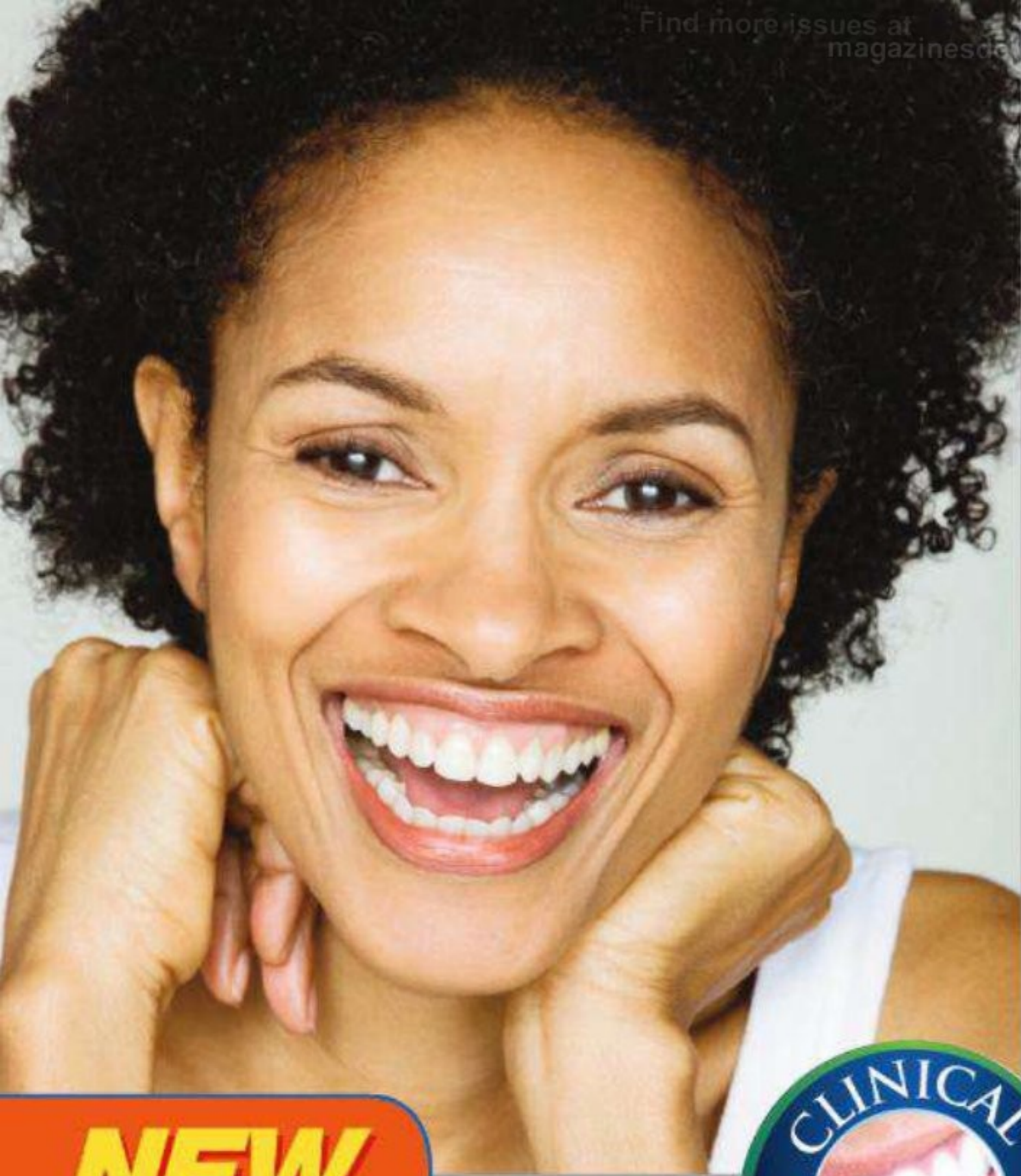
## PERIOBALANCE®



For additional information on keeping your teeth and gums healthy, visit [www.periobalance.com](http://www.periobalance.com)



With us, it's personal.



# 28 days to healthier gums!

Stress, illness, improper diet or inadequate oral hygiene can lead to plaque buildup, bad breath and poor gum health.

**New GUM® PerioBalance®** daily, dental probiotic mint-flavored lozenge contains Prodentis™, a blend of naturally occurring probiotics that help control excess bad bacteria that can lead to poor oral health. GUM® PerioBalance® can help you achieve a balanced oral environment that is essential for healthy teeth and gums.

**NEW**



SUNSTAR



Available in the Oral Care Section at **CVS/pharmacy**



[www.periobalance.com](http://www.periobalance.com)

## GUM® PerioBalance®

- Reduces plaque
- Fights bad breath
- Promotes healthy teeth and gums in as little as **28 days!**

MANUFACTURER'S COUPON / EXPIRES 06/30/12

# SAVE \$3

## on GUM® PerioBalance®

### Available in the oral care section

**CONSUMER:** Please redeem with store cashier. Do not send to address below.

**TO RETAILER:** Sunstar Americas, Inc. will reimburse the face value plus 8¢ handling if submitted in accordance with our redemption policy. For policy and/or coupon redemption, send to: Sunstar Americas, Inc., CMS Dept. 70942, 1 Fawcett Drive, Del Rio, TX 78840.



ADVERTISEMENT

# Holiday Season Health Tips

- **Holiday Health.** The holiday season may become an occasion for constipation due to changes in diet, sleep or exercise patterns. This New Year find balance for your body and take better care of yourself with Smooth Move<sup>®</sup>, an herbal laxative tea for the relief of occasional constipation.\*
- **Find Relief.** There's nothing like a warm cup of tea at the end of a day filled with holiday preparations. Smooth Move<sup>®</sup> tea is based on organic senna leaf and combined with familiar herbs including peppermint, chamomile, licorice or ginger depending on the variety. Whatever the selection, you will enjoy simple, natural ingredients.
- **Keep Moving.** A few minutes of moderate exercise a day will stimulate your body's natural responses, whether it's a short walk or simply taking the stairs.
- **The Season of Helping Others.** The senna leaf used in Smooth Move<sup>®</sup> is organically grown by small family farmers. When you drink a cup of this comforting tea, you are entering into a living tradition that has been passed down for generations—and giving back this holiday season.

Even when we're careful, constipation can still happen. If it does, try Smooth Move<sup>®</sup> herbal tea from Traditional Medicinals<sup>®</sup>.

*Smooth Move<sup>®</sup> is intended to be consumed before bedtime and will generally produce a bowel movement within 6-12 hours.\**

*\*These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.*



Learn more about our natural herbal teas at  
[www.smoothmove.com](http://www.smoothmove.com)



With us, it's personal.

*Irregular?*  
 Try *Smooth Move® Tea*  
 One cup works in 6–12 hours.†



*Relief from Occasional Constipation\**



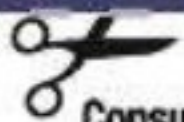
SmoothMove.com

Traditional Medicinals.

Find Smooth Move® with teas in grocery and natural food stores; or with laxatives in pharmacies.

†Smooth Move® will generally produce a bowel movement in 6-12 hours.

\*These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.



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MANUFACTURER'S COUPON EXPIRATION: 7/31/2012

**SAVE \$1.00**

On any tea by  
 Traditional Medicinals.



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# A Sore Throat Doesn't Have to Slow You Down

When you have a sore throat, it's hard to get anything done. Take some simple steps to soothe throat pain and get back to your holiday schedule as soon as possible.

## What Can You Do To Feel Better?

- Drink plenty of clear fluids. Dehydration can make a sore throat worse.
- Use Cepacol® Lozenges and Spray to provide instant-acting, long-lasting relief from sore throat pain.
- If a sore throat is severe, persists for more than two days, is accompanied or followed by a fever, headache, rash, nausea or vomiting, consult a doctor promptly.



**Cepacol®** Sore Throat Lozenges contain the maximum numbing medication available without a prescription to keep you pain-free, so you can get back on track.



For more information about  
Cepacol®, visit [www.cepacol.com](http://www.cepacol.com)



With us, it's personal.





## TAME YOUR SORE THROAT WITH CEPACOL<sup>®</sup>

For powerful, long-lasting sore throat relief, you won't find anything stronger\* than Cepacol.



# StainGuide

## The Holidays



**OxiClean® Versatile** tackles over **101 different types of stains**, is **color-safe** and **chlorine free**. Check out the latest tips and tricks on [facebook.com/OxiClean](https://facebook.com/OxiClean) to remove your family's holiday stains. Join in the fun and share your OxiClean® story with us!



### Mud on Carpet

*Get Out Tough Carpet Stains!*

- Dissolve ¼ scoop of **OxiClean® Versatile Stain Remover** powder with 16 oz. warm water.
- Apply only enough solution to completely saturate the stain.
- Wait 1–5 minutes. Do not allow to dry.
- Blot with a dry white towel, rinse with clean water and then blot until dry.
- Allow to dry, then vacuum.



### Cranberry Sauce on Shirt

*Pretreat for Success!*

- Dissolve ¼ scoop of **OxiClean® Versatile Stain Remover** powder with 16 oz. warm water.
- Apply solution to stain, making sure to completely saturate the stain.
- Rub & wait up to 10 minutes.
- Wash as you normally would, with detergent and **OxiClean®**.



### Wine on Couch

*Save Your Upholstery from Stains!*

- Dissolve ¼ scoop of **OxiClean® Versatile Stain Remover** powder with 16 oz. warm water.
- Apply only enough solution to completely saturate the stain.
- Wait 1–5 minutes. Do not allow to dry.
- Blot with a dry white towel, rinse with clean water and then blot until dry.



### Gravy on Tablecloth

*Pre-Soak Tough, Dried-In Stains!*

- Dissolve up to a full scoop of **OxiClean® Versatile Stain Remover** per gallon of warm water.
- Add stained item and soak for 1–6 hours.
- Wash as you normally would, with detergent and **OxiClean®**.

[For complete instructions, refer to directions on packaging.]



**OxiClean® Gets the Tough Stains Out.**  
Share your OxiClean® story at [facebook.com/OxiClean](https://facebook.com/OxiClean)



Now with **40% MORE** Oxygen Power per scoop!

**“Now, Mom gets stains out almost as fast as I get them in.”**

OxiClean® is your color-safe, chlorine free solution to get out tough stains in your laundry and all around your home. Do more to save you more with OxiClean.



**OxiClean® Gets the Tough Stains Out.**  
Share your OxiClean® story at [facebook.com/OxiClean](https://facebook.com/OxiClean)





## Are the Holidays Joyous or Stressful?



According to our poll this month, roughly 90 percent of people from 16 countries report joyful feelings during the holiday season—whether they celebrate Christmas or Diwali. “I have no problem blocking out any work-related issues. I enjoy the holiday no matter what it involves,” says Ben Ronald, 24, of Bellevue Hill, Australia. Only a small portion of East Indians and Americans admit to some seasonal stress. “I shop for more than 25 people. This time of year, it can get a little crazy,” says Marin Milio, 31, of White Plains, New York. “The stores are packed, there are lines everywhere, and the same songs are playing over and over again!”

**IPAD EXTRA** For more detailed data, download the *Reader's Digest* magazine app from the iTunes Store.

### Nothing but Joy

Philippines	97%
Russia	96
Germany	95
China	94
Mexico	94
Spain	93
United Kingdom	91
Australia	89
Malaysia	89
Brazil	88
South Africa	87
France	85
Canada	83
Netherlands	83
United States	82
India	79

Limited  
to the first  
2500 respondents



"I'm a bit sad that my fiance and I didn't know about Stauer before we got engaged. This ring is so much more clear and sparkly than my real diamond!"

— P.T. FROM BALTIMORE, MD



## URGENT: Diamond Ring Recall

*Experts warn that millions of rings may be "romantically defective" when compared to the spectacular 4-Carat DiamondAura® Avalon*

Only Stauer's exclusive lab-created DiamondAura® gives you the luxury look of large-carat diamonds for a fraction of the price. Scientists create a faultless marvel that's optically brighter and clearer with even more color and fire than a "D" flawless diamond. Our exclusive DiamondAura jewelry features all of the classic specifications, including color, clarity, cut and carat weight and is hard enough to cut glass. You get the look of natural stones, without the

outrageous cost. Today you can wear this 3 ¾ carat lab-created DiamondAura solitaire, accented with 32 gleaming DiamondAura rounds in fine .925 sterling silver for only \$99!

*Your satisfaction is guaranteed.* If for any reason you don't absolutely adore your DiamondAura Avalon Ring, return it within 30 days for a full refund of your purchase price. But we promise that once you get a look at the Avalon up close, you'll see love in a whole new light.

**DiamondAura® Avalon Ring (4 ctw) — ~~\$295~~**

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Order today to get these 1-Carat DiamondAura® sterling silver studs

**PLUS**

\$300 in Stauer Gift Coupons!\*



## Stauer®

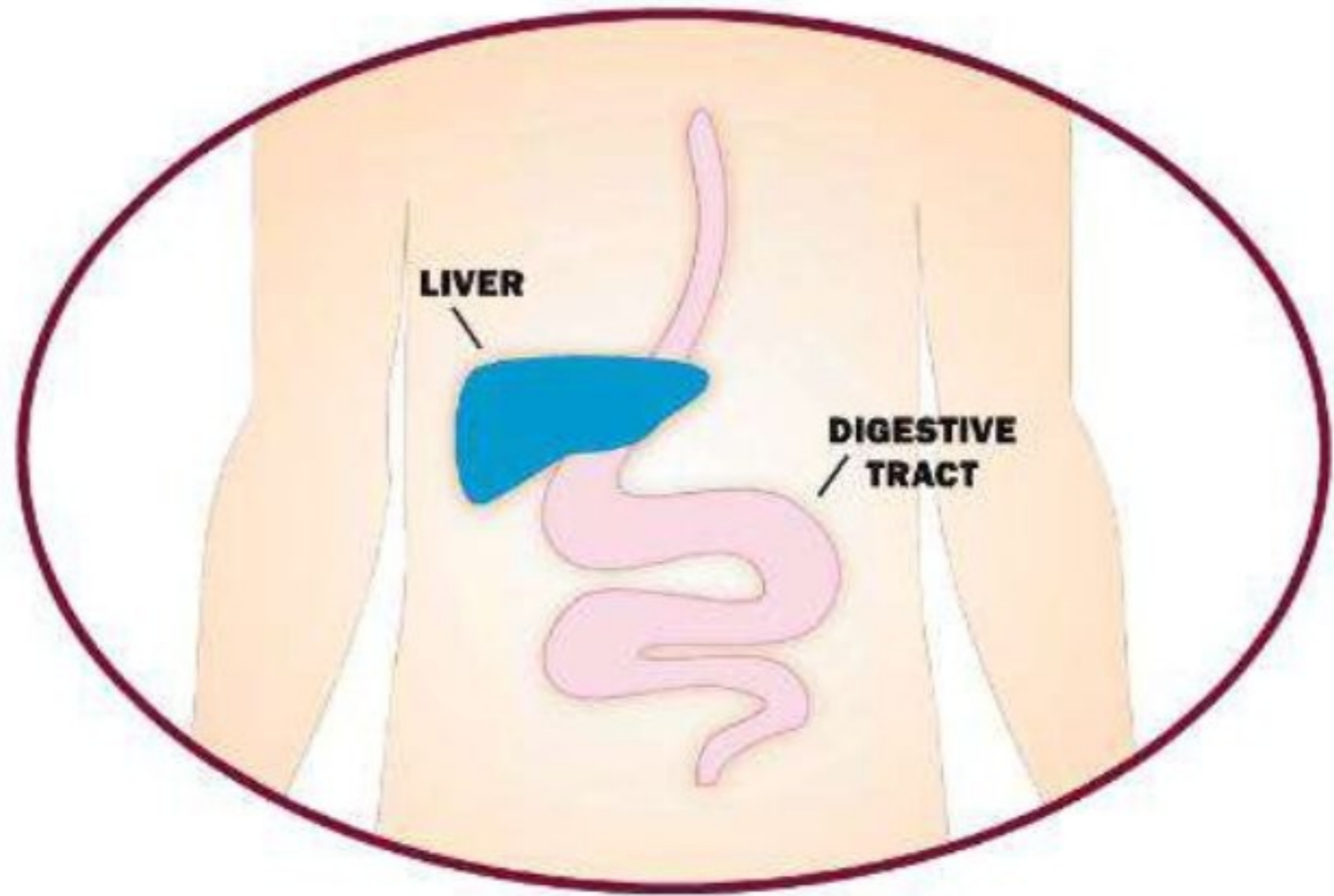
14101 Southcross Drive W.,  
Dept. AVR167-03  
Burnsville, Minnesota 55337

[www.stauer.com](http://www.stauer.com)

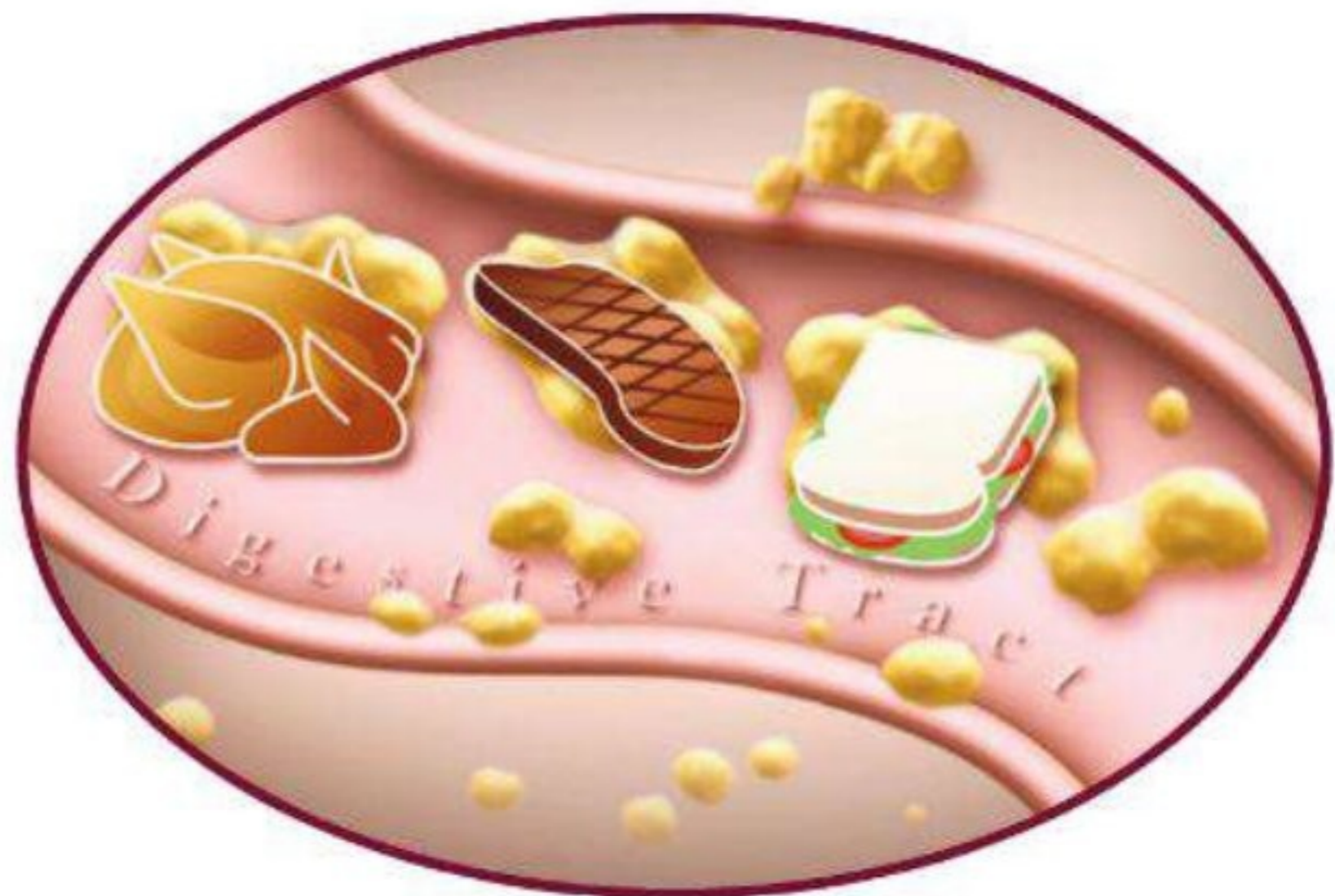
# If you diet and take a statin, ZETIA can help

Statins, a good option, work mainly with the liver.

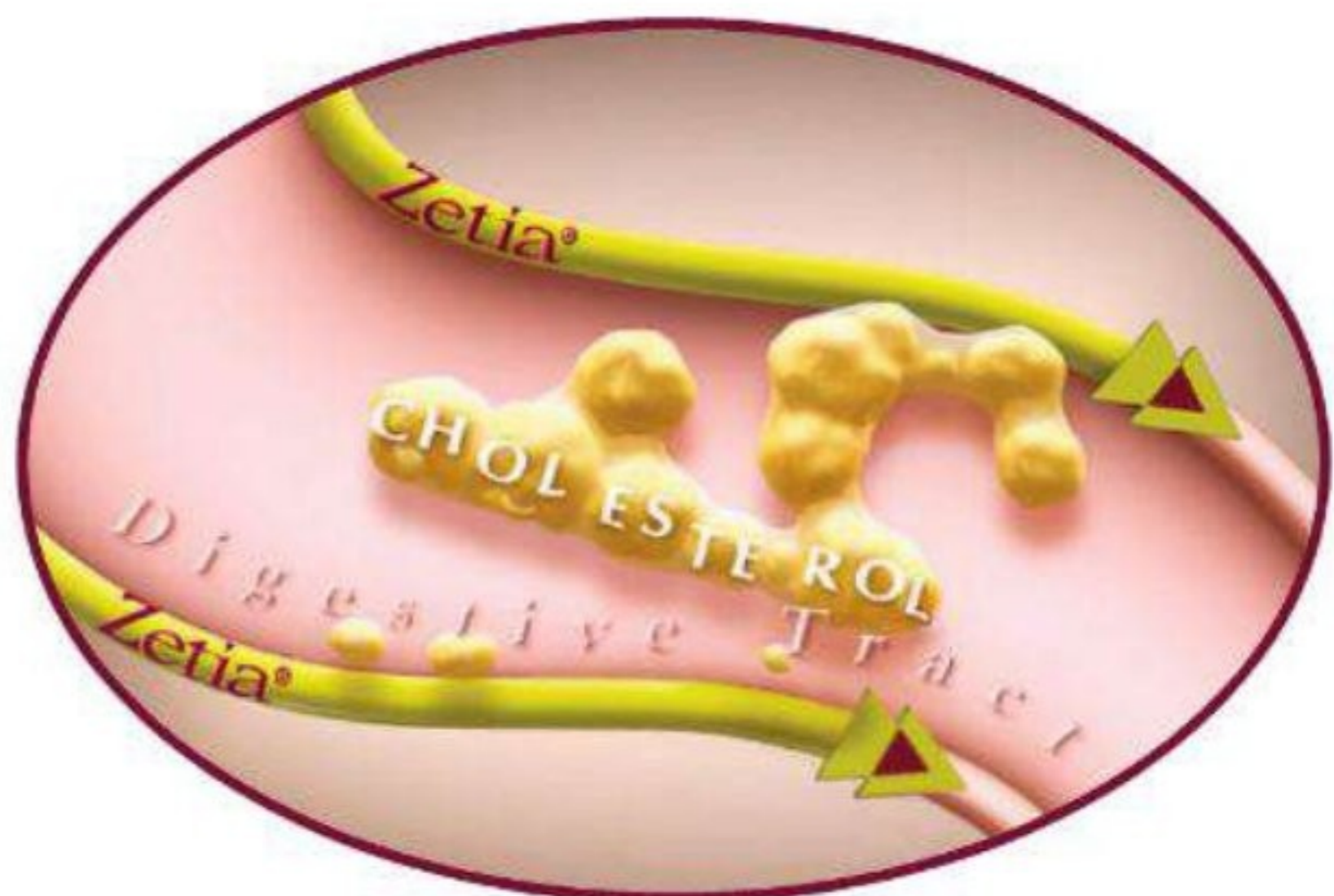
**ZETIA works in the digestive tract,** as do some other cholesterol-lowering medicines.



Cholesterol from food is absorbed when it enters the digestive tract.



**ZETIA is unique** in the way it helps block the absorption of cholesterol that comes from food. **Unlike some statins, ZETIA has not been shown to prevent heart disease or heart attacks.**



Ask your doctor if adding ZETIA is right for you.



**lower**

**LDL (bad) cholesterol even more.**

A healthy diet and exercise are important, but sometimes they're not enough to get your cholesterol where it needs to be. If you're also taking a statin, ZETIA can help lower your LDL (bad) cholesterol even further. In a clinical study, people who added ZETIA to their statin medication reduced their bad cholesterol on average by an additional 25% compared with 4% in people who added a placebo (a pill with no medication). Individual results vary.

**Important Risk Information About ZETIA:** ZETIA is a prescription medicine and should not be taken by people who are allergic to any of its ingredients. ZETIA can be taken alone or with a statin. Statins should not be taken by women who are nursing or pregnant or who may become pregnant, or by anyone with liver problems. If you have ever had liver problems or are pregnant or nursing, your doctor will decide if ZETIA alone is right for you. Your doctor may do blood tests to check your liver before you start taking ZETIA with a statin and during treatment.

Unexplained muscle pain or weakness could be a sign of a rare but serious side effect and should be reported to your doctor right away. In clinical studies, patients reported few side effects while taking ZETIA. These included diarrhea, joint pains, and tiredness.

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.

**Please read the more detailed information about ZETIA on the adjacent page.**

For more information, call  
**1-800-98-ZETIA** or visit [zetia.com](http://zetia.com).

**Zetia**<sup>®</sup>  
*(ezetimibe)* Tablets

**A different way to help fight cholesterol**

**Merck Helps**

Having trouble paying for your Merck medicine?  
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visit [zetia.com](http://zetia.com).**

\*Not all patients are eligible.  
No purchase necessary.  
Restrictions apply.  
See Terms and Conditions.

# **ZETIA® (EZETIMIBE) TABLETS**

## **PATIENT INFORMATION ABOUT ZETIA (zět'-ē-ă)**

Generic name: ezetimibe (ě-zět'-ě-mīb)

Read this information carefully before you start taking ZETIA and each time you get more ZETIA. There may be new information. This information does not take the place of talking with your doctor about your medical condition or your treatment. If you have any questions about ZETIA, ask your doctor. Only your doctor can determine if ZETIA is right for you.

### **WHAT IS ZETIA?**

ZETIA is a medicine used to lower levels of total cholesterol and LDL (bad) cholesterol in the blood. ZETIA is for patients who cannot control their cholesterol levels by diet and exercise alone. It can be used by itself or with other medicines to treat high cholesterol. You should stay on a cholesterol-lowering diet while taking this medicine.

ZETIA works to reduce the amount of cholesterol your body absorbs. ZETIA does not help you lose weight. ZETIA has not been shown to prevent heart disease or heart attacks.

For more information about cholesterol, see the "What should I know about high cholesterol?" section that follows.

### **WHO SHOULD NOT TAKE ZETIA?**

- Do not take ZETIA if you are allergic to ezetimibe, the active ingredient in ZETIA, or to the inactive ingredients. For a list of inactive ingredients, see the "Inactive ingredients" section that follows.
- If you have active liver disease, do not take ZETIA while taking cholesterol-lowering medicines called statins.
- If you are pregnant or breast-feeding, do not take ZETIA while taking a statin.
- If you are a woman of childbearing age, you should use an effective method of birth control to prevent pregnancy while using ZETIA added to statin therapy.

ZETIA has not been studied in children under age 10.

### **WHAT SHOULD I TELL MY DOCTOR BEFORE AND WHILE TAKING ZETIA?**

Tell your doctor about any prescription and non-prescription medicines you are taking or plan to take, including natural or herbal remedies.

Tell your doctor about all your medical conditions including allergies.

Tell your doctor if you:

- ever had liver problems. ZETIA may not be right for you.
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. Your doctor will discuss with you whether ZETIA is right for you.
- are breast-feeding. We do not know if ZETIA can pass to your baby through your milk. Your doctor will discuss with you whether ZETIA is right for you.
- experience unexplained muscle pain, tenderness, or weakness.

### **HOW SHOULD I TAKE ZETIA?**

- Take ZETIA once a day, with or without food. It may be easier to remember to take your dose if you do it at the same time every day, such as with breakfast, dinner, or at bedtime. If you also take another medicine to reduce your cholesterol, ask your doctor if you can take them at the same time.
- If you forget to take ZETIA, take it as soon as you remember. However, do not take more than one dose of ZETIA a day.
- Continue to follow a cholesterol-lowering diet while taking ZETIA. Ask your doctor if you need diet information.
- Keep taking ZETIA unless your doctor tells you to stop. It is important that you keep taking ZETIA even if you do not feel sick.

See your doctor regularly to check your cholesterol level and to check for side effects. Your doctor may do blood tests to check your liver before you start taking ZETIA with a statin and during treatment.



## WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF ZETIA® (EZETIMIBE)?

In clinical studies patients reported few side effects while taking ZETIA. These included diarrhea, joint pains, and feeling tired.

Patients have experienced severe muscle problems while taking ZETIA, usually when ZETIA was added to a statin drug. If you experience unexplained muscle pain, tenderness, or weakness while taking ZETIA, contact your doctor immediately. You need to do this promptly, because on rare occasions, these muscle problems can be serious, with muscle breakdown resulting in kidney damage.

Additionally, the following side effects have been reported in general use: allergic reactions (which may require treatment right away) including swelling of the face, lips, tongue, and/or throat that may cause difficulty in breathing or swallowing, rash, and hives; raised red rash, sometimes with target-shaped lesions; joint pain; muscle aches; alterations in some laboratory blood tests; liver problems; stomach pain; inflammation of the pancreas; nausea; dizziness; tingling sensation; depression; headache; gallstones; inflammation of the gallbladder.

Tell your doctor if you are having these or any other medical problems while on ZETIA. For a complete list of side effects, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

## WHAT SHOULD I KNOW ABOUT HIGH CHOLESTEROL?

Cholesterol is a type of fat found in your blood. Your total cholesterol is made up of LDL and HDL cholesterol.

LDL cholesterol is called "bad" cholesterol because it can build up in the wall of your arteries and form plaque. Over time, plaque build-up can cause a narrowing of the arteries. This narrowing can slow or block blood flow to your heart, brain, and other organs. High LDL cholesterol is a major cause of heart disease and one of the causes for stroke.

HDL cholesterol is called "good" cholesterol because it keeps the bad cholesterol from building up in the arteries.

Triglycerides also are fats found in your blood.

## GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT ZETIA® (EZETIMIBE)

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for conditions that are not mentioned in patient information leaflets. Do not use ZETIA for a condition for which it was not prescribed. Do not give ZETIA to other people, even if they have the same condition you have. It may harm them.

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

### Inactive ingredients:

Croscarmellose sodium, lactose monohydrate, magnesium stearate, microcrystalline cellulose, povidone, and sodium lauryl sulfate.

Issued July 2009  
REV 21

29480885T

  
**Zetia**<sup>®</sup>  
*(ezetimibe)* *Tablets*



MERCK / Schering-Plough Pharmaceuticals

Manufactured for:  
Merck/Schering-Plough Pharmaceuticals  
North Wales, PA 19454, USA

CARD-1003742-0008

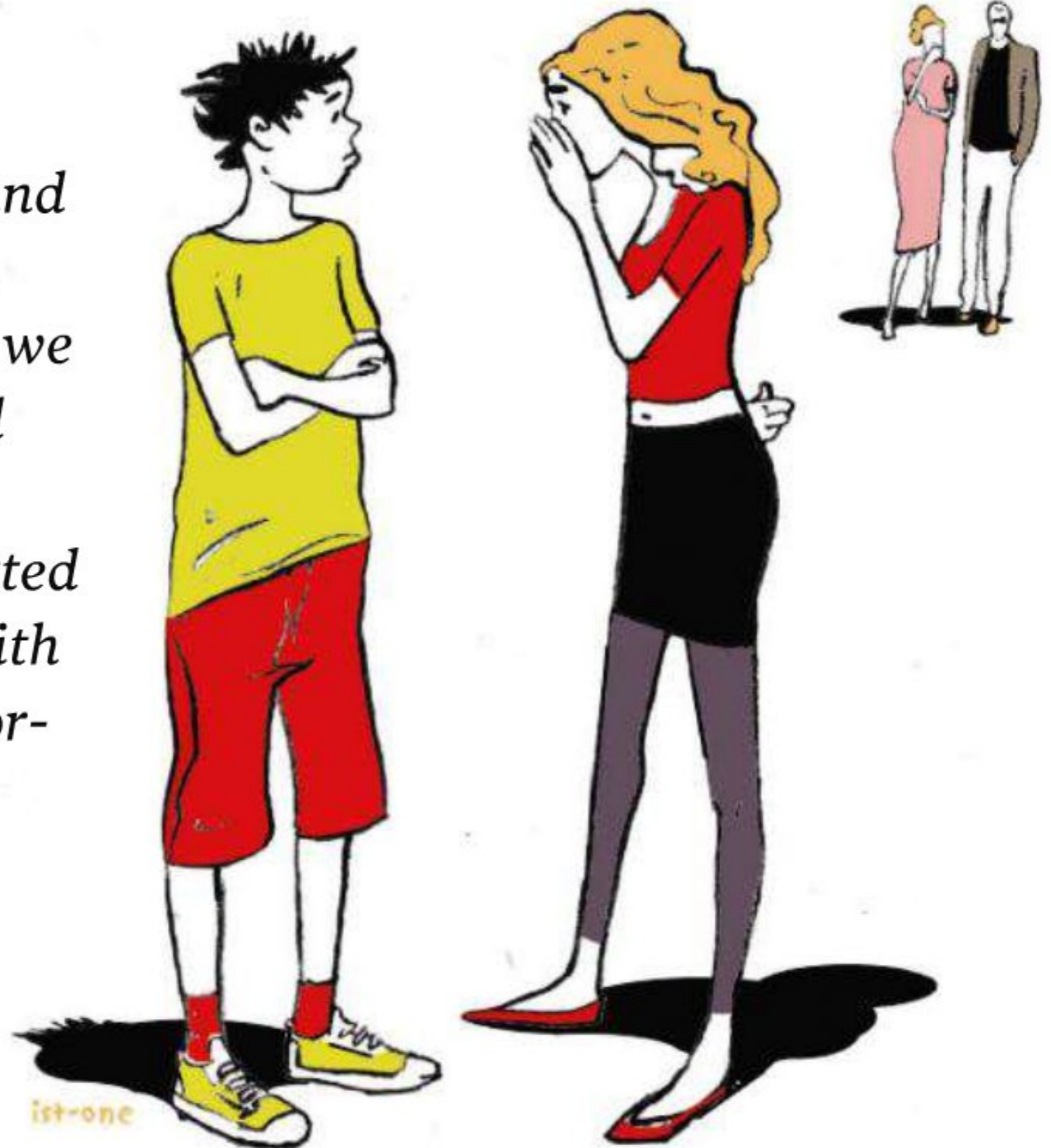


# Ask Laskas

JEANNE  MARIE LASKAS

► **My 16-year-old sister** and I don't always get along, so my parents suggested we go out to dinner to spend "quality time" together. During dinner, she admitted to smoking marijuana with other kids in our neighborhood. She claims there aren't any health risks, and she's careful not to get caught. She doesn't think it's a big deal, but I don't like the idea of her getting in trouble with the law or getting hurt. Yet if I tell my parents, she'll be grounded and will never forgive me. The other kids will probably just beat me up! How can I make sure she's safe without getting on everyone's bad side? *Scared Little Brother*

Jeanne Marie Laskas is not a shrink, but she does have uncommon sense.



Dear Scared,  
You're quite a brother to be so concerned about your sister's well-being. And you're right, ratting her out won't help the relationship. On the other hand, smoking pot is illegal and a health hazard, and your sister has decided to put herself in harm's way. Have another "quality time" dinner with her. Share your confusion and urge her to stop or to talk to your parents about what she's up to. Tell her you'll help. If she declines, I'm sorry—you have to tell your parents. The friendship will have to wait.

ILLUSTRATED BY ISTVAN BANYAI; FRANK VERONSKY

▶ **I have a love-hate relationship with technology.** After two arguments with relatives via Facebook, I've had enough! Both times, someone misinterpreted one of my posts, then retaliated by posting personal insults on my wall. How do you recover from relationships strained by Facebook? *Taxed by Technology*

Dear Taxed,  
The only way to avoid being misinterpreted on Facebook is to get off Facebook. You can click all the privacy tabs you want, but ultimately, by posting on social-media sites, you are leaving yourself open to "friends" who may misunderstand you. Decide whether it's worth it. As for the damage already done, buy a dozen fresh doughnuts and stop by the relatives' house for a visit!

▶ **I've been in only one real relationship, and that was seven years ago.** I'm trying to get back into the dating scene, but I feel weird going to bars. I've tried online dating, but whenever I try to contact a guy, or he contacts me, I chicken out and nothing comes of it. I don't have many friends, and I don't want to be alone all my life. What should I do? Is there something wrong with me? *Lonely*

Dear Lonely,  
Nothing is wrong with you. I promise you, there are many guys out there who dislike loud bars and creepy chat rooms just as you do. Go find some of them. Pay attention to your

## Life's Little Etiquette Conundrums

▶ **I'm graduating from college next month with an associate in arts degree. It might seem like a minor achievement, but due to many obstacles, it took a long time to attain. I'm planning a celebration, but I'm unsure about sending announcements to a few estranged relatives. I don't wish to see them at the party, and I don't want to appear as if I want a gift, but I would like them to know of my accomplishment. To some extent, they helped me along the way, and I am grateful. How should I proceed?**

Well, good for you, grad! Not only did you earn the diploma, but you're remembering those who helped you. That right there is something to celebrate. Work up two announcements: one for the partying friends and another for those you wish to thank. They will appreciate it. Promise.

surroundings at church, at work, in your neighborhood, at the gym, anywhere you like to go. Join clubs or take classes—do the things you love to do and keep your eyes open for new friends who share your interests. Mr. Right is often disguised as Mr. Awesome Friend.

▶ **Send questions about manners, parents, partners, or office politics to [advice@readersdigest.com](mailto:advice@readersdigest.com). Sending gives us permission to edit and publish.**

# Choose the Best Food for Your Best Friend

We love our pets like family and want to be sure that we're giving them a healthy diet. But with so many pet foods touting themselves as healthy and showing pictures of meat and veggies on the front of their bags, you really have to read the ingredients on the back or side of the bag to get to the truth.

To help determine exactly what your dog or cat is getting from their food, simply follow these tips from Blue Buffalo:



## EVALUATING THE INGREDIENT LIST

The top 10 ingredients make up 80% or more of a pet food's entire formula, so make sure that these are natural, high-quality ingredients like real meat, whole grains and vegetables.

Ingredients are listed by weight, which means there is more of the first one on the list than anything else. Look for real meat at the top of the list, not corn or by-products.

## INGREDIENTS TO LOOK FOR IN A QUALITY FOOD

Real meat, such as chicken, fish or lamb provides proteins that are essential for growth, muscle maintenance and overall well-being.

Whole grains like brown rice, barley and oats supply the complex carbohydrates that provide your pet with much-needed energy.

Fruits and vegetables contain healthy fiber and deliver the antioxidants, vitamins and minerals your pet needs to stay healthy.

## WHY CHOOSE BLUE™

BLUE pet foods are formulated with carefully selected, high-quality ingredients – because we think of our pets as family members.

Real meat is always the first ingredient, followed by whole grains, garden veggies and fruit. Look for BLUE at leading pet specialty stores everywhere.

**Visit [bluebuffalo.com](http://bluebuffalo.com)  
for more information.**

“When I found out the first ingredient in my boy’s food wasn’t real meat I switched him to BLUE.”

**Is your big name dog food fooling you?** You probably didn’t know that many well-known dog foods don’t have real meat as their first ingredient. BLUE, on the other hand, always starts with real chicken, lamb or fish, followed by whole grains, garden veggies and fruit. Plus, BLUE contains our exclusive LifeSource® Bits, a precise blend of antioxidants, vitamins and minerals. And your dog can enjoy all of this naturally healthy goodness for only pennies a day more.



How Does Your Brand Compare to BLUE?	BLUE	Your Dog's Food
Deboned Chicken, Fish or Lamb is the FIRST Ingredient	✓	?
Wholesome Whole Grains	✓	?
Garden Veggies & Fruit	✓	?
All Natural*	✓	?
LifeSource® Bits	✓	?
NO Corn, Wheat or Soy	✓	?
NO Chicken or Poultry By-Product Meals	✓	?

\*Fortified with vitamins and minerals

Compare your dog’s food to BLUE™ at **CompareBlueDog.com**

Love them like family.  
Feed them like family.™



Compare your brand to BLUE.



# Your Most Important Plan Questions

Call now for your FREE

**Q: Are all Medicare Advantage plans the same?**

**A:** Not all plans are the same. You need a plan that meets your personal healthcare needs. Look for coverage for doctors' visits, hospital stays, and prescription drugs. With Humana, you get all this in one plan – for an affordable premium, some plans have no premium.

**Q: What Medicare health plan gives me the most value for my money?**

**A:** Humana's plans may save you valuable time and money. You get extra benefits and services. These include a 24-hour nurse advice line<sup>1</sup>, prescription home delivery, programs to help you stay healthy and fit, and more!

**Q: Is there a company that provides real, personal attention?**

**A:** At Humana, you'll be treated like a valued customer, not a number. You get clear information and personal guidance to help you make informed choices. From selecting your health plan to using your coverage and enhancing your health – Humana is there for you every step of the way.

A Health plan with a Medicare contract. The benefit information provided herein is a brief summary, not a comprehensive description of available benefits.

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# Medicare Health Answered. informative guide.

*Yours free just  
for calling*



## Get the Answers You Need from Humana.

Start by calling for your **FREE** informative guide.

You'll see why Humana may be the right answer for you:

- ✓ Fortune 100 company that's been in the health industry for 50 years
- ✓ More than 3.2 million Medicare members<sup>2</sup>
- ✓ Personal guidance to help you choose the plan that fits your needs
- ✓ In-home appointments to review plan information – with no obligation

Call now

**1-800-562-5007 (TTY: 711)**

8 a.m. – 8 p.m., seven days a week

AnswersFromHumana.com

**HUMANA**<sup>®</sup>

For more information, contact the plan. There is no obligation to enroll. <sup>1</sup>May not be available with all plans. <sup>2</sup>Humana Inc. Membership Detail, May 2011.

# BAM! KAPOW!

## HOW ORDINARY BOYS AND GIRLS TURN INTO SUPER ENERGY HEROES.

THE ENERGY HEROES: Young people from Boys & Girls Clubs of America.

FIGHTING CLIMATE CHANGE BY: Spreading energy-saving ideas to their families and communities around the world.

ENERGY SAVINGS: The sky's the limit.



Through a partnership between EPA's ENERGY STAR® program and Boys & Girls Clubs of America, thousands of young people are learning how to reduce energy use and lower energy bills at home and in the community. You, too, can be an ENERGY STAR hero. Find out how at [energystar.gov](http://energystar.gov).

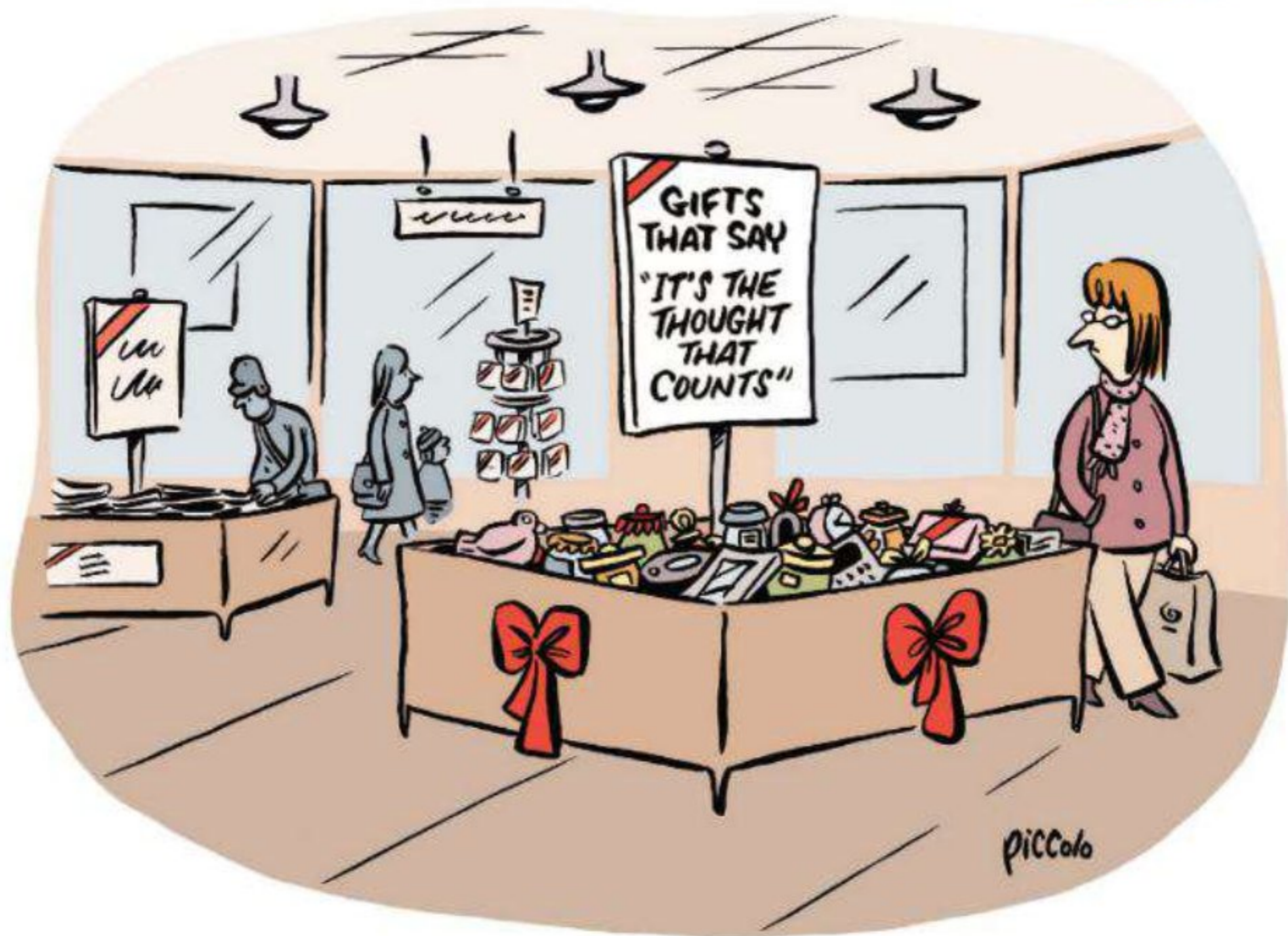


ENERGY STAR



# Life's Funny

That Way



**E**ven though there was a blizzard raging outside, I made it the half-mile to the bakery, where I asked the owner for six rolls.

“Your wife must like rolls,” he said.

“How do you know these are for my wife?” I asked.

“Because your mother wouldn’t send you out in weather like this.”

*Richard Silberlust, Monroe, New Jersey*

**I was in small-claims** court when I listened in on the case of a woman who held a good job but still had trouble paying her bills on time. “Can’t you live within your

income?” asked the judge.

“No, Your Honor,” she said. “It’s all I can do to live within my credit.”

*Ralph Warth, Canton, Ohio*

**As I was treating** my daughter and her family to the buffet at a casino, all the bells and whistles for a winning slot machine began to go off. My seven-year-old grandson was awed.

“Wow!” yelled Casey. “This is like Chuck E. Cheese for old people.”

*Patricia Keyes, Plains, Pennsylvania*

**My friend reviewed her young son’s fill-in-the-blank homework. One line: “At Christmas, we exchange gifts with \_\_\_\_.” His response: “Receipts.”**

*Carol Schnell, Louisville, Kentucky*

**When my 15-year-old son, Pat, stepped up to the plate during a Colt League baseball game, the**



*The Safety Infraction  
Sweater Vest*

## Oh, the Sweater Outside Is Frightful

It's December, and you're cold. You can put on this Christmas sweater, or, if you have any fashion sense, you can toss it in the fireplace and warm up that way. Check out more kindling in the *Ugly Christmas Sweater Party Book*, by Brian Miller, Adam Paulson, and Kevin Wool (Abrams Image, \$16.95).

young announcer declared, "Now batting, the right fielder, number 12, Pathogen!" After some confusion in the stands, the announcer came back on over the loudspeaker. "Oh, I get it—Pat Hogan!"

*Linda Hogan, Bay Village, Ohio*

## Ladies Gaga

*Sometimes men don't date women for their IQs. Here are some examples:*

- Today, my girlfriend asked me if my grandmother had any kids.
- My girlfriend and I went out to dinner. We were going to get there

30 minutes early, so I told her to call to see if they could bump us up. The reservation was under my name. After being with me for a year, she didn't know how to say my last name.

- It took my girlfriend almost a full season of *The Office* to realize it wasn't a reality show.

*From collegehumor.com*

**When I went back** to the medical lab to have some blood drawn, I was greeted with a battery of questions from the technician.

"Has your address changed?" she asked.

"No," I answered.

"Your phone number?"

"No."

"What about your birthday?"

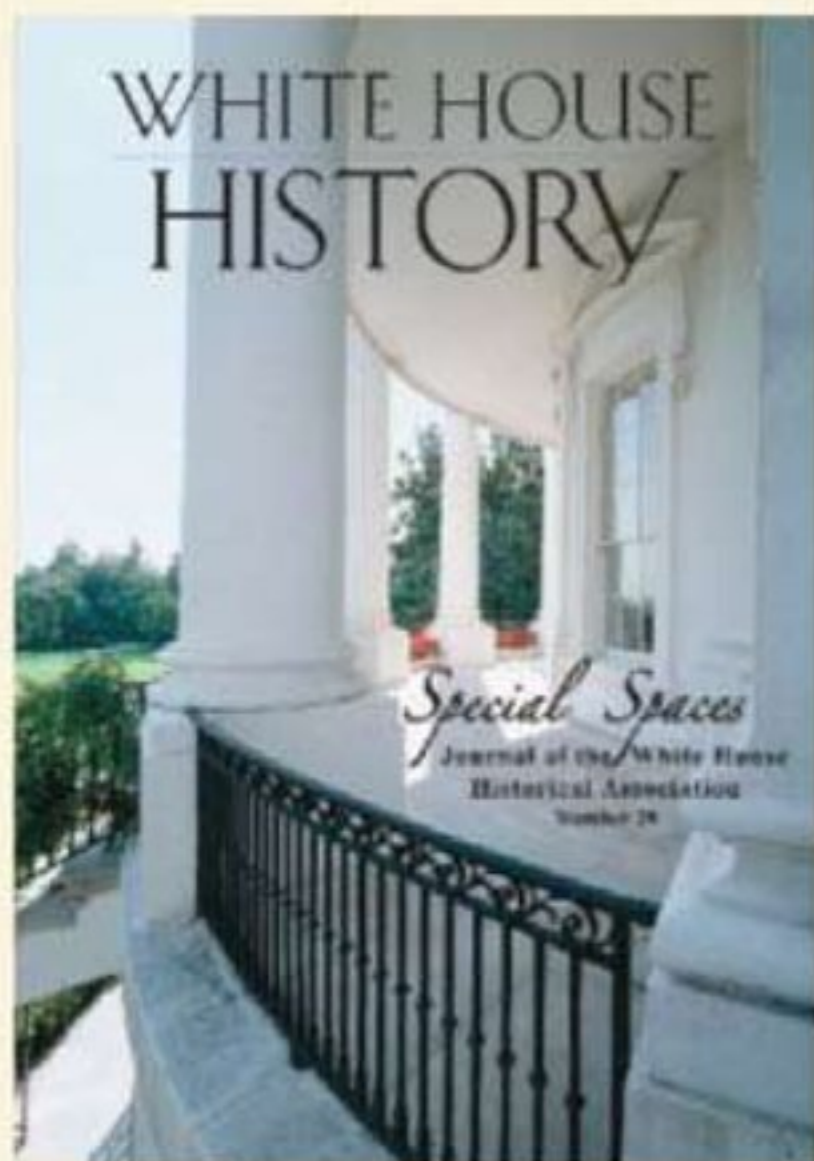
*Lewis Scherer, Jr., Kerrville, Texas*

**A British pig farmer** was so intent on getting rid of her border collie, Bob, that she took out an ad. But it may not have helped her cause. It read:

"Evil Bob would love to find the perfect home, as I have put up with him for nearly ten years and can't take much more. He is probably the worst dog you will ever meet. He started life as a failed mountain rescue dog. He looks older than his years and has wonky teeth, bad breath, and a bad attitude. He steals food, licks the stove, and pees at terrier height so as not to get the blame."

*Source: metro.co.uk*

**Your favorite new joke, funny anecdote, or crazy news story might be worth \$\$\$.** See [page 84](#) for details.



## FREE ISSUE!

*Special offer: Subscribe  
now and receive  
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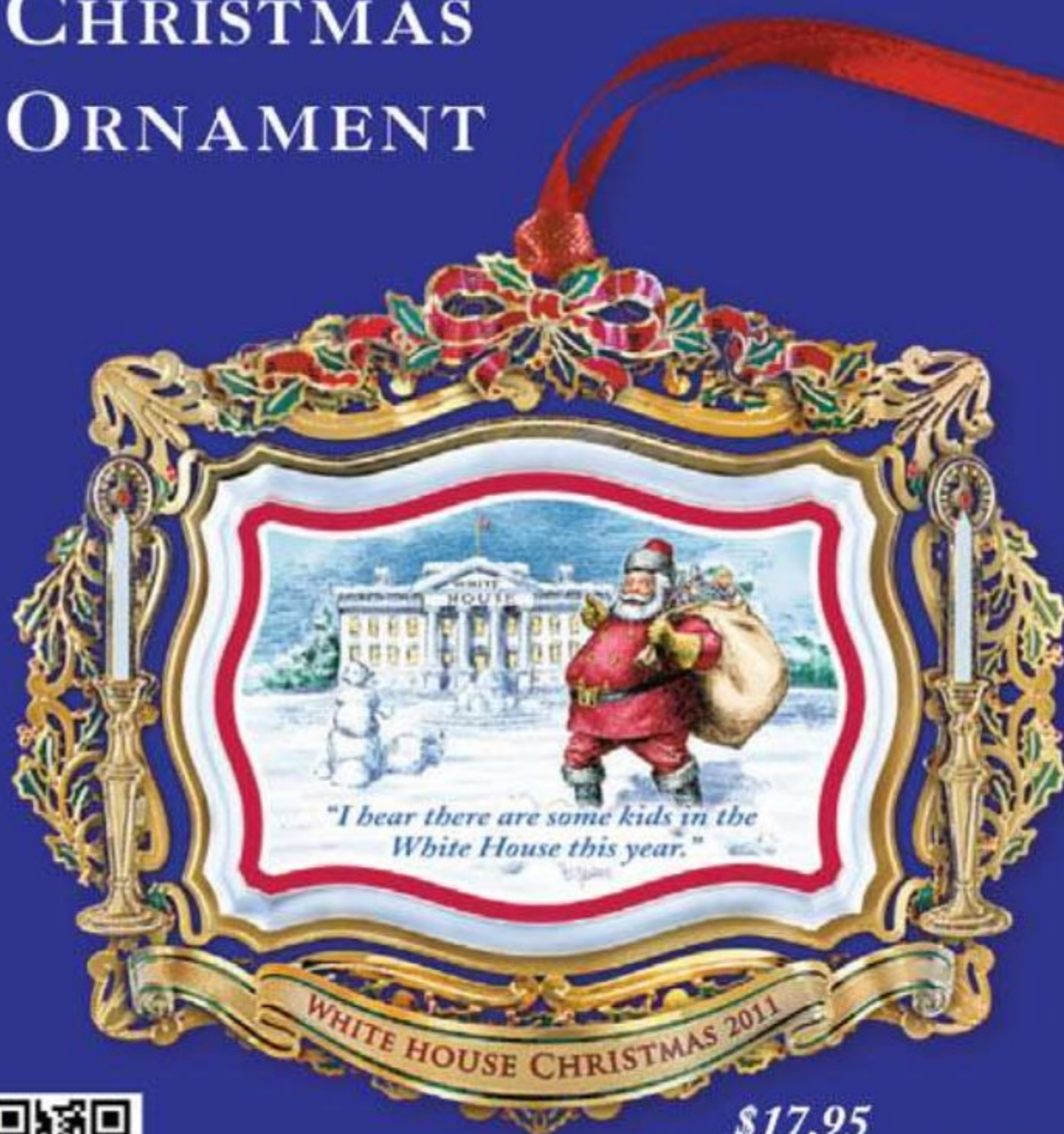
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**THE 26TH PRESIDENT OF  
THE UNITED STATES  
and Featuring Scenes of the  
Roosevelt Family Holidays**



*reverse*

#1

Prescribed\*  
COPD  
Maintenance  
Medication

# DOES BREATHING WITH

If you have COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), which includes chronic bronchitis and emphysema, you know how difficult it can be to breathe. SPIRIVA can help you breathe better, and is the only once-daily inhaled treatment that does all of the following:

- **Helps control COPD symptoms by keeping airways open for a full 24 hours**
- **Helps reduce COPD flare-ups**
- **Is steroid-free**

While nothing can reverse COPD, SPIRIVA relaxes your airways to help you breathe better. Talk to your doctor about lifestyle changes and SPIRIVA.

## **IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION**

SPIRIVA® HandiHaler® is not a rescue medicine and should not be used for treating sudden breathing problems. Do not swallow SPIRIVA capsules. The contents of the capsule should only be inhaled through your mouth using the HandiHaler device. Stop taking SPIRIVA and get medical help right away if your breathing suddenly worsens, your throat, lips, or tongue swells, you get hives, you have vision changes or eye pain, or you have difficulty passing urine or painful urination.

**Please see Important Safety Information on following pages.**

*\*Source: IMS Health, NPA Market Dynamics Custom Study, May 2011.*



# COPD WEIGH YOU DOWN?

Tell your doctor if you have glaucoma, problems passing urine or an enlarged prostate, as these may worsen with SPIRIVA. Tell your doctor if you have kidney problems or are allergic to milk proteins. Ask your doctor if you are not sure. Also discuss with your doctor all the medicines you take, including eye drops. The most common side effect with SPIRIVA is dry mouth. Others include constipation and trouble passing urine. For a complete list of reported side effects, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

## INDICATION

SPIRIVA HandiHaler is a prescription medicine used once every day (a maintenance medication) to control symptoms of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) by relaxing your airways and keeping them open. COPD includes chronic bronchitis, emphysema, or both. SPIRIVA can also reduce COPD exacerbations (flare-ups).

*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.*

**Ask your doctor about breathing better with SPIRIVA.**

**Learn more at [SPIRIVA.COM](http://SPIRIVA.COM), or call 1-877-SPIRIVA.**

**BREATHING WITH COPD IS NO SMALL THING.**



Once-Daily

**SPIRIVA<sup>®</sup> HandiHaler<sup>®</sup>**  
(tiotropium bromide inhalation powder)

## IMPORTANT PATIENT INFORMATION

### **SPIRIVA® (speh REE vah) HandiHaler®** (tiotropium bromide inhalation powder)



**Do NOT swallow SPIRIVA capsules.**



**After putting the SPIRIVA capsule into the HandiHaler device, breathe in your medicine through your mouth.**

**Important Information:** Do not swallow SPIRIVA capsules. SPIRIVA capsules should only be used with the HandiHaler device. SPIRIVA HandiHaler should only be inhaled through your mouth (oral inhalation).

Read the information that comes with your SPIRIVA HandiHaler before you start using it and each time you refill your prescription. There may be new information. This leaflet does not take the place of talking with your doctor about your medical condition or your treatment.

#### **What is SPIRIVA HandiHaler?**

SPIRIVA HandiHaler is a prescription medicine that you use one time every day (a maintenance medicine) to control symptoms of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). SPIRIVA HandiHaler helps make your lungs work better for 24 hours. SPIRIVA HandiHaler relaxes your airways and helps keep them open. You may start to feel like it is easier to breathe on the first day, but it may take longer for you to feel the full effects of the medicine. SPIRIVA HandiHaler works best and may help make it easier to breathe when you use it every day.

SPIRIVA HandiHaler also reduces the likelihood of flare-ups and worsening of COPD symptoms (COPD exacerbations). A COPD exacerbation is defined as an increase or new onset of more than one COPD symptom such as cough, mucus, shortness of breath, and wheezing that requires medicine beyond your rescue medicine.

SPIRIVA HandiHaler is **not** a rescue medicine and should not be used for treating sudden breathing problems. Your doctor may give you other medicine to use for sudden breathing problems.

SPIRIVA HandiHaler has not been studied in children.

#### **Who should not take SPIRIVA HandiHaler?**

##### **Do not use SPIRIVA HandiHaler if you:**

- are allergic to tiotropium. See the end of this leaflet for a complete list of ingredients.
- have had an allergic reaction to ipratropium (Atrovent®).

Allergic reactions may include itching, rash, or swelling of the lips, tongue or throat (trouble swallowing).

#### **What should I tell my doctor before using SPIRIVA HandiHaler?**

##### **Before taking SPIRIVA HandiHaler, tell your doctor about all your medical conditions, including if you:**

- have kidney problems.
- have glaucoma. SPIRIVA HandiHaler may make your glaucoma worse.
- have an enlarged prostate, problems passing urine, or a blockage in your bladder. SPIRIVA HandiHaler may make these problems worse.
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if SPIRIVA HandiHaler could harm your unborn baby.
- are breast-feeding or plan to breast-feed. It is not known if SPIRIVA HandiHaler passes into breast milk. You and your doctor will decide if SPIRIVA HandiHaler is right for you while you breast-feed.
- have a severe allergy to milk proteins. Ask your doctor if you are not sure.

**Tell your doctor about all the medicines you take**, including prescription and non-prescription medicines and eye drops, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Some of your other medicines or supplements may affect the way SPIRIVA HandiHaler works. SPIRIVA HandiHaler is an anticholinergic medicine. You should not take other anticholinergic medicines while using SPIRIVA HandiHaler, including ipratropium. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure if one of your medicines is an anticholinergic.

Know the medicines you take. Keep a list of your medicines with you to show your doctor and pharmacist when you get a new medicine.

#### **How should I take SPIRIVA HandiHaler?**

- Use SPIRIVA HandiHaler exactly as prescribed. Use SPIRIVA HandiHaler one time every day.
- Read the "Patient's Instructions for Use" that comes with your prescription before you use SPIRIVA HandiHaler. Talk with your doctor if you do not understand the instructions.
- **Do not swallow SPIRIVA capsules.**
- **Only use SPIRIVA capsules with the HandiHaler device.**
- **Do not use the HandiHaler device to take any other medicine.**
- SPIRIVA HandiHaler comes as a powder in a SPIRIVA capsule that fits the HandiHaler device. Each SPIRIVA capsule, containing only a small amount of SPIRIVA powder, is one full dose of medicine.
- Separate one blister from the blister card. Then take out one of the SPIRIVA capsules from the blister package right before you use it.

- After the capsule is pierced, take a complete dose of SPIRIVA HandiHaler by breathing in the powder by mouth two times, using the HandiHaler device (take 2 inhalations from one SPIRIVA capsule). See the "Patient's Instructions for Use" that comes with your prescription.
- Throw away any SPIRIVA capsule that is not used right away after it is taken out of the blister package. Do not leave the SPIRIVA capsules open to air; they may not work as well.
- If you miss a dose, take it as soon as you remember. Do not use SPIRIVA HandiHaler more than one time every 24 hours.
- If you use more than your prescribed dose of SPIRIVA HandiHaler, call your doctor or a poison control center.

### What should I avoid while using SPIRIVA HandiHaler?

Do not let the powder from the SPIRIVA capsule get into your eyes. Your vision may get blurry and the pupil in your eye may get larger (dilate). If this happens, call your doctor.

### What are the possible side effects of SPIRIVA HandiHaler?

**SPIRIVA HandiHaler can cause serious side effects. If you get any of the following side effects, stop taking SPIRIVA HandiHaler and get medical help right away.**

- **Allergic reaction.** Symptoms may include: itching, rash, swelling of the lips, tongue, or throat (trouble swallowing).
- **Sudden narrowing and blockage of the airways into the lungs (bronchospasm).** Your breathing suddenly gets worse.
- **New or worsened increased pressure in the eyes (acute narrow-angle glaucoma).** Symptoms of acute narrow-angle glaucoma may include: eye pain, blurred vision, seeing halos (visual halos) or colored images along with red eyes.
- **New or worsened urinary retention.** Symptoms of blockage in your bladder and/or enlarged prostate may include: difficulty passing urine, painful urination.

Other side effects with SPIRIVA HandiHaler include:

- |                                     |                           |                        |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| • upper respiratory tract infection | • non-specific chest pain | • constipation         |
| • dry mouth                         | • urinary tract infection | • increased heart rate |
| • sinus infection                   | • indigestion             | • blurred vision       |
| • sore throat                       | • runny nose              |                        |

These are not all the possible side effects with SPIRIVA HandiHaler. Tell your doctor if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away.

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

### How do I store SPIRIVA HandiHaler?

- **Do not store SPIRIVA capsules in the HandiHaler device.**
- Store SPIRIVA capsules in the sealed blister package at room temperature between 68°F-77°F (20°C-25°C).
- Keep SPIRIVA capsules away from heat and cold (do not freeze).
- Store SPIRIVA capsules in a dry place. Throw away any unused SPIRIVA capsules that have been open to air.

Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you have any questions about storing your SPIRIVA capsules.

**Keep SPIRIVA HandiHaler, SPIRIVA capsules, and all medicines out of the reach of children.**

### General information about SPIRIVA HandiHaler

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# AT HOME IN THE WORLD

AS SHE STARTS HER FOURTH YEAR IN THE WHITE HOUSE, **MICHELLE OBAMA** IS AT EASE IN THE ROLE OF FIRST LADY, DEVOTED TO HER CAUSES—AND STILL WAITING FOR HER COFFEE IN BED



INTERVIEW BY PEGGY NORTHROP





## The First Lady

in the Blue Room  
September 14, 2011

PHOTOGRAPHED FOR  
*READER'S DIGEST* BY BEN BAKER



There is nothing normal about Michelle Obama's life. The first lady is followed everywhere by Secret Service. She lives in the most historic house in America, surrounded by 18th-century antiques and portraits of the Founding Fathers. Her husband lands on the lawn by helicopter after a routine day at work, and her fashion choices are dissected by observers around the globe. She is racking up firsts as a first lady—the first to speak at West Point, the first to top the *Forbes* list of the World's 100 Most Powerful Women, the first to have her mother live full-time in the White House, and of course, the first African American in the job ever.

But, as she told *Reader's Digest* in September, Mrs. Obama is all about creating a normal life inside the extraordinary bubble of Washington. And observers say her pursuit of normalcy is practically revolutionary in the annals of first ladies. Her friend Sharon Malone, an obstetri-

cian and the wife of Attorney General Eric Holder, told *Newsweek* in June, "There's a playbook in Washington about what you're supposed to do—well, she's not following the playbook." While some would argue that her choice of causes—drawing attention to the epidemic of childhood obesity and rallying support for military families—is unexpectedly traditional for a Princeton-educated lawyer and champion of modern working women, Mrs. Obama picks issues based on her own instincts, not what others think she should do. As she told Oprah Winfrey in one of her first interviews as first lady: "I'm not interested in being anyone but Michelle Obama."

"She is a woman who knows what's in her heart," said political commentator Mary Matalin, praising Mrs. Obama in the *Chicago Tribune* in January 2010, "and she's really comfortable with who she is." She is often pictured leaning over (she is toweringly tall, even in low heels) to give a visitor a warm hug. At the *Reader's Digest* photo shoot, she teased our photographer's assistants, two discomfited young men in jackets and ties. "You don't usually dress this way, do you?" she said, then reached out to tweak one's necktie. "The tie clip—rookie move!"

On the day of our interview, Mrs. Obama had just come from a photo shoot for her upcoming garden book, due out next spring, and a lunch consisting mainly, she said, of tomatoes grown in the White House garden.



**Mrs. Obama, with soldiers at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, wants their sacrifice recognized.**

She was practiced and on message—after three years in the White House, no surprise—but her passion and sly humor shone through, especially when she talked about family. Here’s an excerpt:

**Reader’s Digest:** *Military families have been a major focus of yours. Tell me how that started for you.*

**Michelle Obama:** It really started on the campaign trail. I spent a lot of time on the road talking to working women and making sure that the voices of women were incorporated into [my husband’s] campaign and, ultimately, his presidency. As we traveled around the country, inevitably there would be voices of military spouses that I hadn’t heard before. Their challenges—all the same issues that civilian families were deal-

ing with, but with the added stress of multiple deployments and frequent moves—were things I knew nothing about, because I don’t come from a military family. And my thought was, Well, if I don’t know, others don’t know either.

**RD:** *You and Second Lady Jill Biden, whose son Beau is a captain in the Delaware Army National Guard and served a tour in Iraq, founded Joining Forces together. What do military families—who represent just 1 percent of the U.S. population—need from the rest of us?*

**MO:** What we heard, continually, is that they just want people to know their sacrifice. These families are strong, they’re resilient, they don’t ask for help—that’s sort of the way of military life. But oftentimes they

don't feel like the country understands or appreciates their struggle.

**RD:** *In his September speech before Congress, the president mentioned incentives for employers to hire unemployed veterans. Do you take a little credit for that?*

**MO:** Absolutely! Jill and I take credit for whatever we can! *[Laughs]*

**RD:** *On joiningforces.gov, you have a long list of ways we can support military families. You also say a lot of these programs have existed for some time and you're just "shining your light" on them. Talk about some that mean a lot to you.*

**MO:** Fisher House is one organization the president and I personally support; it helps families while they are taking care of loved ones who've been injured or hospitalized for long periods. Soldiers today are living

[those like] what Jill Biden was working on before becoming second lady, Delaware Boots on the Ground, which helps reservists, people who are firefighters or paramedics one day and on the front lines in Afghanistan the next day. Delaware Boots on the Ground is a group of wives and families who do little things that families need—like helping a mom get her washer fixed or shoveling snow or helping with [the purchase of] a baby stroller.

The point is that even the smallest contributions can make a difference. You don't have to be an expert in military life, you don't have to live on a base or near a base. There's something that everyone can do. I tell people that even simply saying thank you makes a world of difference to these families—just knowing that they're not alone, that they live in a country that recognizes their sac-



## I DO A BETTER JOB IF I'M AUTHENTICALLY PASSIONATE ABOUT SOMETHING.

with more traumatic injuries. Their recovery process can take months, sometimes years, and family members often have to quit their jobs and relocate if they don't live near quality military care. These organizations provide a safe, comfortable haven—a chance to get some counseling and to be able to cook a good meal and not eat hospital food for the entire stay.

But there are so many examples: [from things] as big as the USO to

rifice and is ready to step up to serve them as well as they're serving us.

**RD:** *We hear from veterans that as they come home and look for work, there's a stereotype about their mental health that gets in the way. And there's still a lot of shame associated with post-traumatic stress. How are you working on that?*

**MO:** Mental health is a major issue that families point to, and we hope to work on destigmatizing mental health



**A video of the first lady dancing at a Let's Move event went viral.**

[problems]. We don't do well in this country broadly on mental health. The resources are limited, and in some smaller communities, they're nonexistent.

We're not just talking about mental health as it affects the military member. Family members are undergoing their own form of post-traumatic stress disorder—the impact that service has on the strength of the marriage, and young kids who are dealing with the loss of a parent or the deployment of a parent for years and years, not knowing whether he or she is going to come back alive or not.

Just making it a part of the conversation of this country and not pretending that it doesn't exist [could help]. And the hope is that military families and our service members will help us as a nation to deepen our understanding of mental health generally, that the

gains that we can hopefully make here will carry on to the broader population.

**RD:** *Let me move on to your other big cause: childhood obesity. There's a lot of sensitivity over the government telling us what we can and cannot eat. I'm very glad that you admit publicly that you love your french fries.*

**MO:** Love them.

**RD:** *When so many people are unemployed, there's a perception—and a reality—that better food choices are expensive. People's biggest problem may not be eating too much but instead, "I'm not sure where my next meal is coming from."*

**MO:** Affordability and accessibility [of fresh food and produce] has been a problem for decades. That's why our announcement of Walmart's efforts [to reduce the amount of sugar, fat, and salt in their branded products and create some parity between healthy and unhealthy foods] was big. A lot of people said, "Well, Walmart ...," but our view is that Walmart is one of the biggest suppliers of food in a broad range of communities at affordable prices. They understand that oftentimes there is a premium for the cost of wheat bread over white bread, and their commitment is to make the healthy choice the affordable choice so that if families are really trying to make the healthy decision, they can

actually afford it. Walmart can have an effect on the entire industry.

**RD:** *You talk about food deserts—places where there really is no good healthy fresh food for sale.*

**MO:** This has been going on for a long time, where larger grocery stores move slowly away and all that communities have left is little bodegas or the gas station, where there's no produce or the produce is extremely expensive. Philadelphia has gone to great lengths to eliminate food deserts by using a food-financing initiative—taking some government funding along with some private-sector funding—and using that

as an incentive to [get] grocery-store owners [to return].

And what they're finding is that these stores are turning a profit, lo and behold, because people need to eat. If people have an opportunity to go into a nice, good-looking grocery store and buy a head of lettuce and maybe a prepackaged roasted chicken dinner, they'll do it if it's affordable. And it's also creating employment in many of these communities.

We do understand that you can't tell a parent to make better choices when the choices aren't even available to them, so we've had to start there. But there's a lot more work to be done.

**The president and the first lady with Sasha (left) and Malia in 2009.**



COURTESY THE WHITE HOUSE PHOTO OFFICE

**RD:** *I have to ask you how your kids feel about your emphasis on healthy foods. Do they ever call you—as my daughter used to—the meanest mommy in the world?*

**MO:** No, fortunately they don't label me as that. I think the older they get,

ter job if I'm authentically passionate about something. So I have tried my best to pick the issues that I feel strongly about and also the ones that sync up with my husband's broader agenda. And military families, childhood obesity, service, and mentor-



## ONE OF THE TOUGHEST THINGS ABOUT THIS ROLE IS TRYING TO MAINTAIN NORMALCY.

the more they appreciate and understand the point. It's like anything you tell your kids—it doesn't make sense sometimes until they're grown. Right?

The president and I do what we know is right for our kids, even if they don't like it and even if they're going to be a little mad at us. My job is to make sure my kids have healthy habits and understand the choices that they need to make. But their taste buds are no different from any other kids'. They enjoy the same foods, but our message of balance runs through everything in our house.

**RD:** *Some of my international colleagues say American first ladies are kind of tame compared with first ladies around the world, in terms of the causes they champion. You've said that this is not a confining role for you, but do you see yourself speaking out more in another term?*

**MO:** Before I even knew what this role was—because no one knows until they're here—these were the issues that I talked about. Because I do a bet-

ing of young people are completely consistent with all of those. They are things that I care deeply about, that I vow to try to have an effect on. And I think they have not just national but international implications.

One of the things I hear from the other leaders' spouses is that they are seeing the trends around obesity among children, and they are looking at things like food in the schools and exercise and so on. This is a global issue.

Same thing is true with support for military families. Many countries haven't really begun a comprehensive way to look at the families of those who serve. So this is how I choose my issues, rather than what other people think I should do.

**RD:** *People wonder what it's like to live with your family in this fabulous house. George Bush admitted that he brought Laura coffee in bed when they lived here. Do you get that treatment from the president? You're rolling your eyes.*

**MO:** I'm going to write that down. Is

that in his book somewhere? I can photocopy it and put it on my husband's pillow.

**RD:** *OK, so you don't get coffee. But you speak often of trying to keep a sense of normalcy in your family's life. How do you do that?*

**MO:** You know, it is an extreme honor and a privilege, bar none, to live in this house, to serve this country in this way. But that said, one of the toughest things about being in this role is trying to maintain normalcy. I worry about it less for me and my husband than I do for my children. My husband and I do everything we can to put them first, and that can be challenging. We want to make sure we're at their parent-teacher conferences. We want to make sure they

for us but for the next generation.

Even being the president of the United States, [my husband's] first and most important responsibility is being Malia and Sasha's father because if he can't do that, then he can't do it for the rest of the children in this country, and I feel the same thing is true for me.

**RD:** *So they don't get to be little princesses here. It would be so tempting. You've said they make their beds and even help set the table.*

**MO:** Oh, no princess-y [stuff], because that's about their future too. Once they leave here, they're normal kids. We have to prepare them for life beyond the White House, and that means chores, responsibilities, treating people with dignity and respect,



## **WE HAVE TO ENSURE THAT EVERYTHING WE DO IS FOR THE NEXT GENERATION.**

get to go on trips and that the things they're used to in their lives aren't disrupted because of what their father does. We have to fight through the tensions and the stresses and the criticisms that may come with our efforts to create normalcy for our girls.

Because in the end, how I view the future that I want for my children, the kind of passion I have for that, carries over into my desire for every child. We have to fight in this country for that normalcy—we have to fight to ensure that everything we do is not

and being mindful of elders and polite and kind to others. Those values are values that we want them to have when they are old and gray.

So this cannot be a hiatus, this time here. We can't take a break from all those values that we believe in. No, we have to maintain those values, even here. This is the home that we live in, but our values carry with us. In that way, this is just a building.

Fortunately, the White House is filled with many people who respect the wishes of the family, and they



help us. And, of course, we've got Grandma ... when in doubt, Grandma!

**RD:** *You talk about your mother so often, and obviously she's there for your kids. How is she there for you right now?*

**MO:** Being there for my kids is being there for me, first and foremost.

**RD:** *But you must occasionally just want to go into a room and cry. Every working woman I know has felt that way sometimes.*

**MO:** Well, my mom has always been that for me. Now I don't have to call her on the phone; I just walk up to her room and plop down on the couch, and then I vent. And she listens, and she tells me to get up and get it together, and I do.

In that way, it hasn't changed. It's just that she can probably read some of the things I'm frustrated about in the paper before she hears about it from me. But she's always been a wonderful sounding board—objective and no-nonsense, common sense.

She will tell you the truth. She doesn't mince words, but her love is unconditional. Those are the values that I cherish most in her.

I mean, we all need that. And that's one of the reasons why I talk about her. Because I think having that intergenerational interaction in families is key. I still feel like I need a mature shoulder to lean on who can sort of keep my head on straight. Every woman needs that. Every mother needs that. ■

## THE COLLECTED WISDOM OF **MICHELLE OBAMA**

**On picking a partner** “Cute’s good. But cute only lasts for so long, and then it’s, Who are you as a person? That’s the advice I would give to women: Don’t look at the bankbook or the title. Look at the heart. Look at the soul. Look at how the guy treats his mother and what he says about women. How he acts with children he doesn’t know. And more important, how does he treat you? You should never feel less than.” *Glamour*, December 2009

**On success** “You have to practice success. Success doesn’t just show up. If you aren’t practicing success today, you won’t wake up in 20 years and be successful, because you won’t have developed the habits of success, which are small things like finishing what you start, putting a lot of effort into everything you do, being on time, treating people well.”

To the students of the University of Cape Town, South Africa, June 23, 2011

**On going for the gusto** “I am shameless. I dance in public. You want me to dance? Is it going to help the cause? I’ll dance.” To the Writer’s Guild of America, Los Angeles, June 13, 2011

**On setting priorities** “I have always tried to put my kids first and then put myself a really close second, as opposed to fifth or seventh. One thing I’ve learned from male role models is that they don’t hesitate to invest in themselves, with the view that, ‘If I’m healthy and happy, I’m going to be a better support to my spouse and children.’ And I’ve found that to be the case.”

*Glamour*, December 2009

# The Holiday I'll Never Forget

STORIES OF JOY,  
SURPRISE, DISCOVERY,  
AND LOVE





Bakery

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# All I'm Asking For

BY RICK BRAGG

I must have been about nine years old, too dignified to sit on Santa's lap at the Mason's department store in Anniston, Alabama, but still young enough to ask—please, please, please—for a G.I. Joe. “You're too old to play with dolls,”

my brother Sam hissed at me. Sam never was a child. My kin liked to say the day he was born, he dusted himself off in the delivery room and walked home.

“G.I. Joe ain't no doll,” I hissed back, my face red.

“Is,” Sam said.

“Ain't,” I said.

That, in Calhoun County, Alabama, in the winter of 1968, is what passed for intellectual discourse.

I was about to pinch him when my tired mother tugged me away to marvel at the fake snow around a deer with pipe cleaners for antlers. Sam marched up to Santa like a little man, presumably to ask for a chain saw and some shotgun shells.

“Do you think I'll get it?” I asked my mother. She was taking in laundry back then, and cleaning houses when she could. Christmas, to her, was a time of great fear, fear that it would be for her three sons a time of great disappointment.

“I don't know, hon,” she said, using her other hand to hold tight to my lit-



tle brother, Mark, who had taken one look at the odd man in the red coat and tried to run for the high country.

“It's all I'm asking for,” I said, hopeful.

I didn't know then that just asking was like kicking her in the stomach.

It is hard, when I write of my childhood and Christmas, not to sound a little like Dickens. I am not saying I write that well, just that Christmas, for me as a boy, was always a kind of seesaw of gloom and glee, perhaps the plainest evidence of difference between the classes. A G.I. Joe was a dear thing, a real toy, more than my mother made in a day, some days.

But when I think of those times now, the disappointments seem to lose shape in my mind, and I find instead things that seem, in my second 50 years, much like miracles.

The next day, I moped into my aunt Juanita's kitchen. Aunt Juanita, a tiny woman who could swing a hammer like a man, helped raise me. She fed

me peanut butter cookies and fried chicken, though not in that order.

“What’s Santy bringing you?” she asked.

“Well,” I said, “I wanted a G.I. Joe, but Sam said just girls play with dolls, and I ain’t no girl so I reckon I don’t want one.”

A few days later, I saw a box under her tree with my name on it. She had wrapped it in thin paper, thin enough to see through: G.I. Joe, the one in a sailor’s uniform. I wouldn’t have cared if he was dressed like an insurance salesman. I spent all the days leading up to Christmas with an odd

peace of mind. When I unwrapped it, my mother pretended to be surprised.

Santy, she said, must have conspired with my aunt Juanita.

I love my aunt Juanita for doing that. I love my mother for doing all she could, day after day after day. I know the season means more than this stuff, that it might even be wrong to call such things miracles, even if just tiny ones. The miracle in it, I think, is in those two women’s hearts.

● *Rick Bragg’s bestselling books include All Over but the Shoutin’ and The Prince of Frogtown. He won the Pulitzer Prize for feature writing in 1996.*

# The Gift of Possibility

BY ESMERALDA SANTIAGO

.....

**That Christmas Eve**, the streets of Boston were clogged with tourists and locals bundled in wool and flannel. Shoppers, hawkers, and gawkers whirled and swirled around me. “Frosty the Snowman,” “Let It Snow!” and

“Jingle Bells” played in stores; on the sidewalks, the street musicians did their best. Everyone, it seemed, was accompanied by someone else smiling or laughing. I was alone.

The eldest of a Puerto Rican family of 11 children growing up in New York’s crowded tenements, I’d spent much of my life seeking solitude. Now, finally, at 27, a college student in the midst of a drawn-out



breakup of a seven-year relationship, I contemplated what I’d so craved, but I wasn’t quite sure I liked it.

Every part of me wanted to be alone, but not at Christmas.

My family had returned to Puerto Rico, my friends had gone home during the holiday break, and my acquaintances were involved in their own lives. Dusk was falling, and the inevitable return to my empty apartment brought tears to my eyes.

Blinking lights from windows and around doors beckoned, and I wished someone would emerge from one of those homes to ask me inside to a warm room with a Christmas tree decorated with tinsel, its velvet skirt sprinkled with shiny fake snow and wrapped presents.

I stopped at the local market, feeling even more depressed as people filled their baskets with goodies. Dates and dried figs, walnuts, pecans, and hazelnuts in their shells reminded me of the gifts we received as children in Puerto Rico on Christmas Day, because the big gifts were given on the morning of the Feast of the Epiphany, on January 6. I missed my family: their rambunctious parties; the dancing; the mounds of rice with pigeon peas; the crusty, garlicky skin on the pork roast; the plantain and yucca pasteles wrapped in banana leaves. I wanted to cry for wanting to be alone and for having achieved it.

In front of the church down the street, a manger had been set up, with

Mary, Joseph, and the barn animals in expectation of midnight and the arrival of baby Jesus. I stood with my neighbors watching the scene, some of them crossing themselves, praying. As I walked home, I realized that the story of Joseph and Mary wandering from door to door seeking shelter was much like my own history. Leaving Puerto Rico was still a wound in my soul as I struggled with who I had become in 15 years in the United States. I'd mourned the losses, but for the first time, I recognized what I'd gained. I was independent, educated, healthy, and adventurous. My life was still before me, full of possibility.

Sometimes the best gift is the one you give yourself. That Christmas, I gave myself credit for what I'd accomplished so far and permission to go forward, unafraid. It is the best gift I've ever received, the one that I most treasure.

● *Esmeralda Santiago's six books include the bestselling memoir When I Was Puerto Rican and the new novel Conquistadora.*

# Eight Candles, Nine Lives

BY MELISSA FAY GREENE

**We parents work so hard** to relay the historical and spiritual import of religious holidays. No, we explain, Hanukkah is not primarily about gift giving; it's about a long-ago freedom struggle. The eight-day winter holiday

celebrates the successful resistance of the Jews against King Antiochus IV Epiphanes of Syria

and the restoration of the Second Temple 21 centuries ago. All our traditions—from lighting the menorah

to frying the potato pancakes called latkes to spinning a top in the game of dreidel—contribute to the commemoration of these events.

Unfortunately, the Hanukkah observance that has stayed with my children as the most significant of their childhoods has nothing to do with religious freedom. One night in the 1990s, we tidied up wrapping paper and toys in the den while the lit menorah stood on the kitchen table. In our absence, as the many-colored candles snapped and dripped, our long-haired black-and-white cat, Ladybug, hopped onto the kitchen table and brushed past them.

“Do you smell something?” asked my husband, Donny.

“Is something burning?” asked Molly, our oldest, age ten.

It was Ladybug! The fur on her left flank had been singed down to the skin. She wasn’t hurt, but she wore a peeved expression all evening, and for the rest of the week she hid whenever we began chanting the Hebrew blessings over the candles. Though her fur grew out as thick as ever, Ladybug took a dim view of Hanukkah after that, clearly preferring less flammable holidays, like Labor Day.

The following year, for a fifth-grade assignment about family traditions, Molly wrote about Ladybug’s encounter with the Hanukkah candles.

The teacher, Lynn Fink, a sporty and funny woman, enjoyed Molly’s story and gave it an A.

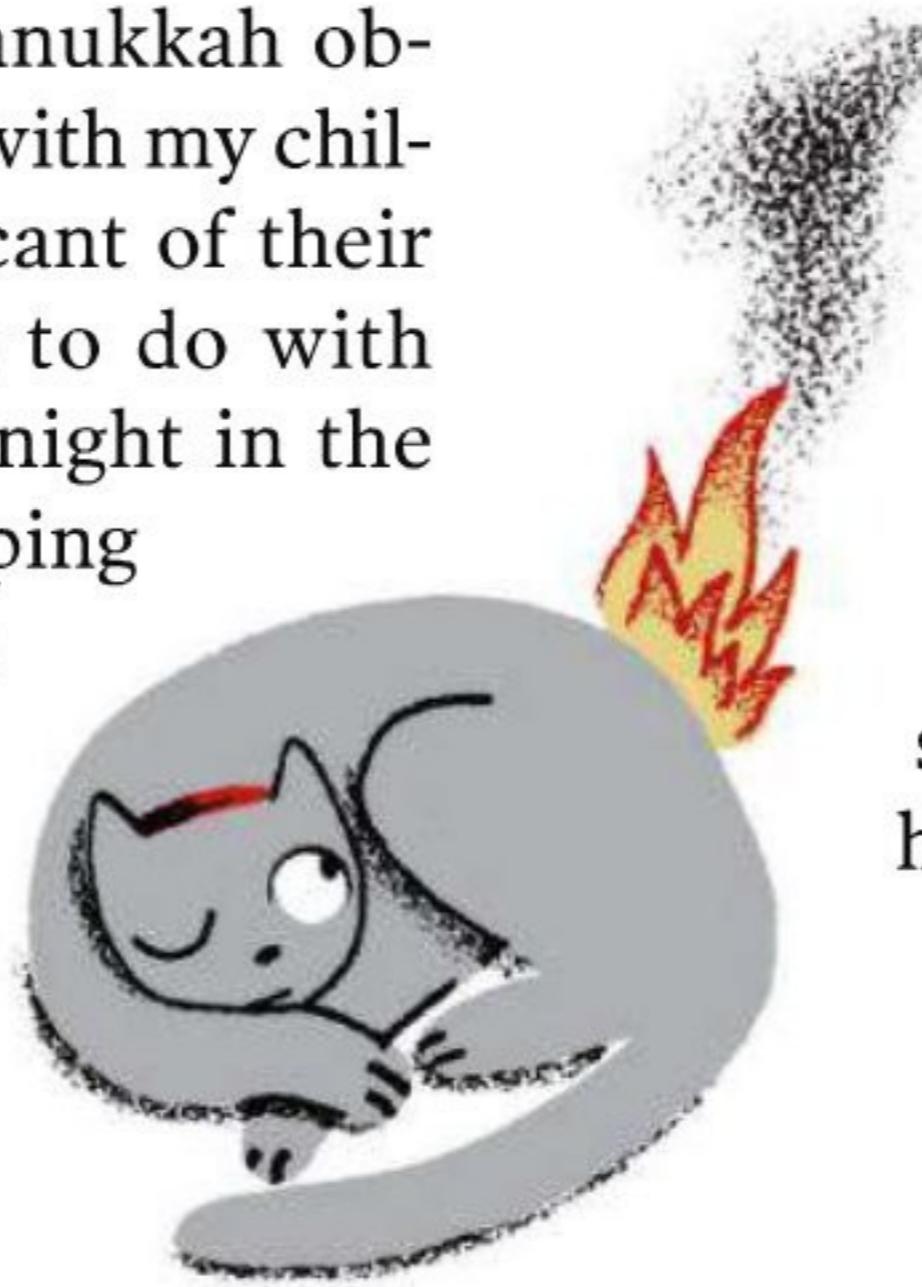
Three years later, Seth got Ms. Fink for fifth grade. He also worked the scorching of cat fur into a writing assignment, and he, too, got an A.

Ditto our son Lee, three years later: same teacher, same story, same A. We had no idea these retellings were piling up.

The year Lily got Ms. Fink for fifth grade, she also felt inspired to pen an account of the night of a feline afire. By now, we were very fond of Ms. Fink. We invited her to join us for a night of Hanukkah. It was her first time to experience the Jewish holiday.

Happily, she ate her latkes with sour cream and applesauce. Gamely, she spun the dreidel. Delightedly, she opened the small gift of homemade cookies the children had prepared for her. As the evening seemed to be winding down, she clapped her hands, rubbed them together as if before a banquet, and exclaimed, “So! When do we torch the cat?”

● *Melissa Fay Greene’s new book, No Biking in the House Without a Helmet, is about her family of nine children: four by birth and five adopted at older ages from orphanages abroad. She is a two-time National Book Award finalist.*



**“DO YOU SMELL  
SOMETHING  
BURNING?”  
MY HUSBAND  
ASKED ME  
THAT NIGHT.**

# Sharing the Sweetness

BY TAYARI JONES

**On the 25th of December**, my mother expects her children to be present and accounted for, exchanging gifts and eating turkey. When she pulls on that holiday sweater, everybody better get festive. Of course, I would be the first

Jones sibling to go rogue. As the middle, artist child, I was going to strike out and do my own thing, make some new traditions. From a biography of Flannery O'Connor, I drew inspiration—I would spend the holiday at an artist colony!

No one took the news very well. From the way my mother carried on, you would think that I was divorcing the family. Still, I held my ground and made plans for my winter adventure in New Hampshire. The MacDowell Colony was everything I could have wished for. About 25 to 30 artists were in attendance, and it was as, well, artsy as I had imagined. It felt like my life had become a quirky independent film.

By Christmas Eve, I had been at the colony more than a week. The novelty of snowy New England was wearing off, but I would never admit it. Everyone around me was having too much fun. Sledding and bourbon!

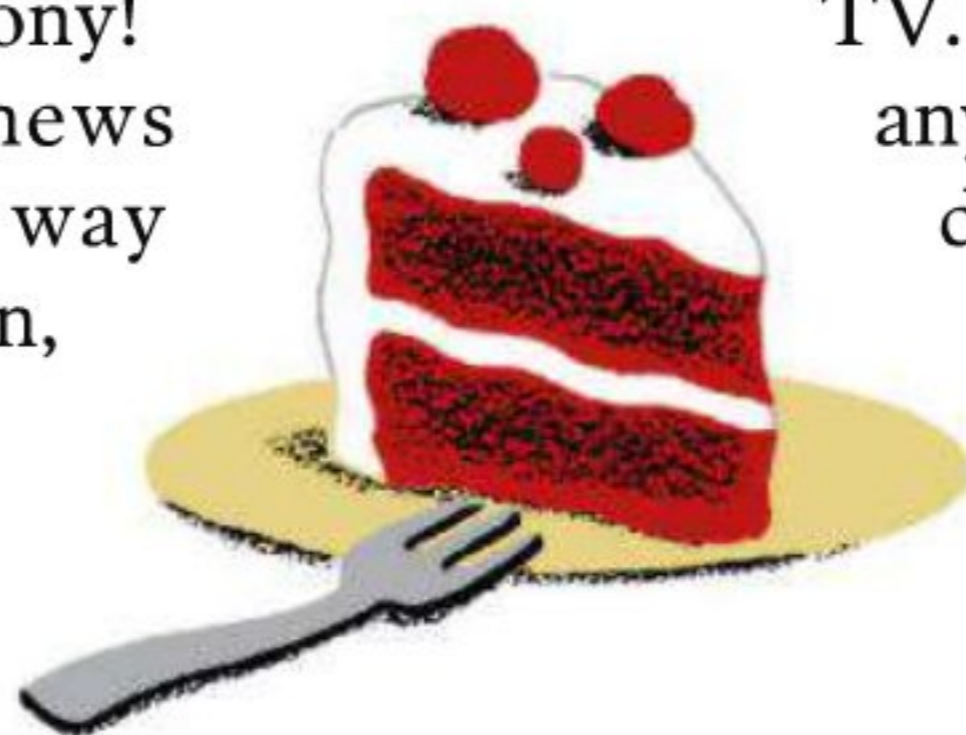
Deep conversations by the fireplace! And that guy with the piercings. So cute! What was wrong with me? This was the holiday I'd always dreamed of. No plastic reindeer grazing on the front lawn. No football games on

TV. Not a Christmas sweater anywhere in sight. People here didn't even say "Christmas," they said "holiday." Utter sophistication. Then why was I so sad?

Finally, I called home on the pay phone in the common room. My dad answered, but I could barely hear him for all the good-time noise in the background. He turned down the volume on the Stevie Wonder holiday album and told me that my mother was out shopping with my brothers. Now it

was my turn to sulk. They were having a fine Christmas without me.

Despite a massive blizzard, a large package showed up near my door at the artist colony on Christmas morning. *Tayari Jones* was written in my



**I POUNCED  
ON THAT  
PARCEL LIKE  
I WAS FIVE  
YEARS OLD.  
INSIDE WAS  
A GORGEOUS  
RED-VELVET  
CAKE.**



mother's beautiful handwriting. I pounced on that parcel like I was five years old. Inside was a gorgeous red-velvet cake, my favorite, swaddled in about 50 yards of bubble wrap. *Merry Christmas*, read the simple card inside. *We love you very much*.

As I sliced the cake, everyone gathered around—the young and the old, the cynical and the earnest. Mother

had sent a genuine homemade gift, not trendy or ironic. It was a minor Christmas miracle that one cake managed to feed so many. We ate it from paper towels with our bare hands, satisfying a hunger we didn't know we had.

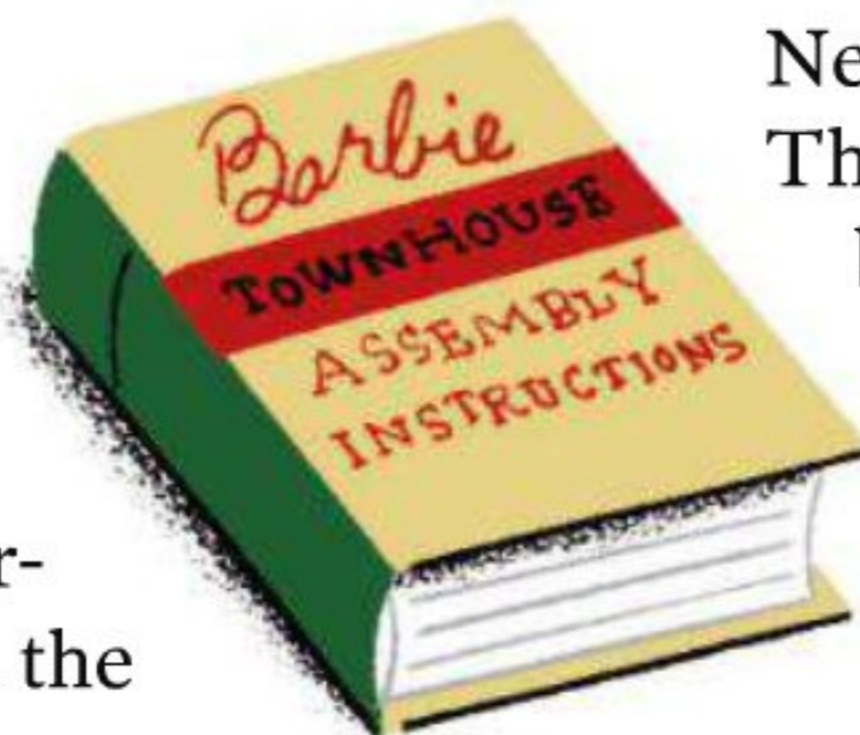
● *Tayari Jones is the author of three novels, most recently Silver Sparrow.*

# Some Assembly Required

BY FLOYD SKLOOT

**My five-year-old daughter** knew exactly what she wanted for Christmas of 1977, and told me so. Yes, she still would like the pink-and-green plastic umbrella with a clear top she'd been talking about. Great to observe patterns of

rain spatters. Books, long flannel nightgown, fuzzy slippers—fine. But really, there was only one thing that mattered: a Barbie Townhouse, with all the accessories.



Next day, I stopped at the mall. The huge Barbie Townhouse box was festooned with exclamations: “3 Floors of High-Styled Fun! Elevator Can Stop on All Floors!” *Some Assembly Required*.

This was a surprise. Rebecca was not a Barbie girl, preferred stuffed animals to dolls, and wasn't drawn to play in a structured environment. Always a make-up-the-rules, design-your-own-world, do-it-my-way kid. Maybe, I thought, the point wasn't Barbie but house, a domicile she could claim for herself, since we'd already moved five times during her brief life.

Uh-oh. My track record for assembling things was miserable. Brooklyn-born, I was raised in apartment buildings in a family that didn't build things. A few years earlier, I'd spent one week assembling a six-foot-tall jungle gym from a kit containing so many parts, I spent the first four hours sorting and weeping and the last two hours trying to figure out why there were so many left-over pieces. The day after I finished

building it, as if to remind me of my limitations, a tornado touched down close enough to scatter the jungle gym across an acre of field.

I assembled the Barbie Townhouse on Christmas Eve. Making it level, keeping the columns from looking like they'd melted and been refrozen, and getting that elevator to work were almost more than I could manage. And building it in curse-free silence so my daughter would continue sleeping—if, in fact, she was sleeping—added a layer of challenge. By dawn I was done.

Shortly thereafter, my daughter walked into the living room, stuffed bear tucked under her arm, feigning shock and looking as tired as I did. Her surprise may have been sham, but her delight was utterly genuine and moves me to this day, 34 years

later. Rebecca had spurred me to do something I didn't think I could do. It was for her, and—like so much of the privilege of being her father—it brought me further outside myself and let me overcome doubts about my capacities.

Now that I think about it, there probably was real surprise in her first glimpse of her Barbie Townhouse. Not, perhaps, at the gift itself but that it had been built and remained standing in the morning light. Or maybe it was simpler than that: Maybe she was surprised because she'd planned on building the thing herself.

● *Floyd Skloot is the author of 17 books, most recently the story collection Cream of Kohlrabi. Rebecca Skloot's debut book, The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks, was a New York Times bestseller.*

# A Legacy of Love

BY LEE SMITH

**December 23, 1969.** When it gets really cold down South, it seems colder than anyplace else. It had been freezing out in the piney woods the day we cut down our Christmas tree—which had been decorated for weeks now in

the living room of our little frame house in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. I remember the pattern of glittery frost on our uninsulated windows, the chilly wind that slipped under the doors, the sound of our steps as we crunched across the frozen grass of our front

yard early that morning. We'd been up for most of the night, timing the pains. I looked back as my young husband gunned the car out of the driveway, headed for the hospital. In the bright morning sun, ice glittered on every branch of every silver tree.

Two people live in that house now, I remember thinking. Soon there will be three.

Six pounds, seven ounces, he came in hollering at the top of his lungs; he had ten fingers and ten toes and a funny flat nose and a pointed head. Just an ordinary, healthy baby boy: a miracle. We named him Josh.

Soon they took him away so that I could rest, but I couldn't sleep a wink—I was way too excited. When they wheeled him back, he was wearing a bright red Santa hat. A red-and-white felt Christmas stocking hung from his bassinet.

I have that little hat and stocking still.

We don't have Josh, though. He died in his sleep eight years ago, October 26, 2003. The exact cause of his death was an "acute cardiomyopathy," the collapse of an enlarged heart brought about in part, I believe, by all the weight he had gained while taking antipsychotic drugs. He was 34; he had been sick for half his life doing daily heroic battle with the devastating brain disorder—schizophrenia—that first struck while he was in a program for gifted teen musicians at Berklee College of Music in Boston, the summer between his junior and senior years in high school.



**SIX POUNDS,  
SEVEN  
OUNCES, HE  
CAME INTO  
THE WORLD  
HOLLERING.**

Yet we don't mourn Josh at Christmastime but celebrate his remarkable life.

Thanks to early diagnosis and medical treatment, which included hospitalization, a residential outpatient program, and vocational training, Josh was eventually able to live on his own. He learned to manage his medication and get to his doctor appointments on time. For the last seven years of his life, he worked at a Japanese restaurant, where he made sushi for lunch and often played piano at night, a mix of jazz, blues, and his own compositions.

What a privilege it was to live on this earth with him, to be his mother. Of course, to have children—or simply to experience great love for any person at all—is to throw yourself wide open to the possibility of pain at any moment. But I would never choose otherwise.

Now we have four grandchildren, two of them his namesakes. And this holiday, as always, we will hang Josh's bright little Santa hat and worn red felt stocking on our Christmas tree.

● *Lee Smith has published 12 novels and four collections of short stories. A collection of new and selected stories, Mrs. Darcy and the Blue-Eyed Stranger, was released in paperback last May.*

# Merry, Silly Christmas

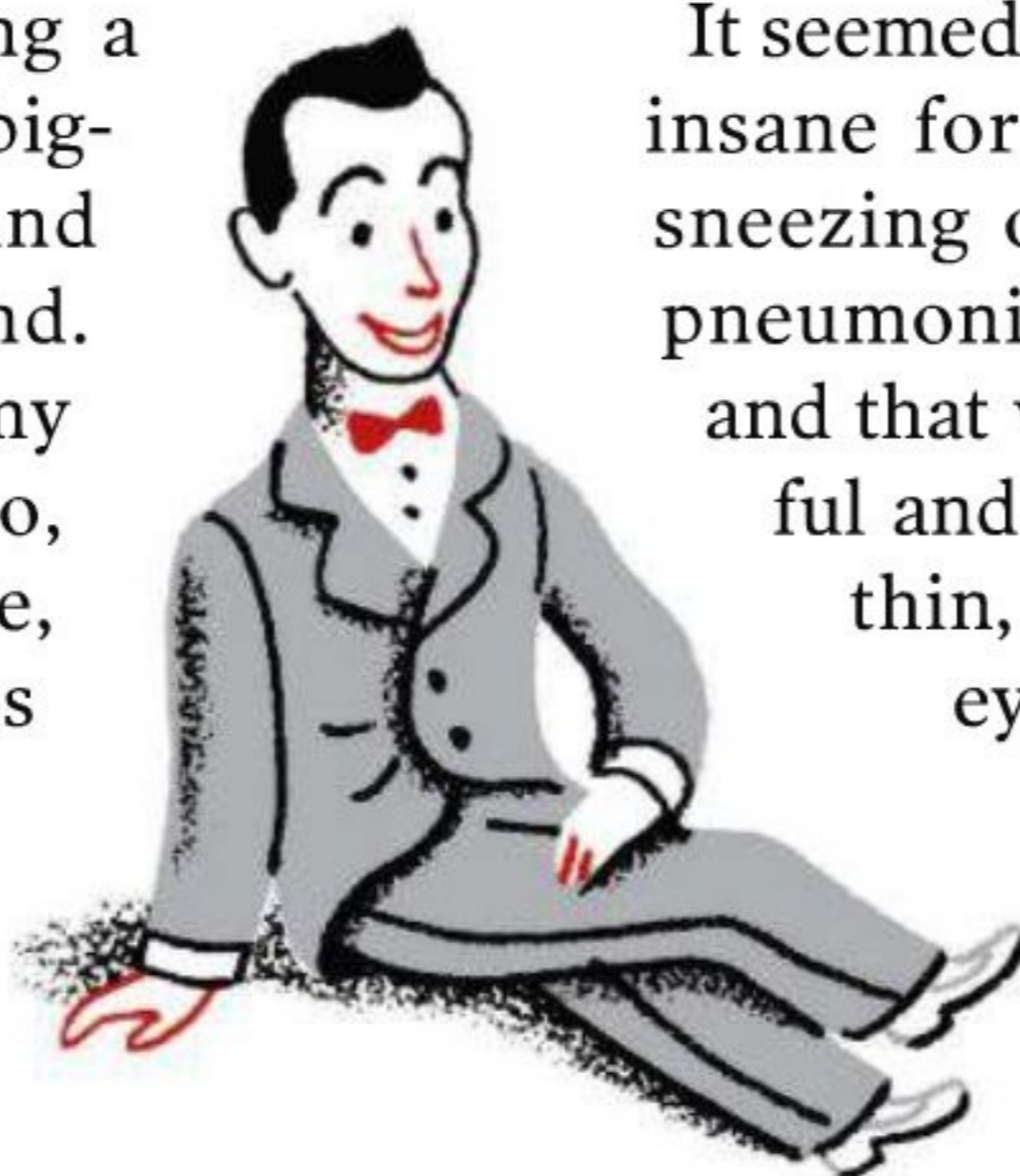
BY JENNY ALLEN

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**My best Christmas** was the year we had Ken and Barbie at the top of our tree. We had an angel first, for Christmas Day, but then we had Ken and Barbie. Let me explain. When my daughter was four, I hired a ballet dancer to

babysit for a few afternoons a week. Randy was tall and confident, with that dancer's chest-first carriage, and, though he was only 27, a sure, cheerful bossiness. For four years, he and Halley roamed the city on adventures: to climb the Alice in Wonderland statue in Central Park, to smile at the waddling, pint-sized penguins at the zoo. They had their own world, their own passions: a devotion to ice cream, to Elmo, to Pee-wee Herman.

He orchestrated Halley's birthday parties to a fare-thee-well: One year he declared a Peter Pan theme, made Halley a Tinker Bell outfit with little jingle bells at the hem, and talked my father into making a scary appearance in a big-brimmed pirate hat and a fake hook for a hand. Randy took charge of my grown-up parties, too, dictating what I wore, foraging in thrift shops to find the right rhinestone necklace to go with the dress he'd made me buy.



When Halley was eight, Randy left New York to take over a sleepy ballet company in a small city in Colorado. He taught, he choreographed, he coaxed secretaries and computer salesmen into pliéing across the stage.

Halley missed him terribly, we all did, but he called her and sent her party dresses, and he came to see us at Christmas when he could. The year Halley was ten, we had a new baby. That same year, Randy was diagnosed with AIDS. He told me over the phone, without an ounce of self-pity, that he had so few T cells left that he'd named them Huey, Dewey, and Louie.

It seemed insane for him to travel, insane for him to risk one of us sneezing on him and giving him pneumonia, but he had decided, and that was it. He was as cheerful and bossy as ever. Terribly thin, his cheeks hollow but eyes bright, he took Halley all over the city once again, with baby Julie strapped to his chest in a cloth carrier.

“We’ve got to do something about this tree,” he said one day. The tree, with its red ribbon bows, looked fine to me; I was even a little vain about the way every branch shone with ornaments.

A few days later, on New Year’s Eve morning, he summoned our little family. He was wearing the old pirate’s hat, fished out of a costume box and, for hair, curly colored streamers that stuck out of the hat and tumbled down to his shoulders.

As we watched—me irritable at first, wondering how much you were supposed to yield to a dying house-guest, even if you loved him like a brother—he stripped the tree. Then he brought out more curly streamers, heaps of them, and tooters and little party-favor plastic champagne bottles. “Now we’ll turn it into a New Year’s tree,” he declared.

A New Year’s tree! Of course! We threw the streamers all over the tree, we covered it with the tooters and the

tiny champagne bottles. “And now, for the pièce de résistance,” Randy said. Stretching his tall self way up to the top of the tree, he removed its gold papier-mâché angel. Solemnly, carefully, he placed on top Halley’s tuxedoed Ken and her best Barbie, the one in a sparkly ball gown.

“Ta da!” he said, and beamed. It was a wonderful tree, happy and goofy and perfect.

Randy lived for another year and a half. None of us will ever get over his death, not really. But every Christmas-time, I raise a glass to Randy—to his tree, to his bossiness, to the Christmas he taught us that courage is a man in a pirate hat with silly streamers for hair.

● *Jenny Allen is the author of a book of fables for grown-ups called The Long Chalkboard, illustrated by her husband, Jules Feiffer. Her one-woman show about ovarian cancer, I Got Sick Then I Got Better, has been seen in theaters and at hospitals, universities, and cancer conferences around the country.*

## A YELLOW LEAF

A yellow leaf in the branches  
Of a shamel ash  
In the front yard;  
I see it, a yellow leaf  
Among so many.  
Nothing distinguishes it,  
Nothing striking, striped, stripped,  
Strident, nothing  
More than its yellow  
On this day,

Which is enough, which makes me  
Think of it later in the day,  
Remember it in conversation  
With a friend,  
Though I do not mention it—  
A yellow leaf on a shamel ash  
On a clear day  
In an Arizona winter,  
A January like so many.

*Alberto Ríos*

FROM *THE SMALLEST MUSCLE IN THE HUMAN BODY* (COPPER CANYON PRESS).  
FOR MORE POETRY, VISIT [POETRYFOUNDATION.ORG](http://POETRYFOUNDATION.ORG).

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an asterisk. Details on  
page 151.

# The *Well-Chosen* Gift



Sure, it's the thought that counts, but around the holidays who has time to think? These 56 choices let you match personalities with products and help you put the head and heart back into giving.

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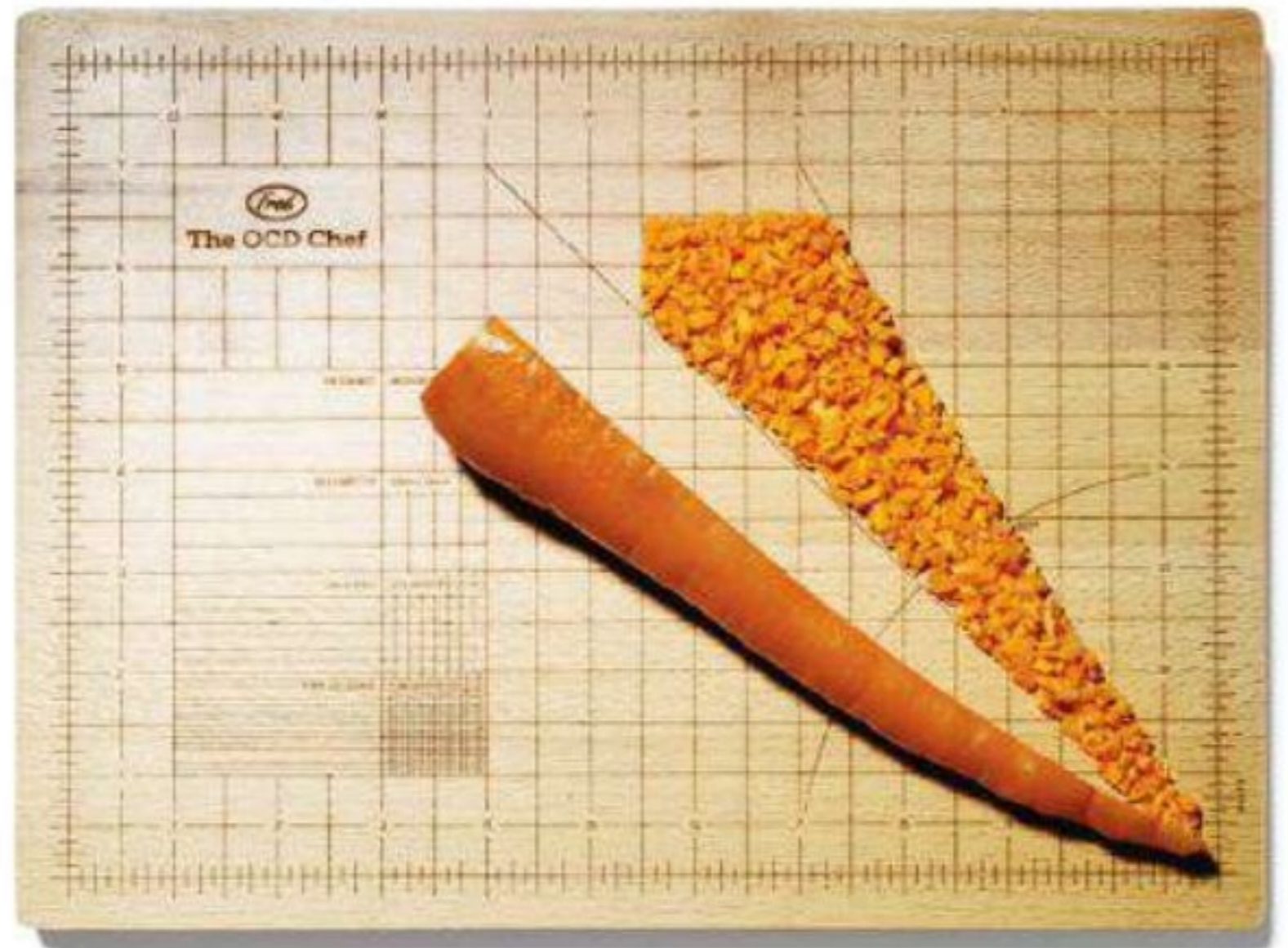
**THE OCD CHEF CUTTING BOARD** A 9-by-12-inch beechwood slab with a tongue-in-cheek guide for getting the carrots diced, julienned, or brunoised just so. (\$24.99, fredandfriends.com)

**MARMALADE LOVER'S GIFT SET** Tart up their toast with a trio of bright, offbeat flavors. (\$32, bluechairfruit.com)

## Well-Drunk

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**CORZO TEQUILAS** Champagne is so flat. (Been there, drunk that.) But each Corzo bottle is a thing of beauty—with Silver, Reposado, or Añejo inside. (\$46.99 to \$57.99, bevmo.com)







## Well-Carried

### MUDPIE CABLE-KNIT CLUTCH

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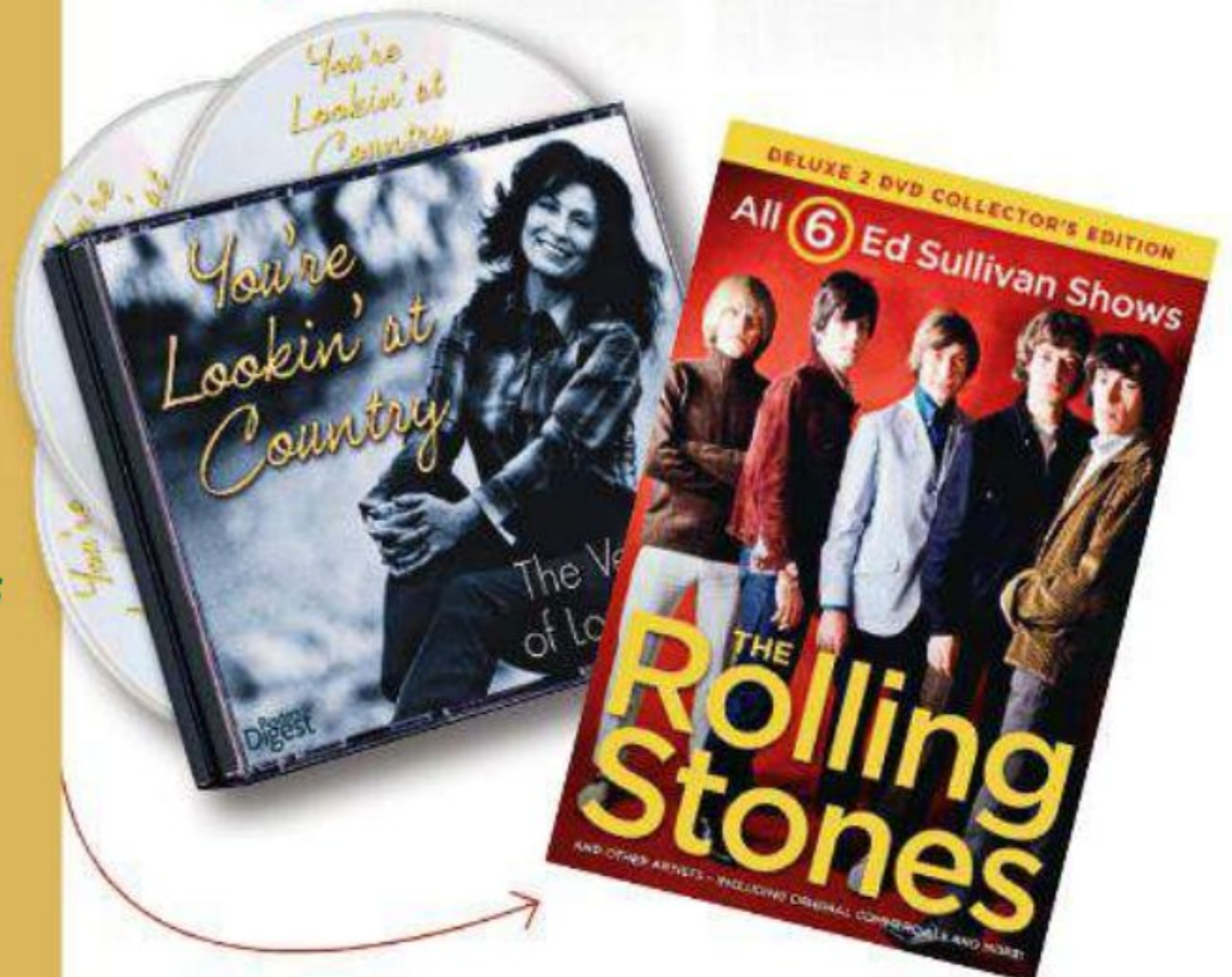
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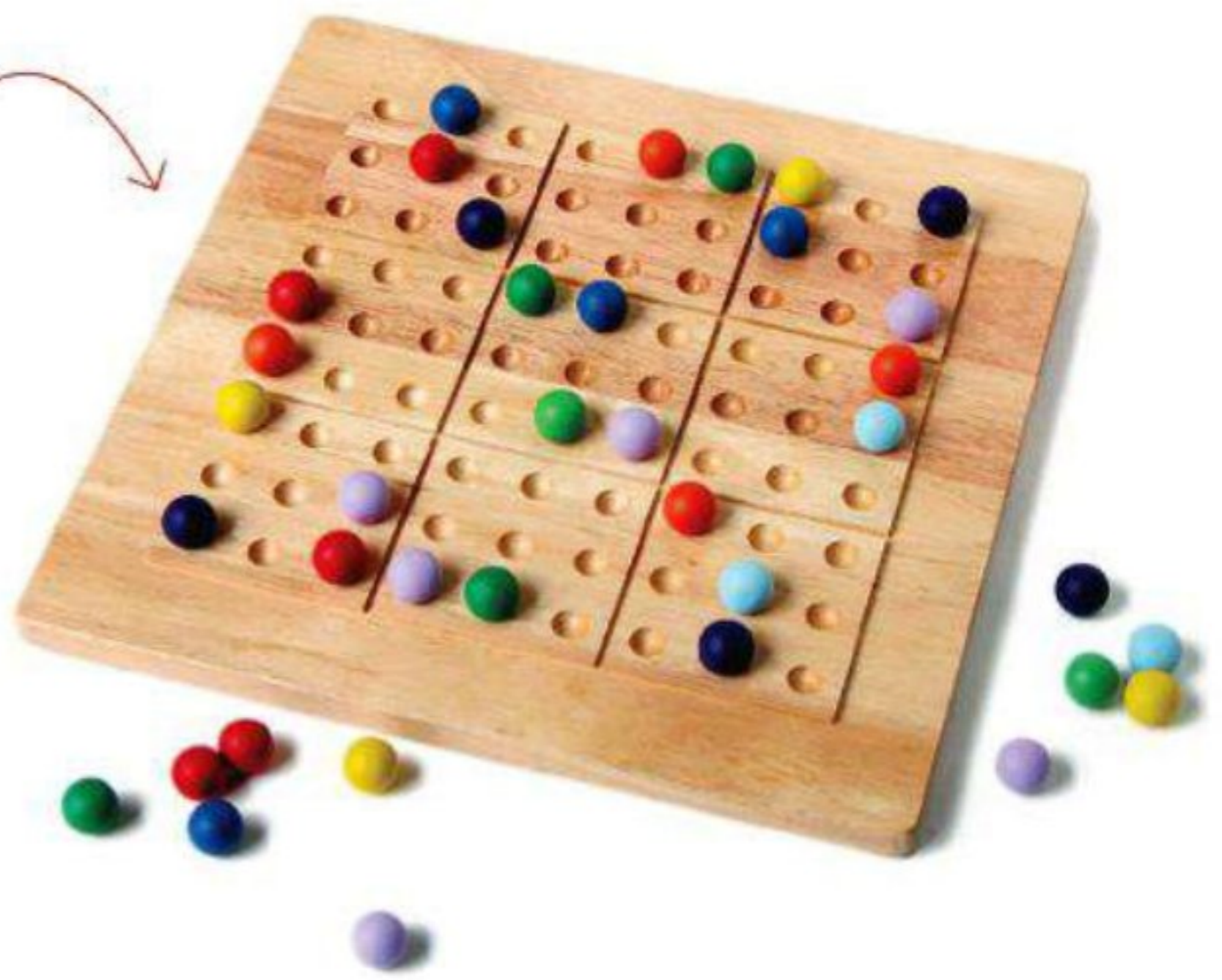
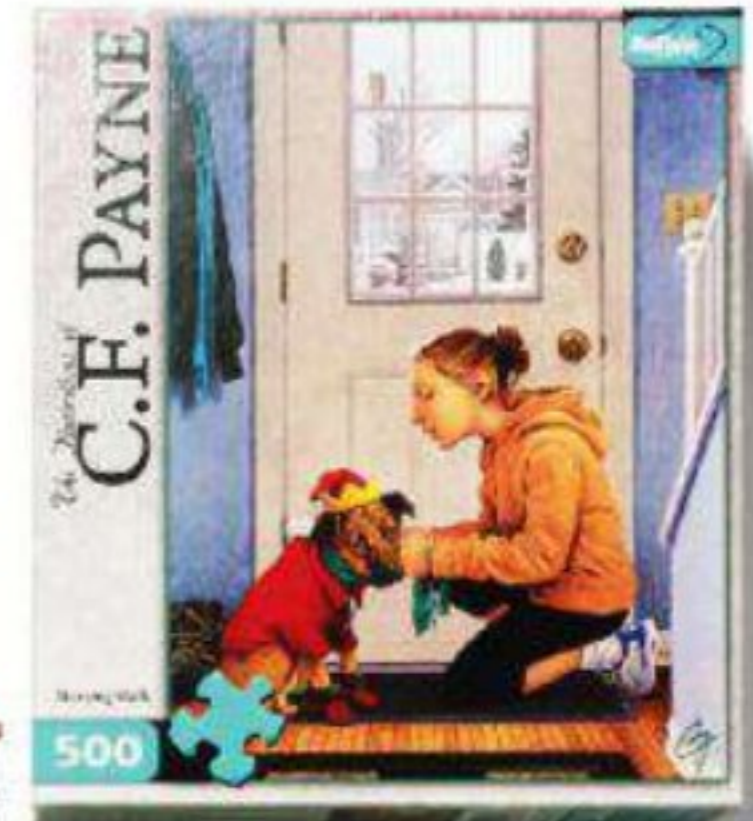
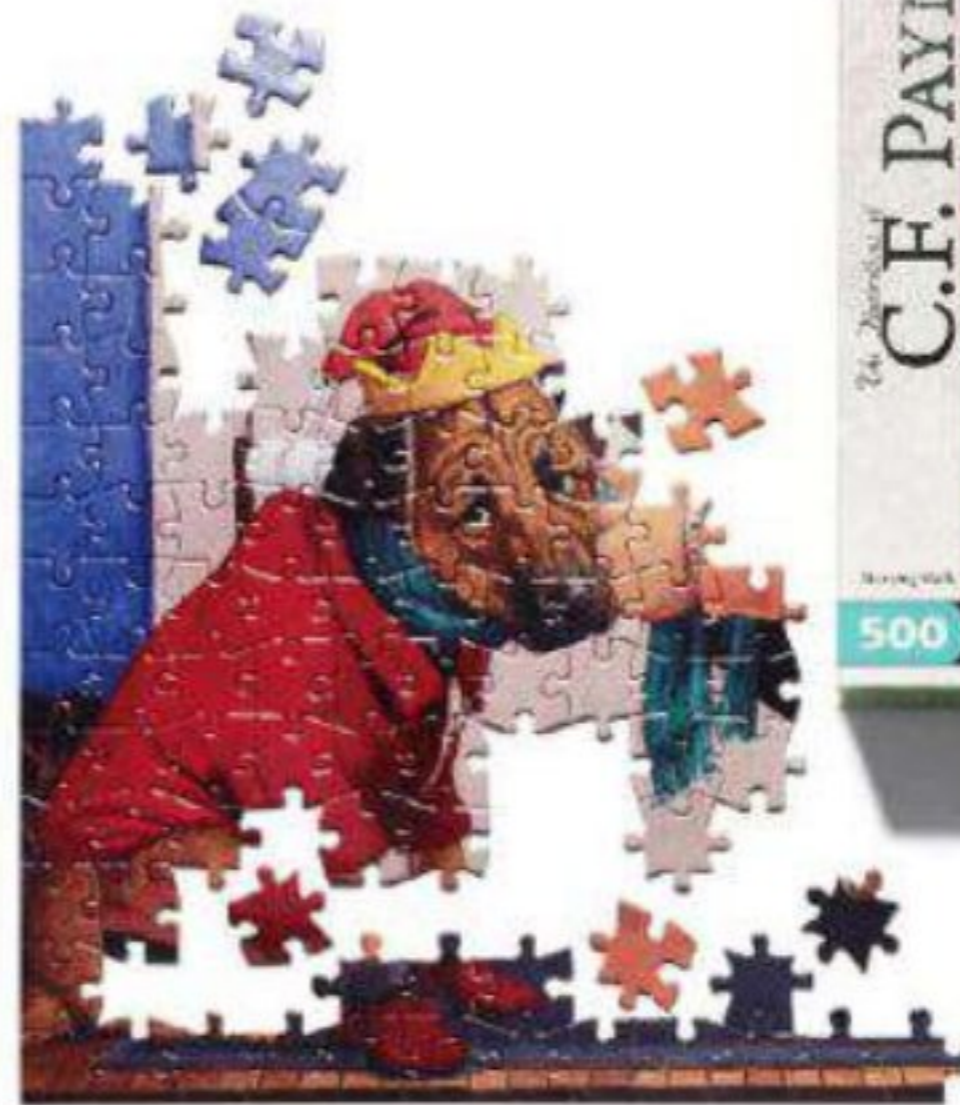
# Well-Played

**\*C. F. PAYNE PUZZLES** The artist who did the back cover of *Reader's Digest* for more than four years goes jigsaw and cuts things up into 500 pieces. (\$10.98 each, amazon.com)

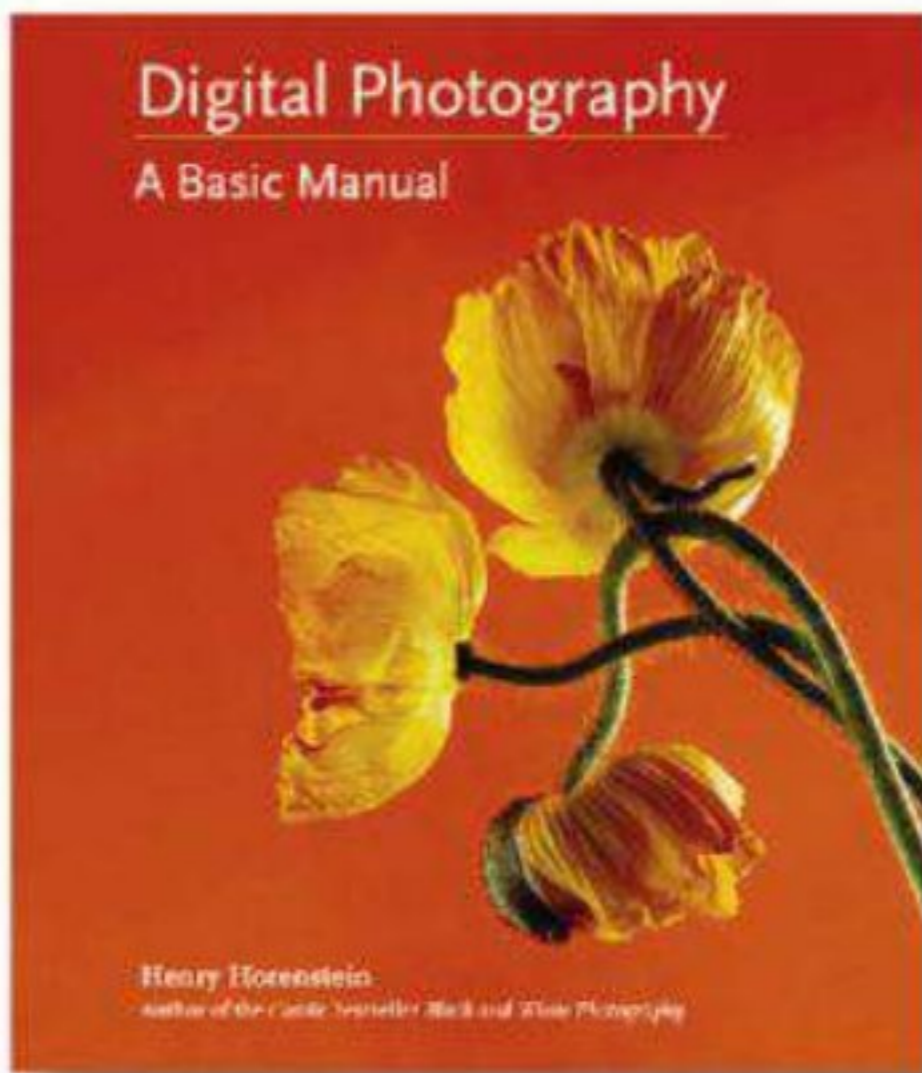
**\*ROCK AND ROLL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM BOARD GAME** It's Trivial Pursuit for the fans of head-banging *and* ballad-crooning, hard metal *and* soft rock. Answer correctly and you move out of your garage and toward stardom. (\$32.89, amazon.com)

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**CREATIVE WHACK PACK** You get 30 magnetic pyramid pieces in a ball (a rhombic triacontahedron, to be specific). Disassemble; reassemble; get creative. (\$17.47, walmart.com)



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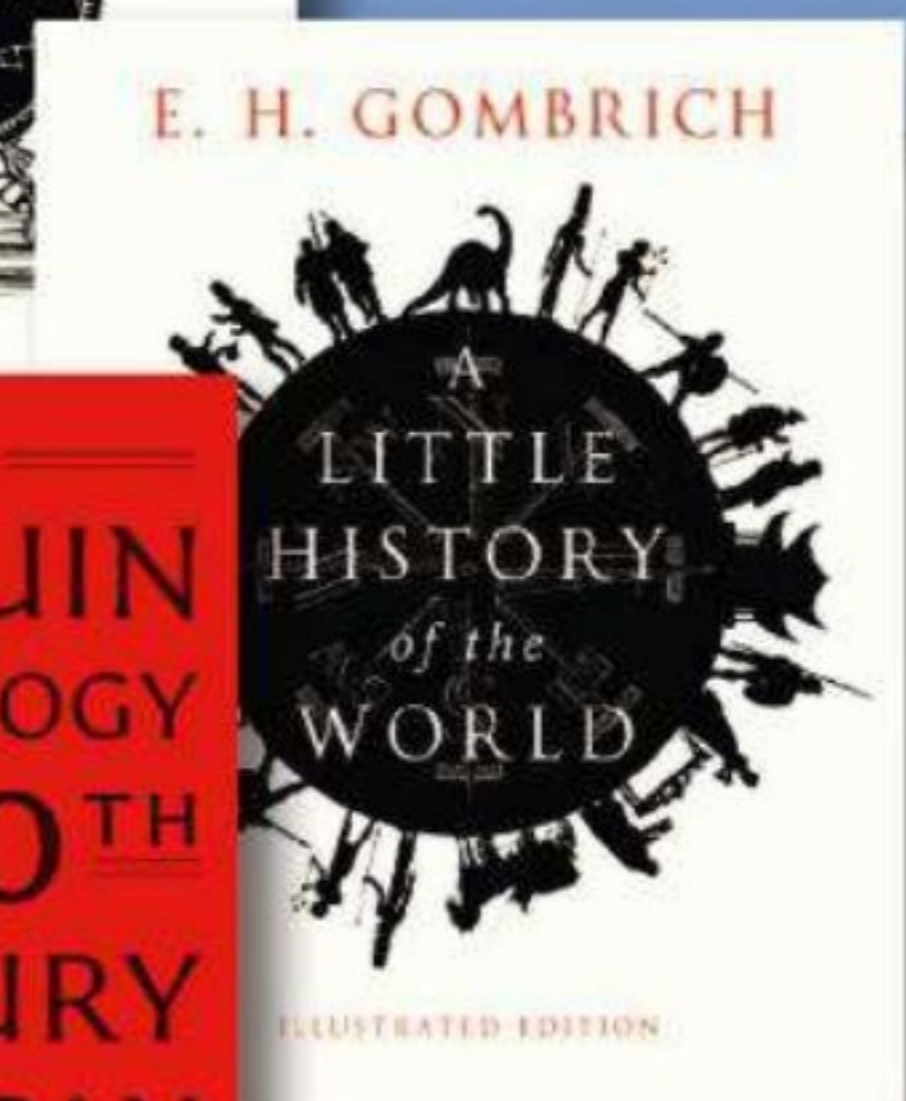
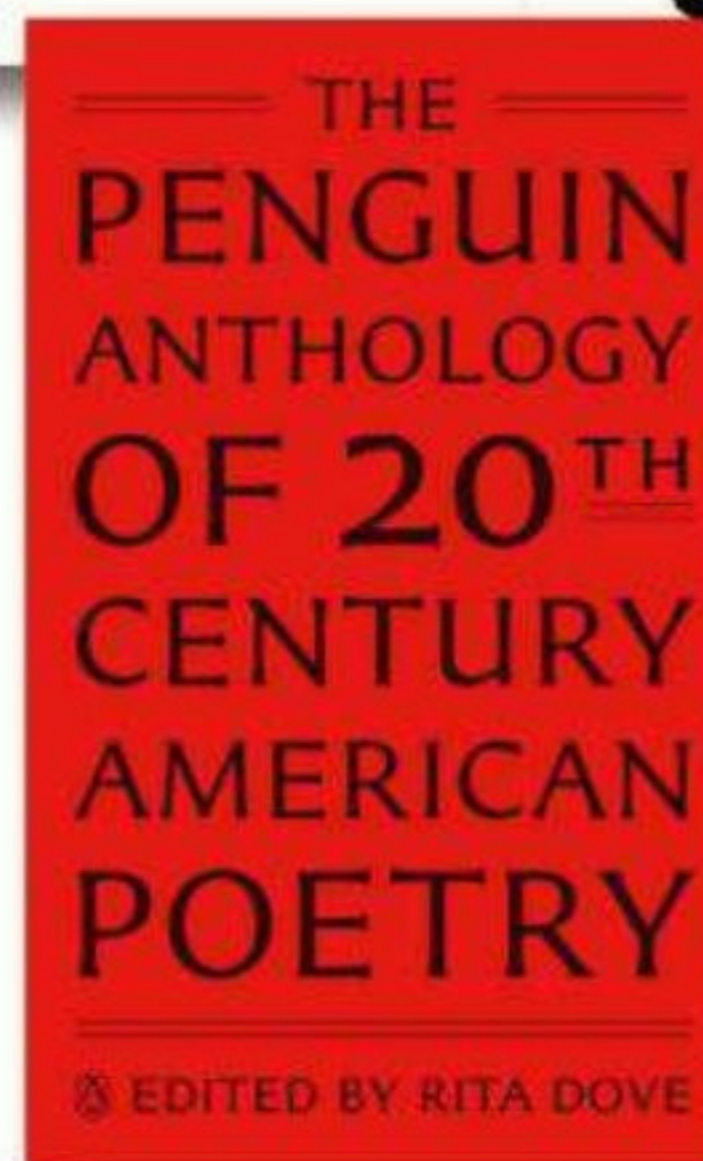
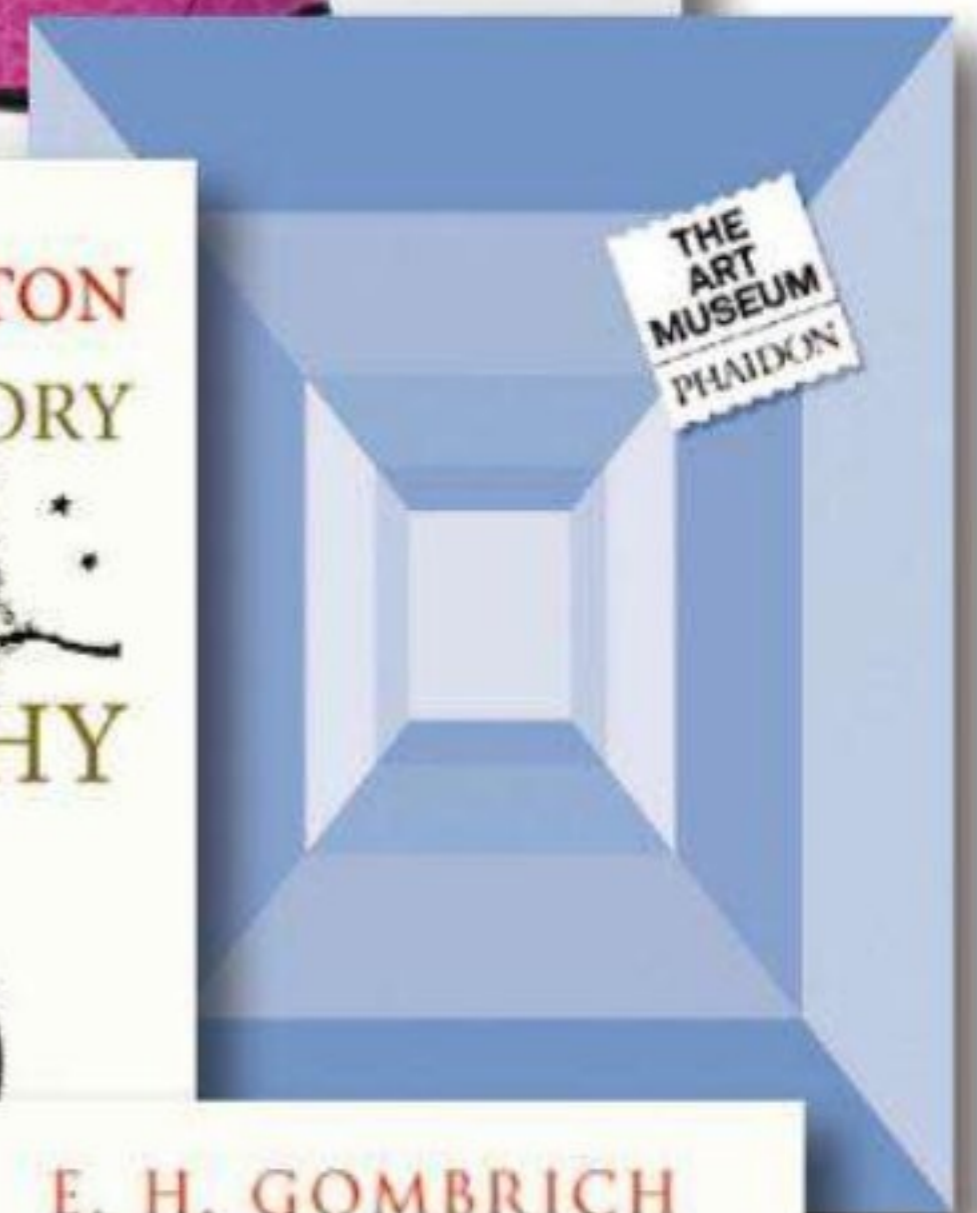
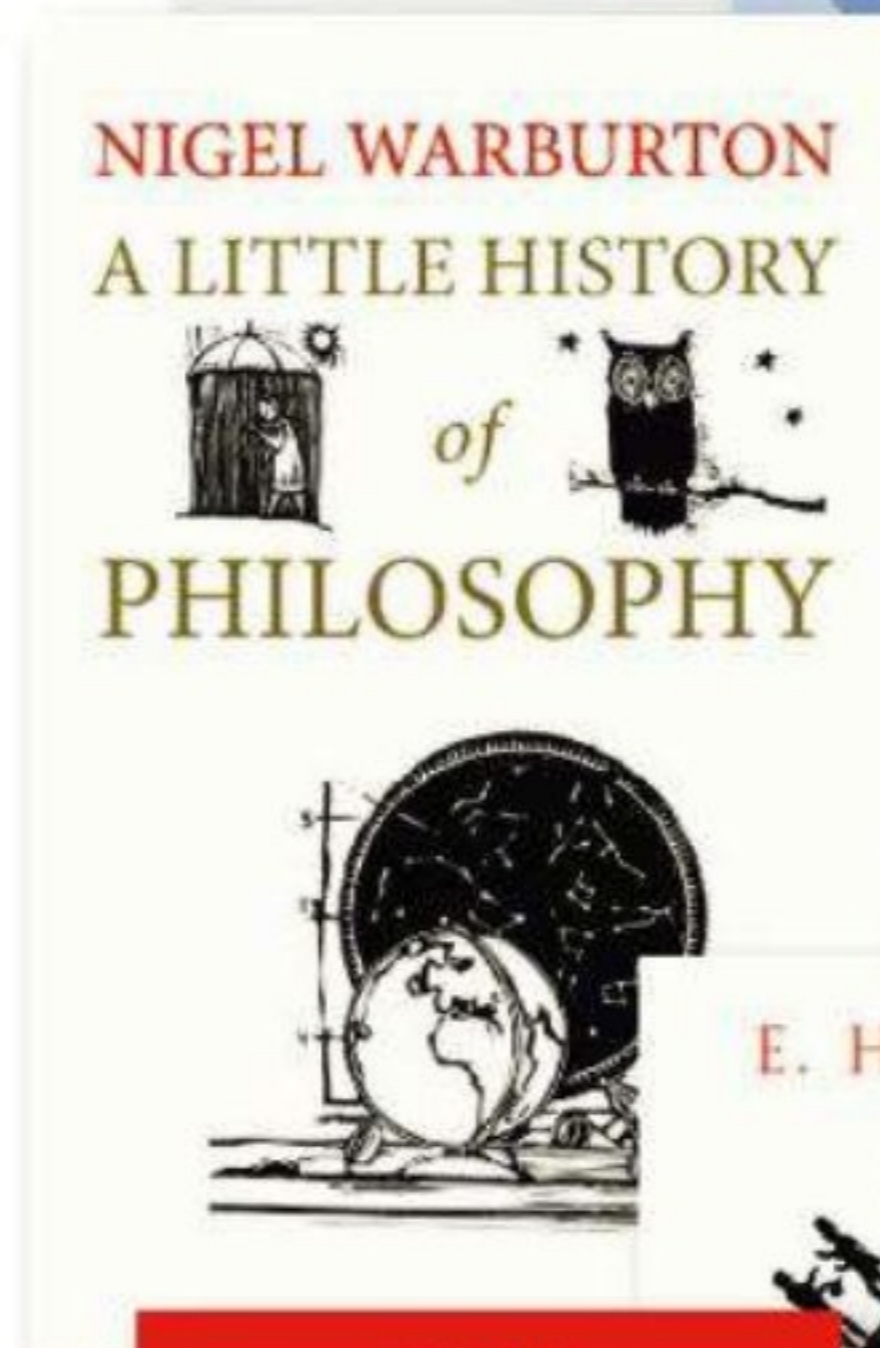
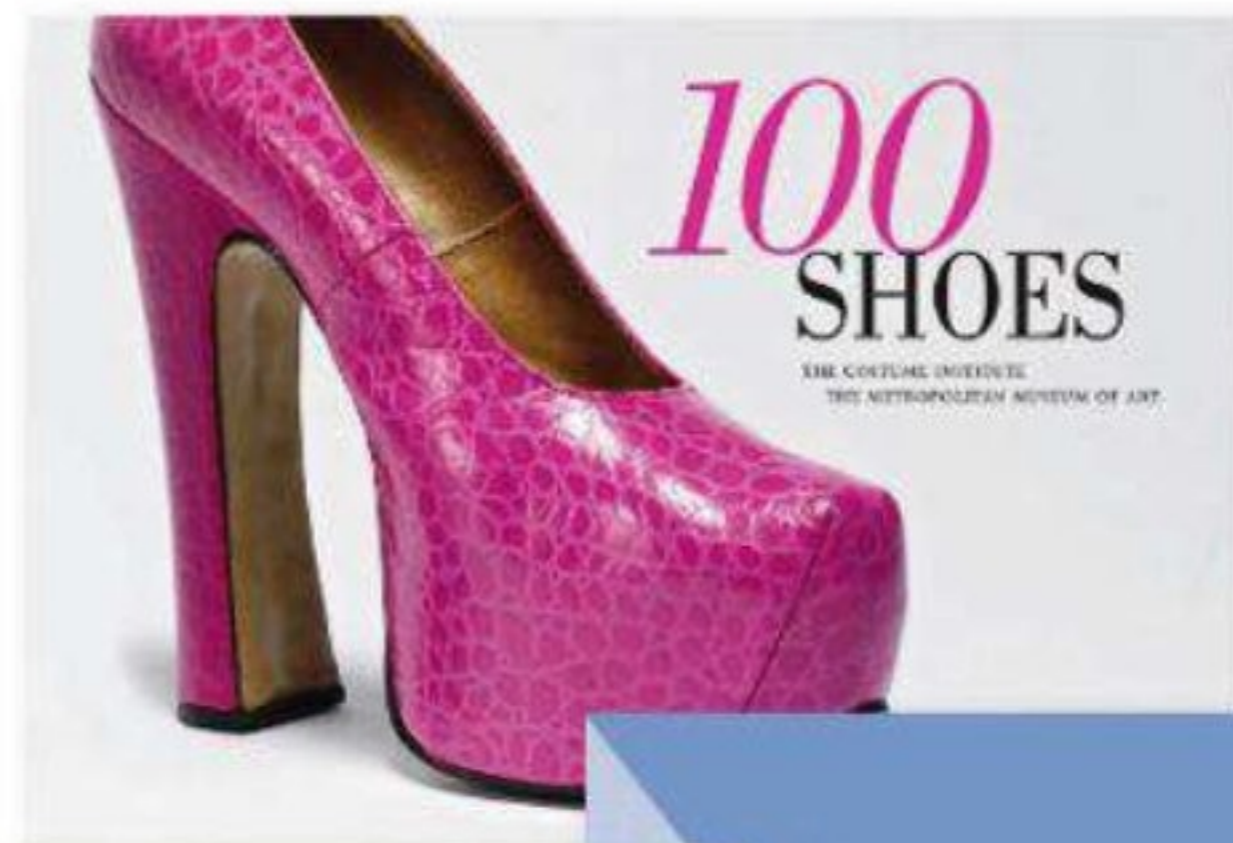
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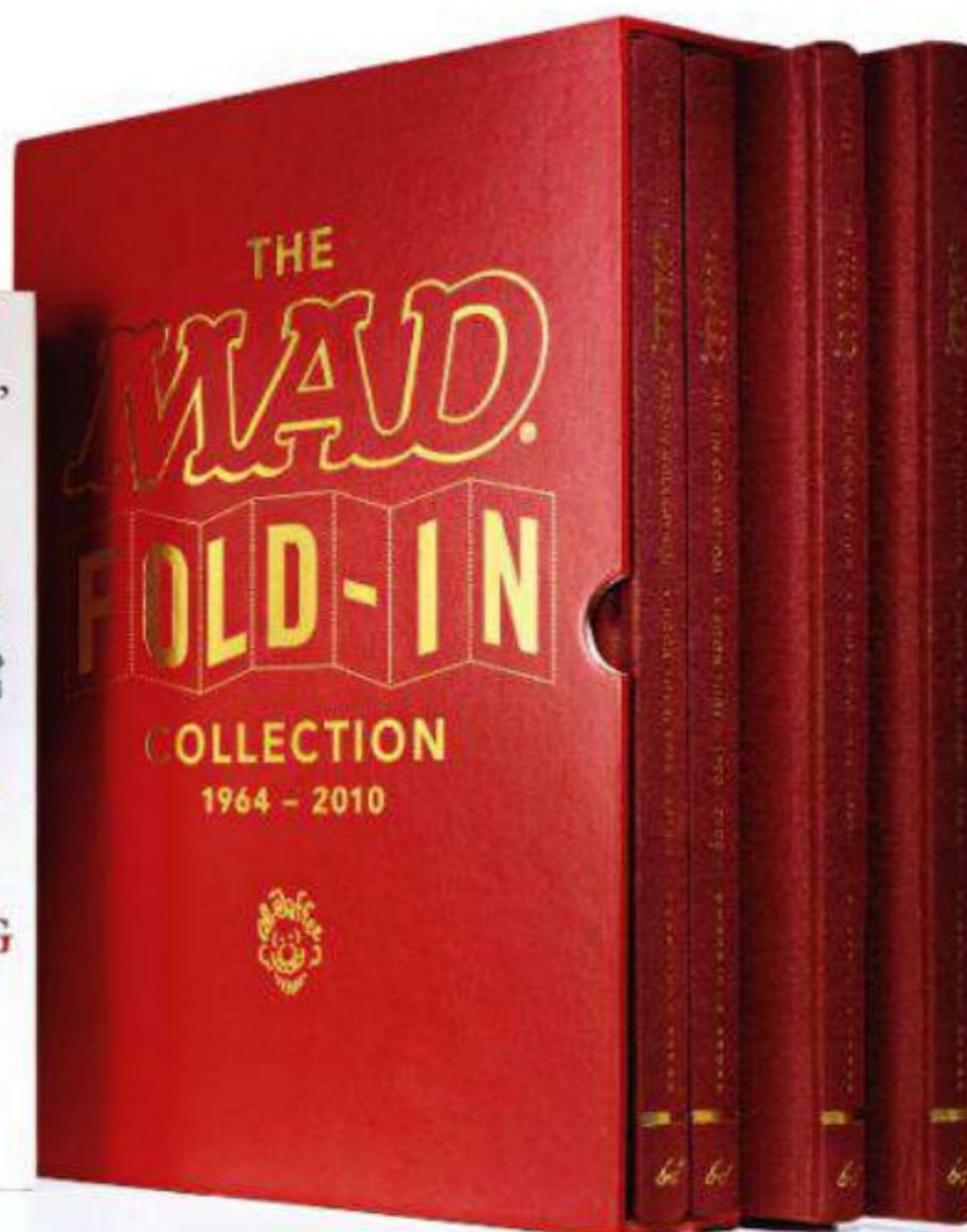
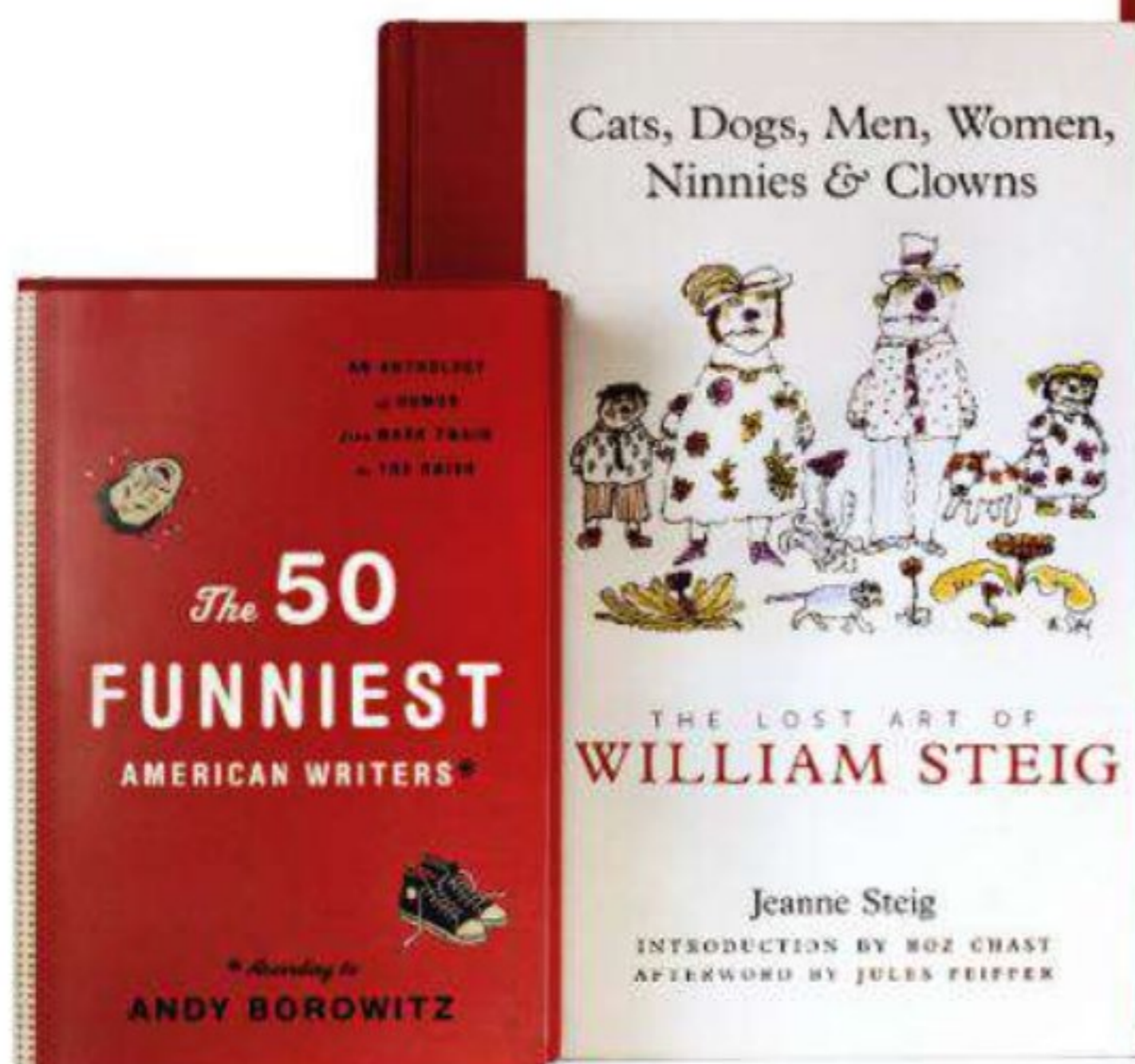
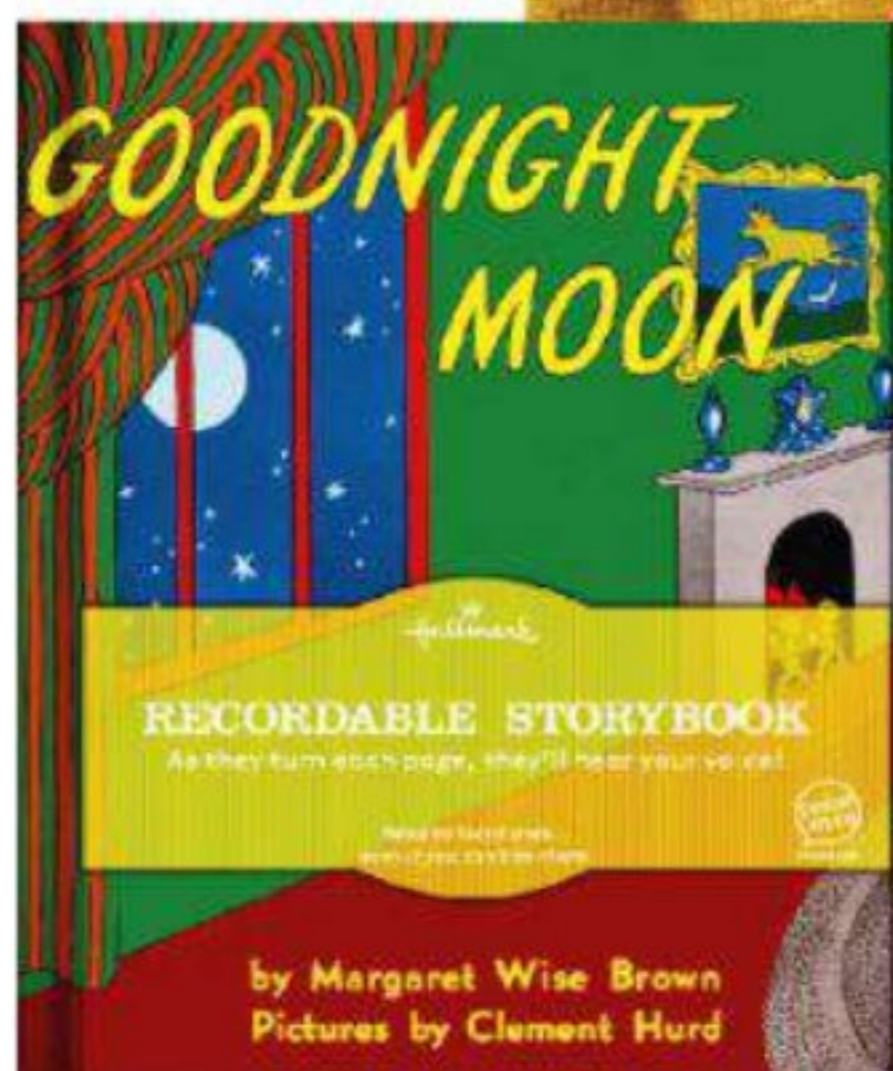
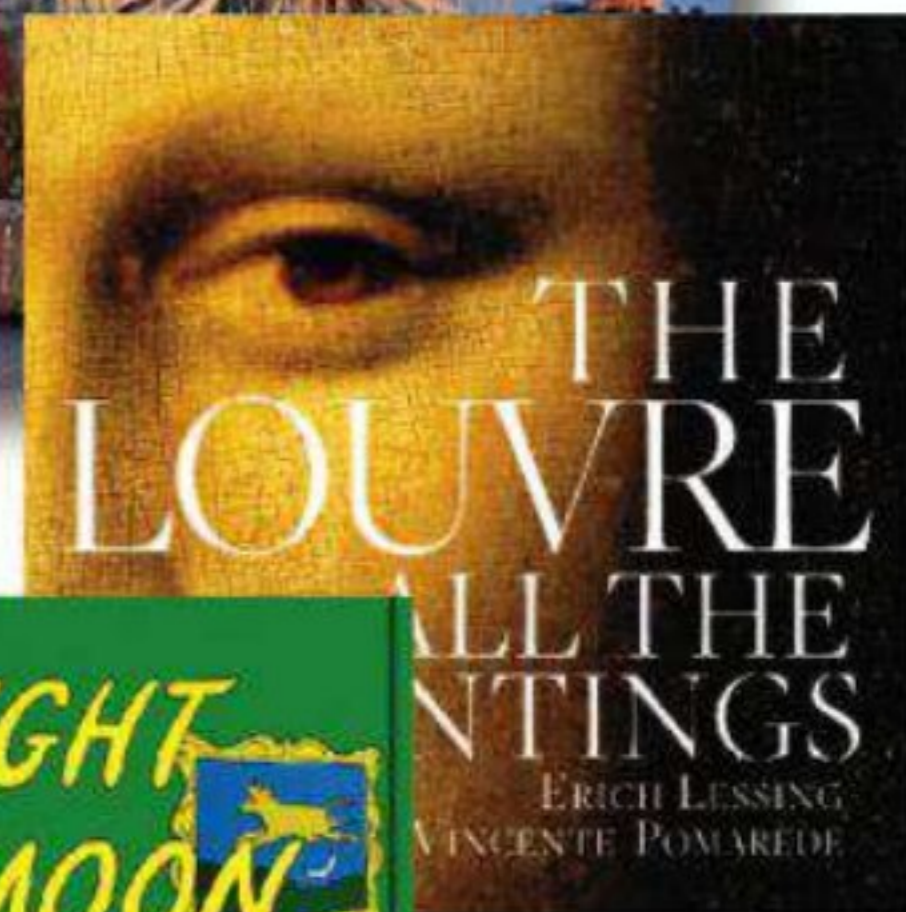
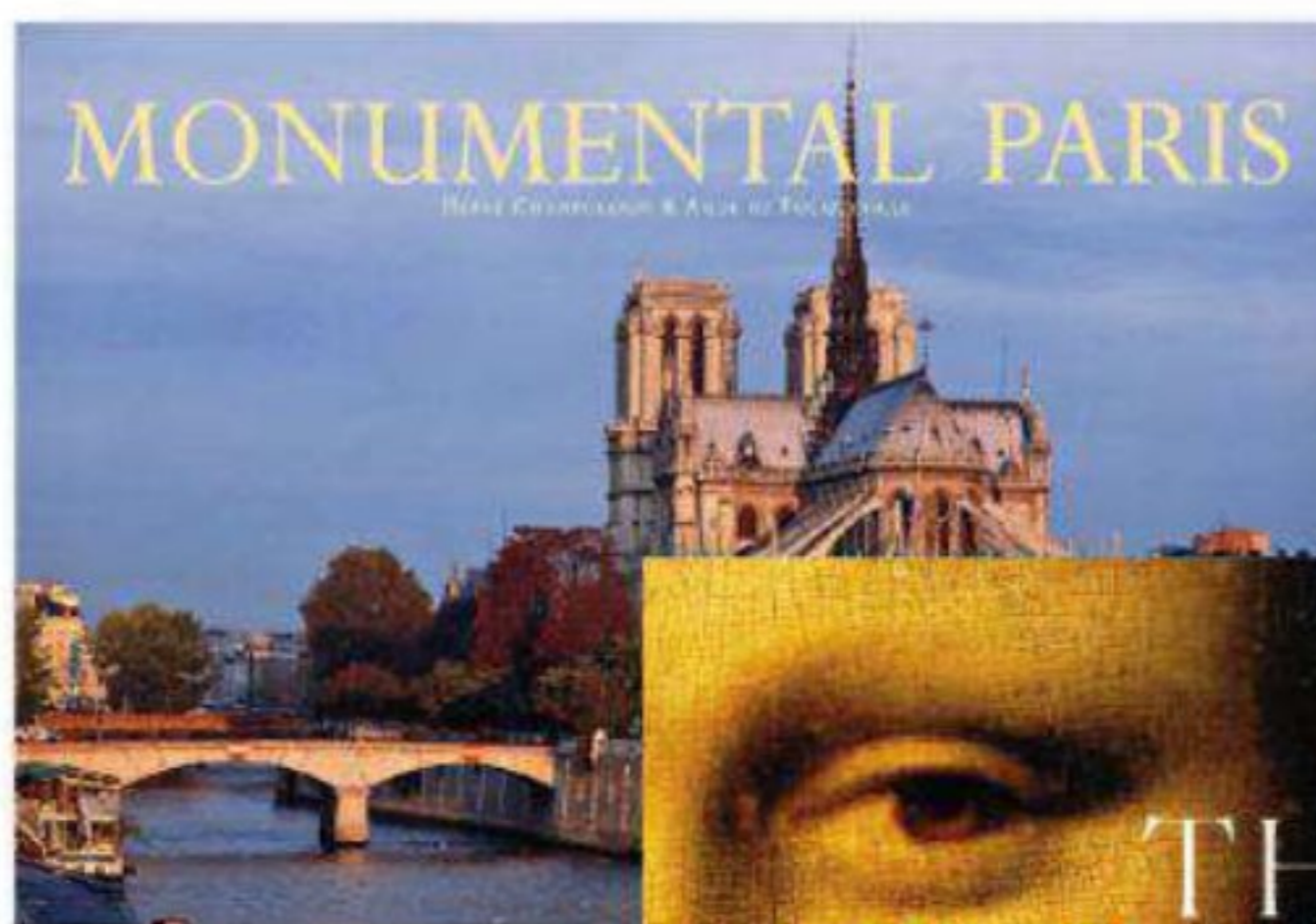
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**Produced by** Lauren Gniazdowski, Emilie Harjes, Elizabeth Kelly, and Natalie van der Meer







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# The Year In Happy Endings

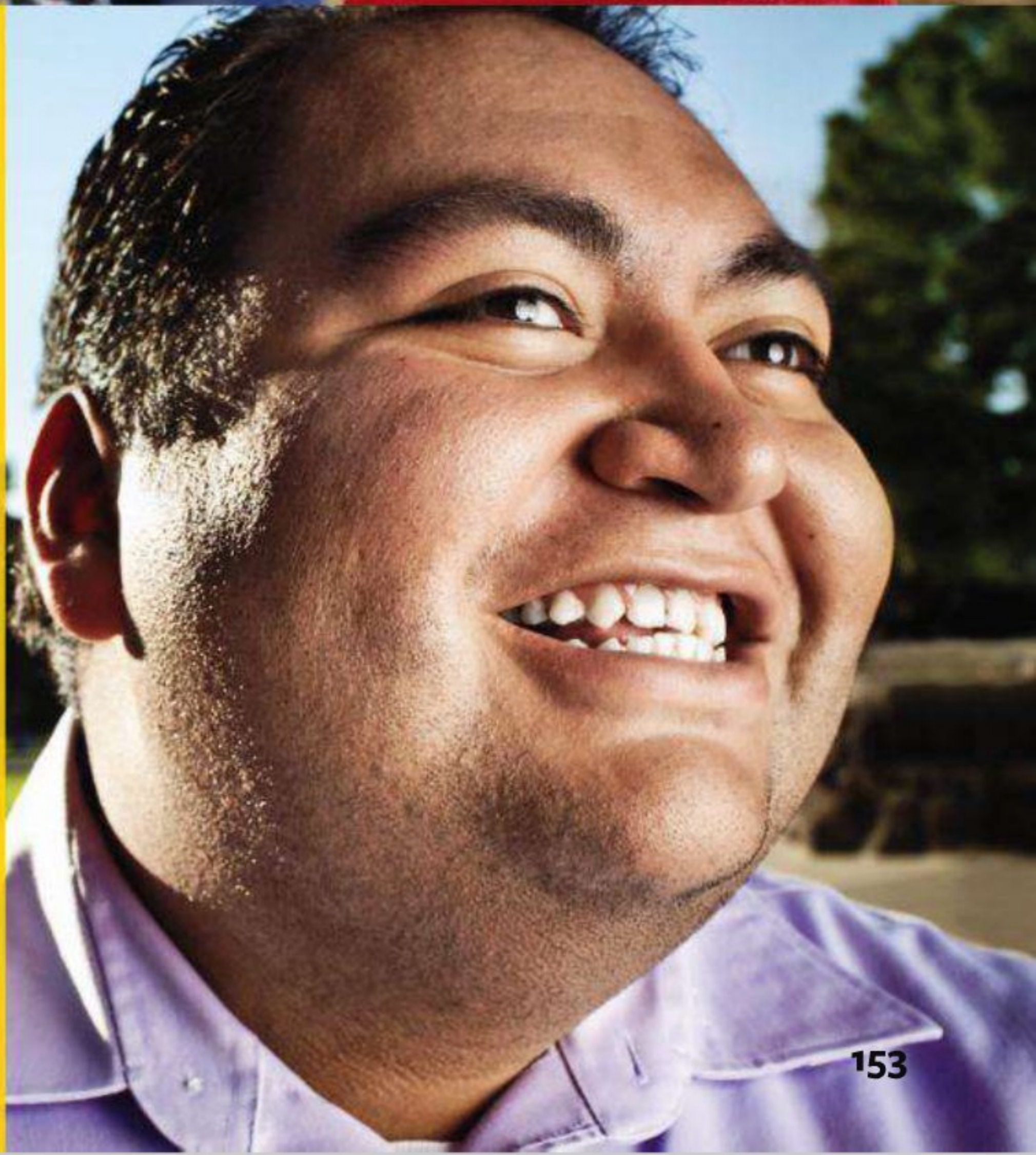




**Five  
stories of  
amazing  
resilience  
and  
miraculous  
recoveries**

PHOTOGRAPHED BY  
TAMARA REYNOLDS

readersdigest.com 12/11-1/12



**Danielle and Reginald Eppes with their sons, Joel, R.J. (center), and James-Peter in front of their new home.**



# Taken by the Wind—and Back to Earth

BY ANDREA COOPER

**T**hunder was drumming in the distance when Reginald Eppes woke up at five in the morning on April 27. He checked the weather forecast on his phone. A cluster of storms was coming, but it sounded like his small town, Coaling, near Tuscaloosa, Alabama, wouldn't be hit too hard. But Eppes, a seasoned firefighter, knew better than to underestimate the power of these huge electrical storms.

“Know where the flashlights are?” he asked his wife, Danielle. By the time he located them, thunder was booming all around them. The in-

stant he switched the flashlight on, the house lights went off. A second later, the kitchen windows blew out.

Eppes and Danielle ran to protect their boys—R.J., eight, James-Peter, six, and Joel, four—still sleeping in their bedroom.

“Get up, get up, R.J.!” Eppes shouted, waving his flashlight. The sleepy boy roused himself and teetered on the edge of the upper bunk of his bed. Eppes held out his arms and called to his son to jump. He was too late.

The roof tore away; the walls of the bedroom dissolved around them. R.J. was sucked up into a roaring swirl of debris.

I’ve lost him, Eppes thought. In desperation, he threw himself over James-Peter, lying on the lower bunk, to shield him. Glass, wood, and plaster hit them like shrapnel. Eppes heard his wife praying. Then something huge, heavy—he thinks the washing machine—slammed into him. He wound his arms tightly around James-Peter, still grasping the flashlight in one hand.

After an agonizingly long period (Eppes guesses it was anywhere between two and five minutes but says it felt like forever), the wind began to die down. Eppes found himself standing in the ruins of his home. Darkness lay all about him. Then he thought he saw a shape moving over the rubble straight toward him.

It was R.J., guided home by the beam of his father’s flashlight.

At the hospital later, R.J. described what had happened to him. “I floated out when the wall started moving. I think I was above the trees. I was scared. My mom and dad were gone. Pieces of glass went across my back, and something hit my neck really hard.”

R.J. had been snatched up into the funnel of a fierce tornado that had just

**“I floated out when the wall started moving,” said R.J. “I think I was above the trees.”**

as capriciously set him back gently on the ground. Amazingly, R.J. sustained only bumps and gashes. Of all his family, Eppes was hurt most severely. The heavy object that crashed into him as he shielded James-Peter fractured his ribs and deflated his lungs. But he and his family were alive.

Others in the Tuscaloosa area were not so lucky. The F4-force tornado, with winds up to 190 mph, killed 65 people and injured more than 1,000. Reginald and Danielle Eppes are convinced that R.J. survived his ride in the maelstrom only by some miracle. As they build a new house with a storm shelter, they are looking forward to the sweetest Christmas ever. “I really believe,” Eppes says, “that God was watching over us.”

# Snow Angel

BY NATALIE  
VAN DER MEER

**J**ason Zenk heard his dog Penny barking outside. It was a bitter cold night, Super Bowl Sunday, February 6. The game was at half-time, and the 13-year-old thought he had better see what was bothering Penny. He went into the garage with some food scraps to quiet her down. Then he heard sobbing. Jason ran back inside to get his father, Patrick, who entered the garage and flicked on the lights. Standing in the middle of the garage was a little girl in pink leggings, crying and soaked from the snow. "Please," she said. "Please come help. I think my mom is dead. My brother is in the truck."

After a dinner of pizza casserole at her mother's house in Alton, Iowa, Jamie Carrion, 26, had bundled her sleepy kids, Averie, four, and Abel, 21 months, into a pickup truck and headed home. It was 7 p.m., dark and freezing outside. Snow covered the landscape. Carrion, then three months pregnant, set the cruise control to 50 mph and pointed the truck down Highway 10. Few cars were on the road. Suddenly, the truck began to slide. It careened into a ditch

and rolled two or three times before coming to a stop, tilted into a snow bank on its passenger side. Carrion blacked out.

"When I came to, I could hear Abel crying. It was pitch black, and I couldn't see anything," Carrion recalls. Frantically, she called to her children, feeling around in the dark for them. Finally, she managed to push the heavy driver's door open enough so that the cab lights turned on. In the dim glow she saw Abel in his car seat. His nose was bloody, but he was not otherwise hurt.

Averie was nowhere in sight.

Carrion called Averie again and again. But there was only silence. In a panic, she found her cell phone and punched 9-1-1.

Averie had been conscious when the truck stopped rolling. The little girl called her mother, but she didn't answer. Realizing the urgency of the situation, Averie wriggled through the broken passenger's window and then tunneled out through a snowdrift.

It was terribly cold outside. What should she do? Looking all around, Averie spotted a lighted lamppost. Where there was light, there might be people—so she set off in that direction. First she had to climb over a fence; then she tramped a quarter of a mile through the snow. Soon her leggings were soaked to her skin. A house came into view, and a dog trotted out to meet her. She stumbled out of the snow and into the open garage, and the dog started barking. Then a boy came out to help her, and she began to cry.

**Averie, with mother Jamie, brother Abel, and sister Aracelie.**



The Zenks took Averie inside their home and gave her dry clothes. Jason's father, Patrick, jumped into his car and went to search for the accident. He didn't have far to go. Up ahead he saw the flashing lights of police cars and ambulances. EMTs were tending to Jamie and Abel. Cops told Patrick they were searching for a missing child. "I think I have who you're looking for," Patrick told them.

By mere coincidence, it was the first time in many years that the Zenks had stayed home for the Super Bowl. "She had a guardian angel over

**"Averie is very grown-up for her age," says Carrion. "She's so smart, so brave."**

her that night," Jason's mother, Jean, says of Averie. Besides a few bumps and bruises, Averie and Abel were OK. Carrion knows she was given a remarkable reprieve that night from an accident that could have been so much worse. One thing she is sure of: her daughter's courage and character. "Averie is very grown-up for her age," she says. "The way she walked all that way to help us ... She's so smart, so brave."



# To Serve and Protect

GARY SLEDGE

**Hernandez says the real heroes are the doctors, paramedics, and public servants.**

**D**aniel Hernandez always knew he wanted to help people. Before he'd even graduated high school, he trained to be a certified nursing assistant and volunteered at a nursing home. A big kid with a gentle, efficient manner, he learned to use needles to draw blood, to lift patients in his strong arms, and to respond swiftly and calmly to emergencies.

He never quite got around to taking the exam to become fully certified, though, because by then he'd decided he wanted to work in public service. He felt inspired by the good that responsible lawmakers can do, so in his junior year at the University of Arizona, he declared a major in politi-

cal science and began volunteering in political campaigns. One of his heroes was his local congresswoman, Gabrielle Giffords. He'd met Giffords while he was working on Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign and thought Giffords was not just a trailblazer but "the kindest, warmest human being you will ever meet in your entire life."

He was elated when he was picked for an internship with her, and he gladly gave up a part-time sales job for the chance to work on her team. So eager was he that he started work four days early. On Saturday morning, January 8, he arrived at La Toscana Village mall north of Tucson and began setting up tables in front of a



Safeway store where 30 or so people were gathering to meet Giffords. It was Hernandez's job to sign people in and guide them into a queue so each could get a photo taken with the congresswoman between an American and an Arizona State flag.

At 10:10 a.m., Hernandez heard loud popping sounds. "Gun!" someone yelled. He heard people screaming, saw them falling to the ground. Hernandez was standing 30 feet away from Giffords when she collapsed. In seconds, he was at her side. "When I heard gunfire, I figured there was danger to the congresswoman," he recalls. "I started toward her."

Everywhere around him was chaos, but Hernandez willed himself to remain calm. "I tried to tune everything out and keep an intense focus. I didn't want to let my emotions become part of the problem."

Giffords was lying on the sidewalk; blood was streaming down her face from a bullet wound to her head. Gently, Hernandez lifted her into a sitting position against his shoulder so she wouldn't choke on her blood. Then, with his bare hand, he applied pressure to the wound on her forehead to staunch the flow of blood. She was conscious; he calmed her and told her all would be well.

Minutes later, ambulances and paramedics arrived on the scene. Still Hernandez stayed with Giffords, holding her hand and talking.

"I just made sure she knew she wasn't alone," he says. "When I told her I'd contact [her husband] Mark, she squeezed my hand hard."

Nineteen people fell victim to a deranged man with a deadly weapon that day. Six died. Giffords, though gravely wounded, survived—in no small part because of Hernandez's quick and selfless actions. Says surgeon Peter Rhee, chief of trauma at University Medical Center in Tucson, where Giffords was taken, Hernandez "was quick to act—he did a heroic thing."

Hernandez never talks about those horrible minutes in a Tucson parking lot without mentioning the people he sees as the real miracle workers: the paramedics and doctors and the

**Someone yelled, "Gun!" and in seconds, Hernandez was at Gabrielle Giffords's side.**

public servants who spend their lives helping others—and sometimes give their lives that way. He doesn't see himself as a hero. The people of Tucson and the nation beg to differ. They're grateful Daniel Hernandez felt driven to be of service—felt called so strongly, in fact, that he was there at that fateful moment, four days earlier than he was supposed to be. He puts it simply. "Sometimes," he says, "I wonder if there was a reason for me to be there."

# Hugged Back to Life

BY HELEN SIGNY

Ogg with twins Jamie and Emily, now nine months old and in fine health.

**K**ate Ogg, 29, was anxious as she waited in her Brisbane obstetrician's office. Her twins, conceived via in vitro fertilization, weren't due for another 14 weeks, but she'd been feeling painful contractions. After a hurried exam, her obstetrician gave her the news: She had to go to the hospital immediately.

Ogg lay quietly in a hospital bed in hopes of stopping her labor. It didn't work: After a week, her contractions started to intensify again. There was no holding these babies back, the doctors told her. Accompanied by her husband, David, she was wheeled into the delivery room, where a team of 14 doctors, nurses, midwives, and neonatologists waited for her—



along with two resuscitation carts.

As her first baby, a little boy, was born, Ogg caught a glimpse of a floppy, white body. Was that what a preemie should look like? She had no idea. As the team rushed to insert a tube into his lungs, Ogg delivered her second baby, whom they would name Emily. The little girl let out a cry, and for the first time, Ogg realized something might be wrong with the silent boy they'd planned to call Jamie.

The staff worked frantically on Jamie, but he never drew a breath. Finally, one of the doctors turned to Ogg. "We've lost him."

As they handed Kate her baby, she noticed him gasp as if trying to breathe. "It's just a brain stem reflex," the doctor told her before leaving the couple to mourn in private. Kate gently unwrapped the blanket that surrounded Jamie and placed his fragile body on the warm skin of her chest. She wanted to get to know him. His future had been snatched from her, and she ached to get him back. For a while, she sobbed. Suddenly, Ogg thought she felt Jamie startle. She looked down and saw his chest move.

"I think he might actually make it," she said excitedly to David. Again they were told it was a reflex. Then the newborn opened his eyes and seemed to grab for his father's finger. David hurried to find a doctor, who explained that they weren't seeing what they thought they were. "But

look!" said Ogg, who had moistened her finger with colostrum from her breast. "He's licking my finger."

Quickly, the doctor listened to the baby's chest. By now, Jamie's lungs were inflated, he was breathing unaided, and he had regained full color. The medical team rushed Jamie to intensive care.

Ogg had stumbled onto a practice encouraged in many maternity hospitals around the world. Placing

**It's thought that the mother's chest provides the closest approximation to the environment of the womb.**

newborn babies on their mother's skin, especially if they are premature, is called kangaroo mother care. Just like a kangaroo pouch provides a nurturing environment for a just-born joey, it's thought that a mother's chest provides the closest approximation to the environment of the womb. It helps babies' chance of survival.

Emily and Jamie remained in intensive care for weeks. "Whenever we held the twins, they were happy," Ogg says. "They would stop frowning."

After their dramatic beginnings, the twins recovered quickly. And, in a life of miracles, the Oggs are expecting another: After many years of failing to conceive naturally, Ogg found out she is expecting her third child. She can't wait for the first cuddle.

# Swept Away

LAM LYE CHING

On the third day of floating miles off the coast of Japan, Shinkawa (center) was rescued.



**J**ust before 3 p.m., the earth rumbled under 60-year-old Hiromitsu Shinkawa's feet, and everything around him lurched—the effects of the 9.0-magnitude earthquake that devastated Japan last March 11. From the lumberyard where he worked, Shinkawa sped home to his wife, Yuko, also 60, in the town of Minamisoma on the northeastern coast. Expecting the tsunami, the couple fled their house, only to return to retrieve some belongings—a fateful and fatal mistake.

“I ran away ...,” Shinkawa told *Jiji Press*, “but I turned back to get something at home and was washed away.”

The waves that hit Minamisoma reached as high as 61 feet that day and moved swiftly through the town, tearing down the walls of houses and swallowing Shinkawa and his

wife along with thousands of others.

At one point, Shinkawa managed to lift his head from the swirling, suffocating water and spied a piece of roof—his roof, corrugated metal nailed to wood beams. He pulled himself toward it, hoisted himself up, and rode out to sea.

For two days, Shinkawa stayed afloat on his makeshift raft, bobbing almost ten miles off the coast in the Pacific Ocean. From the wreckage, he was able to scoop up a white helmet, which protected his head from debris still being tossed around by the waves. He covered himself with a light mattress and a blanket that he found in the water. “No helicopters or boats that came nearby noticed me,” Shinkawa later told authorities.

On the third day, at around 11 a.m., an officer on a Japan Maritime



Self-Defense Force vessel spotted Shinkawa through binoculars about nine miles away, waving a piece of red cloth. The boat turned on its searchlight, and within 17 minutes, the crew had lowered a lifeboat into the water to save Shinkawa.

“I thought that today would be my last day,” he told his rescuers.

It was incredible, they said, that he was alive and able to walk. Still, when Shinkawa was given a sports drink in the boat, “he drank it in one gulp and broke down in tears,” a rescuer said.

“There were so many things floating around at sea, it is a miracle that we found him,” another rescuer said.

Shinkawa, mourning his lost wife, was airlifted to a hospital. Soon after,

he moved to a suburb outside Tokyo to be near his daughter and grandson.

Once, last June, he visited his parents, who had returned to the devastated village and moved into temporary housing. His house was a

**“I was too scared to look at the ocean,” Shinkawa said on a return visit home. “I looked at the mountain.”**

pile of rubble. “I was too scared to look at the ocean,” he told GQ magazine. “I looked at the mountain.”

Later, in remembrance of Yuko, he wrote a poem: “Missing:/How many days later/Will you appear in my dream/My beloved/Wife?” ■

# Where **ARE** Our Manners?

**WE HAVE LOTS OF  
REASONS FOR BEING RUDE—  
BUT NO EXCUSES.  
HOW CAN WE BE NICER?**

BY RORY EVANS

ILLUSTRATED BY ZOHAR LAZAR

DEPARTURES

ATES

GATE

1-2





**I**f the world is going to hell in a handbasket, it's entirely possible that the globe is steering that handbasket with its knee, only occasionally glancing at the road and blithely thumb-typing a text message to the moon. And it's this self-absorbed approach that we see everywhere, from the line for the ATM to flaming commentary on blog posts to the showcased short tempers (and overturned tables) on *The Real Housewives of Fill-in-the-Blank*. All of which lends proof to the hypothesis that people have never been ruder.

**Of course, 300 years ago,** on some muddy Colonial street somewhere, a mobcapped woman twisting a butter churn likely witnessed a youngster forget to use the word *prithiee* and

clucked her tongue and thought the same thing. "I'm not sure if people are more rude today than they were 50 or 100 or 200 years ago, but there's no question modern-day rudeness has a unique cast to it," says *Boston Globe Magazine* etiquette columnist Robin Abrahams, author of *Miss Conduct's Mind Over Manners*. Indeed, with all the technological devices, reality television, and cable-TV punditry, it's a wonder everyone doesn't wake up each morning and greet the chirping birds with an entirely different kind of bird. Here, a survey of some of the factors that have made us so foul.

#### **FAST BROADBAND, SLOW PEOPLE**

You can, by now, do almost everything over the Internet or, even better, on your cell phone. Need to figure out if your baby's cries mean she's hungry or just upset? There's an app for that.



# “You have to remember that the girl behind the rent-a-car desk **ISN'T NAMED GOOGLE.**”

Need to pay a month's worth of bills? A few clicks and 30 seconds, and you're all set. Need a boarding pass? Click and print. Which is why “dealing with an actual human can feel like an evolutionary step backward,” says Henry Alford, author of the forthcoming *Would It Kill You to Stop Doing That? A Modern Guide to Manners*. “It feels very hand crank.” And that, in turn, winches up our impatience because humans don't work at 4G speeds. Or, as Alford puts it, “you have to remember that the girl behind the rent-a-car desk isn't named Google.” And remember, the person working the desk asking you to fill forms out in triplicate is almost never the person who set the Byzantine requirement in place. “Don't get angry at that person,” says Lesley Carlin, an etiquette expert for tripadvisor.com. “Save it for a polite, strongly worded letter to the company.”

## **WE'RE ALL ... UM ... WAIT ONE SEC ... DISTRACTED**

As is well known to anyone waiting in line at a coffee shop behind someone who's paying more attention to his BlackBerry than to the barista, tech devices themselves also lead to a newfangled rudeness. “Cell phones are not polite or rude devices. They're just devices,” says Anna Post, great-great-granddaughter of Emily Post and coauthor of the new, 18th edition

of *Emily Post's Etiquette*. “It's how we choose to use them that is polite or rude.” According to a recent Intel survey, 75 percent of American adults believe mobile manners are getting worse, with people witnessing an average of five mobile offenses (texting while driving, talking loudly on a cell phone) every day. Yet one in five people says he knows that he has poor mobile behavior but everyone is doing it. Clearly, a good part of the problem is that bad behavior is easier to spot in someone else than in ourselves. As Post points out, being distracted makes you less attuned to the needs of others, and to the naked, third-party eye, distraction looks like rudeness. “We can have mobile devices with us all the time, and as a result ... we have them with us all the time,” she says. We've programmed ourselves to think that every new message chime brings life-changing news, so checking inboxes takes precedence over talking to the people we're with. For that, she offers a simple rule: “Human-to-human contact trumps the device every time.”

## **WE'RE USED TO ANONYMITY**

“Remember Halloween as a kid, when you put on a mask? When you were free from all repercussion? *Of course* you were going to tell the neighbor that her dachshund looked like a naked mole rat,” Alford says. And isn't a



screen name or a hermetically sealed sedan today's (unfriendly) version of that Casper the Friendly Ghost mask? "The Internet is really our version of the Wild West," says syndicated advice columnist Amy Alkon, author of *I See Rude People: One Woman's Battle to Beat Some Manners into Impolite Society*. "That's why you should adopt your own personal policy of civility, not 'What can I do?' but 'What should I do?'" To that end, she recommends posting comments under your real name—or with the idea that you are, anyhow. As for quelling road rage, she suggests imagining that the person who tempts you to flip the bird is the person who is about to interview you for a job. "You're human—I'm not saying you can't react," she says. "You just can't act like it's World War III." Still, she recommends striving for the behavior she sees in one of her friends,

who, "when someone does something rude to her, she doesn't give the rude back," Alkon says. "Instead, she takes a deep breath and does something nice for someone. She spreads the nice, and that makes her feel better. Because really, anger can be poisoning."

#### **IT'S WHAT WE SEE ON REALITY TV**

"Reality shows are a great example of how not to act," Carlin says. To wit, there is a show on Oxygen now in its seventh season, called *Bad Girls Club*, and it casts together seven young women who recognize that their habitually outrageous behavior has hindered them personally and professionally. Until, that is, they become famous for foul mouths and fouler behavior. Consequently, it's hard to watch these churls cashing in on their notoriety and not think they might be doing something right. Real House-

wife of New Jersey Teresa Giudice, she of the overturned tables, has had not one but two cookbooks published. As Alford sees it, reality TV is “semi-engineered psychodrama in which untrained actors exchange their dignity for cash. If you’re young and impressionable, it’s entirely possible that you’d think having orange skin or a frequently repeated trademark expression is something to be emulated.”

**Of course, money isn’t everything** (and, in fact, Giudice and her husband, Joe, are millions in debt). And Anna Post insists we recognize that we wield the remote: “It’s not Snooki who sneaked something out of the budget when she got a higher appearance fee from Rutgers University than [Nobel Prize-winning author] Toni Morrison did,” she says. “The term *society* might sound nice and anonymous, but it’s each and every one of us, and

we’re opting in whenever we decide to watch as little as ten minutes of shows like *Jersey Shore*.”

### **IT’S WHAT WE SEE IN POLITICS**

In the past year, we’ve seen a (married) congressman undone by tweeting photos of his genitalia and a well-regarded cable news talking head refer to President Obama as a word for male genitalia on live morning news. This lewdness isn’t the extent of the rudeness, which on a day-to-day basis tends toward partisan name-calling and overtalking on cable news. Texas governor Rick Perry accuses Fed chairman Ben Bernanke of “almost treasonous behavior.” *New York Times* columnist Joe Nocera calls Tea Party Republicans “terrorists” (he later apologized). This isn’t exactly new: “Politics has always been ugly,” Alkon says. (And, in the case of the dueling Aaron Burr and Alexander Hamilton, in 1804,



deadly for Hamilton.) “There just was a town crier and not a CNN that needs to have its day filled with diatribes.” As disgusting as their behavior might be, it doesn’t seem to keep these politicians from being reelected—or emulated at the next dinner party we go to, where we run into someone whose politics we don’t agree with. “They’re meant to represent their constituents,” Alford says. “So why do these representations often emphasize the voting public’s least attractive qualities? It’s like one of those caricatures you get at a street fair: Can you please exaggerate all my worst qualities, please?”

### **THERE’S NO INCENTIVE TO BE POLITE**

It happens to the best of us: We hold the door open for a mother and her unwieldy double stroller—then watch, gobsmacked and stuck, as the equivalent of a Union Pacific train of people steamroll in behind her. Note to self: Never extend that kindness again. Really, though, the next time you see that mom and her double-wide, you will do exactly as you did the first time. “The reason we get upset when things like that happen is that we still expect kindness,” Post says. “It’s kind of good news, in a funny way. When you’re upset about rudeness, it means you’re expecting something else.”

### **WE DON’T GIVE PEOPLE THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT**

When you’re looking for an outrage, it’s not that tricky to find. This is especially true for the Polite Police.

This past summer, an e-mail that a future mother-in-law wrote to her stepson’s intended wife went viral largely because it was a shockingly rude denunciation of the young woman’s behavior during a weekend at the family’s home in England. It starts with “It is high time someone explained to you about good manners. Yours are obvious by their absence, and I feel sorry for you.” From there, it only gets worse (“You do not declare what you will and will not eat”—despite the FMIL’s acknowledgment that the recipient is diabetic).

**Clearly, even those who consider themselves so well mannered could stand a little polishing.** “People who are arrogant and think they do no wrong are the worst because they never learn,” Alkon says. So perhaps the most fundamental step in making the world a nicer place is acknowledging your shortcomings: “Everyone thinks bad manners are what other people have,” Alford says. “People spend a lot of time pointing out bad manners. This is not unhelpful, but it would be even more helpful if you’d publicly acknowledge good manners when you see them.” Indeed, it might be most useful to stop playing the referee for the ever-expanding, occasionally arcane rules of etiquette and decide instead that you want to contribute to an overall sense of civility, esprit de corps, and understanding (or at least forgiveness). Or, as Alkon puts it, “I really don’t care what you do with your fork, as long as you don’t stab someone with it.”

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: COURTESY JOHN WOO; COURTESY ROSE LINCOLN/HARVARD UNIVERSITY NEWS OFFICE; COURTESY GREG SUTTER; COURTESY EMILY POST INSTITUTE

# PET PEEVES AND MAJOR OUTRAGES

## ★ HENRY ALFORD



*Vanity Fair* columnist, author of the forthcoming book on manners *Would It Kill You to Stop Doing That?*

**Pet peeve:** “I get irritable standing in line behind the customer who, post-purchase, colonizes the stretch of counter next to the cash register as Her Little Desk Space. Hey, lady—just because you bought a pack of gum doesn’t mean you live here now!”

**Rudest thing:** “A friend saw a restaurant patron dig a plastic spoon into the bowl of mints, lick the spoon clean, and then return the spoon to the bowl. My friend and I have a nickname for that person now, and the nickname is Hantavirus.”

## ★ LESLEY CARLIN



Travel etiquette expert for TripAdvisor, coauthor of two books on manners

**Pet peeve:** “If it involves the word *mucus* and/or has anything to do with the digestive process, wait till you’re in private to discuss it.”

**Rudest thing:** “Someone’s cell phone went off during the best man’s speech at my wedding reception. Not only was it annoying when it happened, we have it on video for all eternity.”

## ★ ANNA POST



Great-great-granddaughter of Emily Post, coauthor of *Emily Post’s Etiquette*, 18th edition

**Pet peeve:** “Being asked to hold on to my dirty utensils

between courses at a restaurant.”

**Rudest thing:** “It’s a tie between people who clip their nails—especially their toenails—in public and people who say, ‘Do you know who I am/who I work for?’”

## ★ ROBIN ABRAHAMS



Author of *Miss Conduct’s Mind Over Manners*

**Pet peeve:** “People who don’t RSVP promptly, accurately, or at all. I don’t understand why people find planning their social calendar so difficult.”

**Rudest thing:** “A bride who didn’t invite her friends’ spouses to her wedding, a boss who sniffed her employees’ food, and a massage therapist who fell asleep on top of a client.”

## ★ AMY ALKON



Author of *I See Rude People*; [advicegoddess.com](http://advicegoddess.com)

**Pet peeve:** “People bellowing into cell phones in public. If you wouldn’t march into a coffee shop and start shouting things, don’t think that having a cell phone on your ear makes it OK. The world is not your giant phone booth!”

**Rudest thing:** “Someone wrote in about a woman who would visit her sister and park across from her sister’s house, in front of the neighbor’s house. It is a public street, but the neighbor seems to think it is her private drive. The neighbor left a nasty note on the visitor’s car, attacking her, at length, not only for her supposed parking violation but also for being fat. Hateful, awful, and cruel.”

*Beth Dreher*



# The Reader's Digest

# 50

Manners keep us from acting like snobs and boors, and they are constantly evolving to keep up with the times. Knowing that they exist and why they exist is the first step to collective happiness. Here are a few that may help add a little civility to an increasingly uncivil world. You may not agree with every tenet. But you'll no doubt understand now why an eyebrow is cocked when someone chooses to ignore one.

## AT THE TABLE

★ **When helping a woman** pull her chair to the table, hold it and guide it as she does the same. Don't shove it against the back of her legs.

★ **If you're seated at a table** with eight or fewer guests, wait for everyone to be served and for the hostess to begin eating before you dig in. At a long banquet table, it's OK to start when several people are seated and served.

★ **All things not having** to do with food (and decoration) should remain off the table: keys, clutch bags, cigarette packs, sunglasses, BlackBerrys.

★ **Don't snap your napkin** open or unfurl it showily like it's an Olympic flag.

★ **If you prefer not to** have wine while dining out, don't turn your glass upside down, and don't make a big deal of saying you don't drink. Simply place your fingertips on the rim of the glass and say "Not today, thanks." This implies no judgment of those who wish to imbibe.

★ **Use your hand to shield** your lemon as you squeeze it into your iced tea so you don't inadvertently squirt your dining companion in the eye.

★ **If you're eating and** want to take a sip, dab your mouth with your napkin to avoid staining the rim of the glass.

★ **Grabbing a bowl of salad** or a saltshaker as it's being passed to someone

who asked for it is the equivalent of cutting in line: greedy and rude.

★ **On the subject of passing:** Dishes go counterclockwise, but if someone to your left asks for something, you can hand it directly to him.

★ **When you excuse yourself** to go to the restroom, just say "Please excuse me."

★ **When out with friends** or family—even at a fancy restaurant—it's OK to ask for your leftovers to be wrapped. But don't do it at a business lunch or dinner.

★ **Should you text at** the table at a social gathering? Farhad Manjoo on slate.com: "If you're in a situation where you'd excuse yourself to go to the bathroom, you should also excuse yourself before reaching for your phone."

## IN THE WORKPLACE

★ **Don't check personal devices** during a meeting attended by your boss or anyone else who can make her disapproval your problem.

★ **Don't pop up and** "prairie dog" beside someone's cubicle, holding a conversation as a disembodied head.

★ **Don't use a speakerphone** unless you're in your office and holding a meeting that's being attended by someone remotely. Alert the person you're speaking with that others are present, and close the door. FYI: Using a speakerphone at full

volume to go through your voice mailbox is the definition of annoying.

★ **When answering the phone,** state your name and place of business: “Widgets, Incorporated. Susan Smith speaking. How may I help you?”

★ **When leaving voice mails,** state your name, place of business, and number. Succinctly say why you’re calling. Repeat step one; say goodbye.

★ **Whoever arrives at a door** first holds it for the next person, no matter the gender of either.

★ **Don’t microwave stinky** foods in the shared lunchroom. (Come on.)

★ **When introducing people,** name the person of greater status first: “Mrs. CEO, I’d like you to meet the mail guy, Ron.”

★ **If you leave your** cell phone at your desk, turn it off. Particularly if your ringtone is “Who Let the Dogs Out?”

★ **Don’t say “Pardon me.”** Say “I beg your pardon.” The first is a command; the second, a request.

## **OUT AND ABOUT**

★ **At the airport,** don’t crowd the boarding area. And once on board, stow your stuff and get out of the aisle quickly.

★ **If you need to get up** during a flight, don’t yank the back of the seat in front of you as you do.

★ **Playground etiquette says** that a toy that’s been abandoned is up for grabs until its owner wants it back.

★ **Change the baby away** from other people and not on a table where someone might eat.

★ **Curb and clean up** after your dog.

★ **When getting into a cab** with your boss, go first so she doesn’t have to scooch across the seat.

★ **When a party guest makes** a racist or bigoted remark, say “I disagree,” and change the subject.

★ **If a guest at your party** is drunk, ask him discreetly if he’d like to lie down, if you can arrange for a ride, or even if he’d like to spend the night. Don’t let him drive.

★ **Don’t ask to bring** a guest to a wedding if your invitation doesn’t indicate you may. If you’re the bride or groom, don’t ask for cash. And “no wrapped gifts, please” fools no one.

★ **Keep to the right** on the sidewalk, and keep moving. Don’t stop to check e-mail, especially at a building entrance.

★ **If a cell phone call** is dropped, the person who initiated the call should redial—even if you’d wrapped things up.

★ **Don’t ask a person** with an accent, “Where are you from?”



# Don't use cell phones in a waiting room, checkout line, or bathroom stall (HEAVEN FORBID).

★ **If you use your iPod** with cheap, leaky earbuds, those near you hear your downloaded Lady Gaga as if it's being played on the world's tiniest buzz saw.

★ **Let people off** the elevator and hold the doors for others before you board.

★ **Remove your sunglasses** and earbuds to speak to someone.

## ON THE DEVICE

★ **If all you have to say** in your e-mail reply is "Thanks!" refrain from sending it. You're just clogging an inbox.

★ **Long "@" conversations** on Twitter bore other followers. Take them to Twitter's Direct Message (DM) or e-mail.

★ **Don't use cell phones** in a waiting room, checkout line, restaurant, train, or (heaven forbid!) bathroom stall.

★ **When talking to someone** in person, don't glance down at your cell phone to see who's trying to reach you.

★ **When instant-messaging**, always ask if now is a good time to chat.

★ **It's OK to piggyback** on a neighbor's free Wi-Fi as long as you don't hog it and do realize it's not secure.

★ **RSVP to legitimate** online invitations promptly.

★ **Things not to do** when e-mailing: shout in all caps, use colored fonts or clip-art emoticons, attach large files, forward an e-mail unless appropriate.

★ **You can e-mail thank-yous** for party invitations and birthday gifts given in person as long as you send each of them separately. (No cc's.) For mailed gifts, letters of recommendation, and wedding presents, a written note is still preferable.

★ **Brag all you want** on your Facebook page, but make sure you high-five your friends just as often.

★ **Work e-mails can be** sent anytime, but business texts should be restricted to one hour before the start of the workday to two hours after it ends, according to *The Modern Gentleman*.

★ **If you still own** an answering machine, make sure the outgoing message isn't annoying or twee.

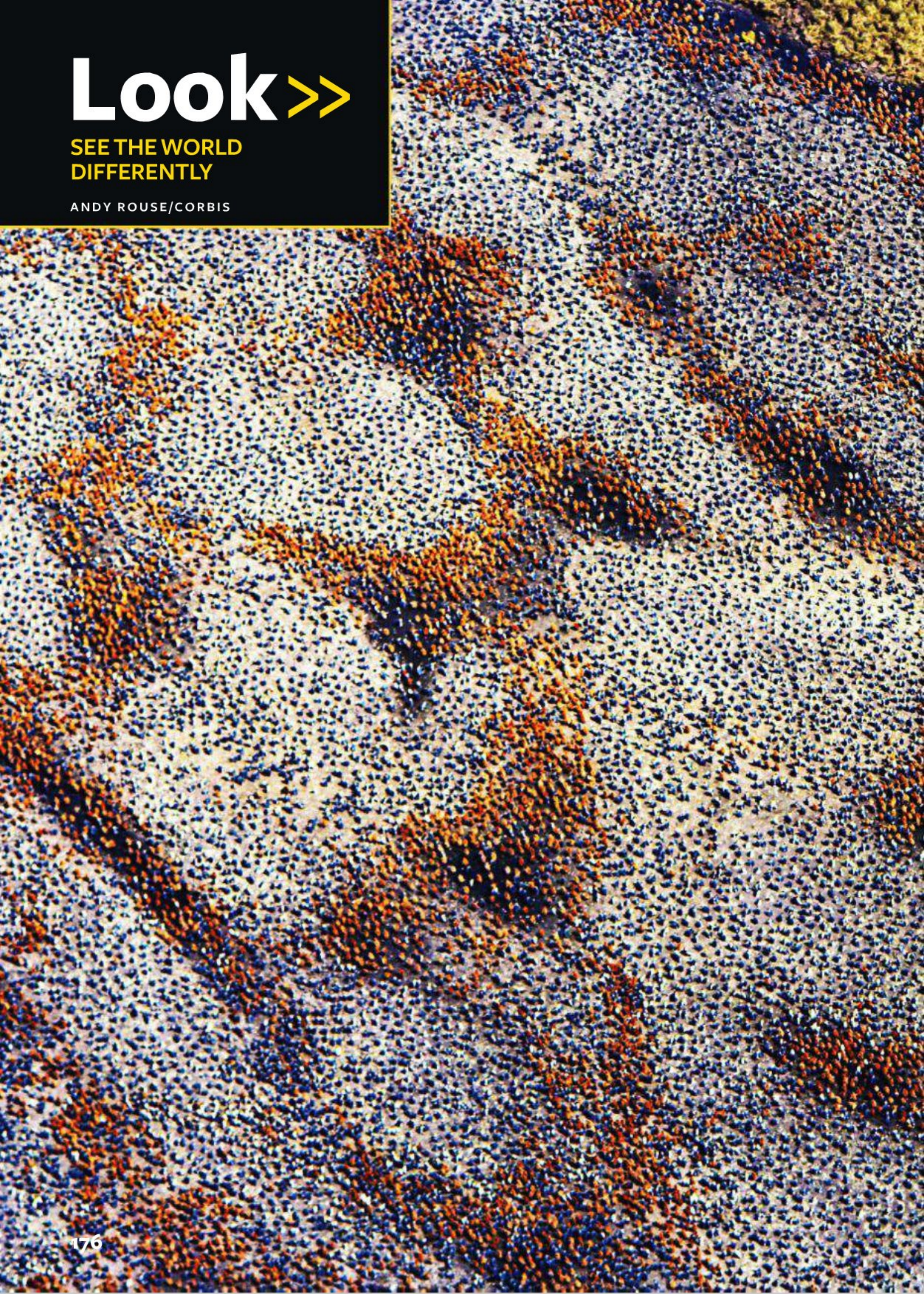
★ **It's OK** (and even advisable) to follow your boss on Twitter, but you shouldn't try to friend him on Facebook. Friends implies equivalency; followers, not so.

*Hilary Sterne*

# Look >>

SEE THE WORLD  
DIFFERENTLY

ANDY ROUSE/CORBIS









# ◀◀ Twice

The closer you get, the cuter they look. Seen from the air, these clusters of king penguin chicks account for the darker part of the pattern, with the lighter part created by the colony's adults. Officially known as *Aptenodytes patagonicus*, the chicks were hatched on South Georgia Island, in the remote South Atlantic Ocean. When grown, they'll sport the familiar penguin tuxedo, made distinctive by their species' bright orange ear patches.

MOMATIUK - EASTCOTT/CORBIS

# Health

The Reader's Digest **VERSION**

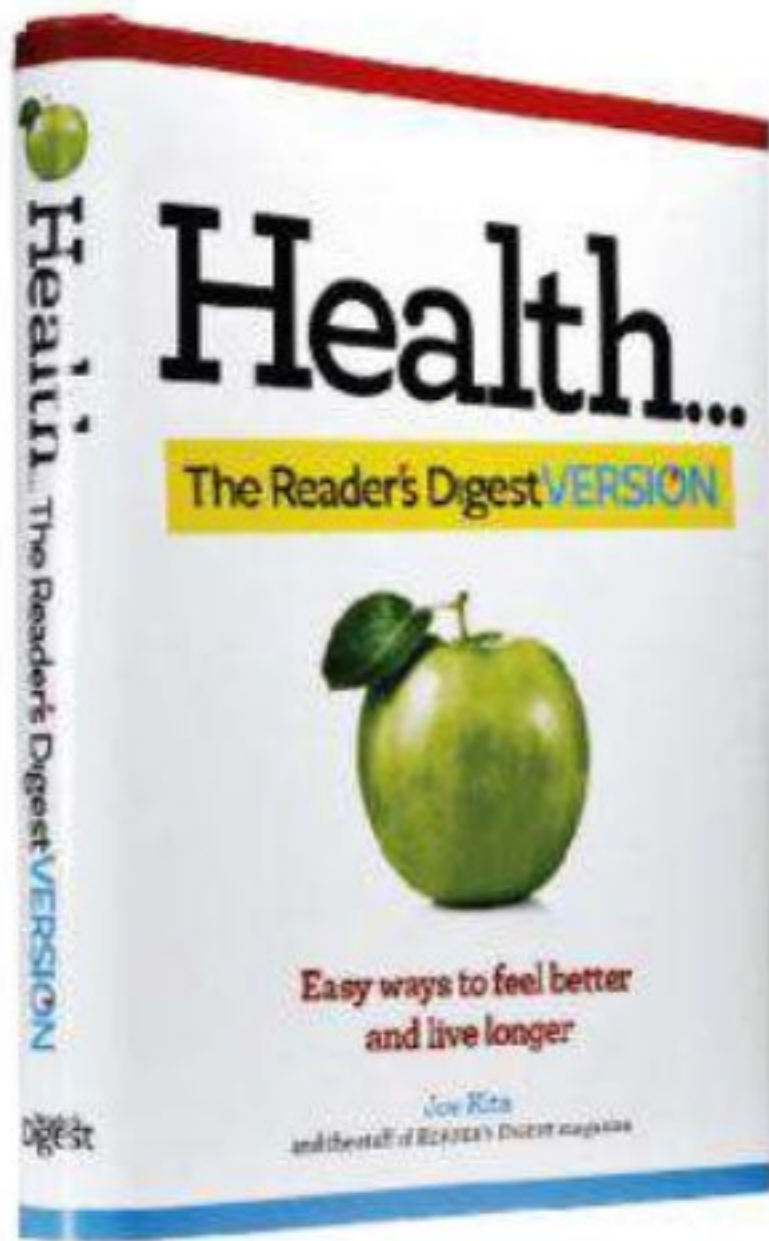


Fight pain, lose weight, feel great, live longer—here's what really works. An exclusive excerpt from our new book.

**R**emember when going to your doctor was like a visit to Mayberry? The waiting room was homey, the smiling nurses greeted you by name, and the doctor fixed everything right there, with nary a referral. And then you got to choose a lollipop.

These days, we're recognized by our files, not our faces, and the receptionist's first words are "Can I see your insurance





**Buy your copy of *Health ... The Reader's Digest Version* at [readersdigest.com/healthbook](http://readersdigest.com/healthbook).**

card?” And lollipops? Well, those promote obesity, you know.

Even worse, patients are losing their patience—with insurance that covers less but costs more, with doctors who have less time, with health information that gets more confusing. Staying healthy has become a source of stress, not satisfaction. Doing nothing has never seemed more appealing.

That's why we decided to offer a little medicine of our own—succinct, practical, straightforward advice on health and well-being from the latest book in our Reader's Digest Version series. Step into our office: The staff is friendly, there's no waiting, and proof of insurance isn't even required. And although we couldn't include a lollipop in the package, we guarantee you'll leave feeling this is one challenge you have unquestionably licked.

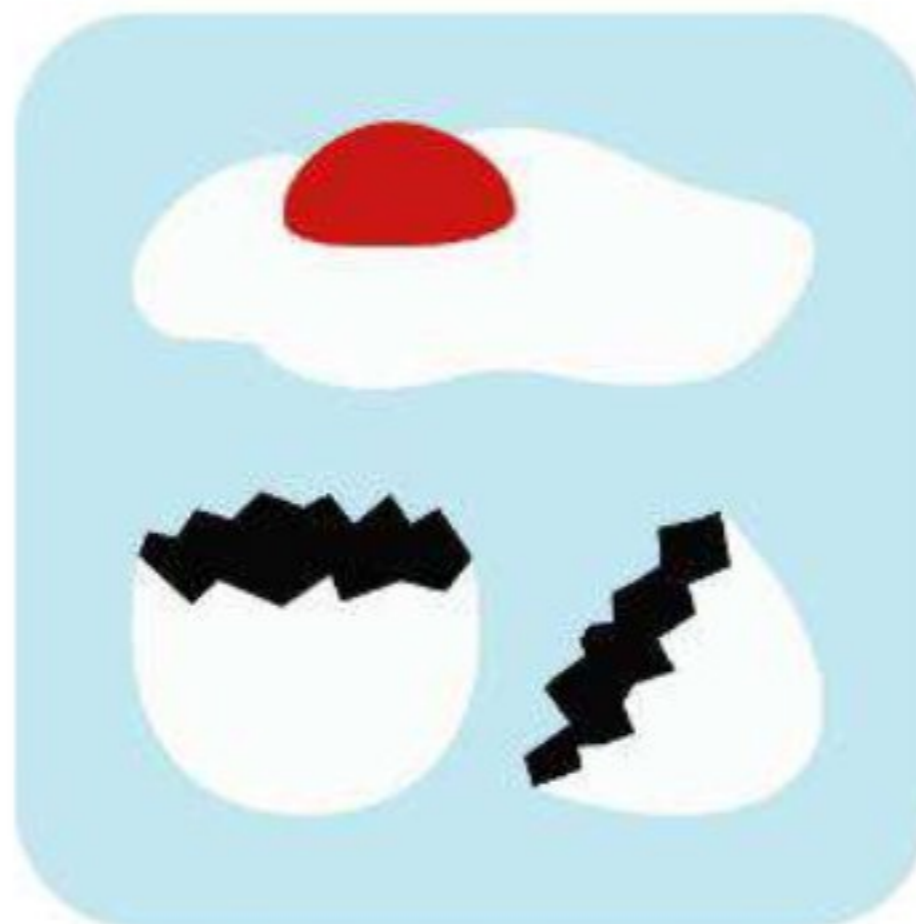
## How to Cut Down on Cravings

**S**ometimes it seems as if no matter how much we have, we want more. But getting it isn't necessarily good for us—just look in the closet, the garage, or the rental unit at the U-Store-It Village. Or look at your middle in the mirror. In fact, let's start there, since food cravings can be especially destructive to your health. Here's how to control them.

### **Determine what you're really hungry for.**

The next time you get a craving, ask yourself if you're stressed, sad, or bored. If so, you may be eating to fill an emotional void. Keep a “desire diary” for a week or more, and note your mood whenever

you're hit by an irresistible urge to chow down. If stress is your trigger, exercise more to relieve the pressure. If loneliness drives you to the Doritos bag, call someone. Remember that true hunger is easy to satisfy; any food will do. Emotional hunger, on the other hand, often manifests itself in desires for specific things like ice cream and fast food.



### **Get off the energy roller coaster.**

A second big cause of ravenous cravings is a diet that's too full of refined carbohydrates, which can

produce drops in blood sugar that prompt hunger. If you have a doughnut for breakfast, you'll get a nice jolt of energy from the sugar and simple carbs, but by mid-morning, you'll be craving more. To stabilize blood sugar and appetite, start eating more



“Never go to a doctor whose office plants have died.”

*Erma Bombeck*

protein and fiber. Tomorrow, try eggs and whole wheat toast for breakfast or a bowl of fiber-rich cereal with nuts, and see how easily you make it to lunch.

### **Stay hydrated.**

Many people think they're hungry when they're actually thirsty. Drink a glass of water and wait a few minutes to see if your craving subsides.

### **Distract yourself.**

Taste buds have a very short attention span. Pop a mint, brush your teeth, check e-mail, call a friend, or take a walk. In many cases, you'll find you weren't really hungry.

## **How to Stay Calm and Feel Better**

### **(No Valium required)**

One of the first things Navy SEALs, military pilots, and bomb experts master is how to remain calm under pressure. Retired Army Lt. Col. David Grossman, who trains them, always includes a lesson in breathing. The more excited or stressed you are, he explains, the quicker and shallower your respiration will be and the higher your blood pressure and heart rate will jump. Too many people live in this state of alert, which compromises physical and mental performance, in addition to health.

### **To begin changing how you breathe, do this:**

Put your hand on your belly and breathe normally. You'll probably notice that very little is happening down there. Now try

letting your belly expand like a balloon as you inhale slowly through your nose, then let it deflate as you exhale. That's how you should be breathing all the time. The additional oxygen will nourish every cell in your body and ease your stress.

## **How to Cut Your Cholesterol, Naturally**

Cholesterol-lowering drugs are cheap and effective—and if your doctor says you need them, we have no argument. But if it's a judgment call, consider this: So many people nowadays address every problem with a pill that overmedication is a serious health problem in itself. Besides, not addressing the root causes of high cholesterol, such as a poor diet and a sedentary lifestyle, puts you at risk of other chronic illnesses, like hypertension and diabetes—even if you take a pill for your cholesterol. All of this adds up to powerful reasons to try the three most

## **How to Make a Better Ice Pack**

Pour 1½ cups water and ½ cup rubbing alcohol in a ziplock freezer bag (quart size); seal the bag and throw it into the freezer. The alcohol will keep the water from freezing solid, leaving you with a moldable slush that conforms perfectly to knees and foreheads.

effective natural strategies for managing cholesterol:

### **Rough up your diet.**

The No. 1 foodstuff for lowering cholesterol is soluble fiber—it reduces the absorption of cholesterol in the intestine. One study showed that people who eat a high-fiber diet have about a 30 percent lower risk of heart disease than people who shun the stuff. Bonus: A fiber-rich diet will probably reduce your waistline, too, because these foods fill you up. Oatmeal, apples, barley, and sun-dried plums (also known as prunes) are all soluble superstars.

### **Follow this training plan.**

While any exercise is good for your health, some workouts are particularly effective at raising HDL, the good kind of cholesterol. First, the longer your aerobic workout (as measured by duration or distance), the better the results—intensity doesn't matter as much. A combination of aerobic and strength training can shave pounds—which can move your cholesterol numbers



in the right direction too. Try a weekly program that alternates two or three days of walks, runs, or bike rides at a moderate pace with two or three days of total-body resistance training. (If you've been sedentary, work up slowly under the guidance of a doctor and trainer.)

### **Become less of a man or woman.**

If you lose weight—as little as five or ten pounds—your cholesterol numbers will improve. Even better news: If you follow our first two tips, you'll likely drop pounds automatically.

## **How to End Back Pain**

**L**ower-back pain is the most common cause of disabling pain in people under 45—and almost everyone will suffer from it at some point in life. Fortunately, most cases can be managed or even eliminated with lifestyle changes. Here are a few little things you can do to make your spine smile.

### **Clean out your purse.**

Hanging a heavy weight off one side of

## **The Diabetes 11**

Based on the latest research gathered by the American Diabetes Association, here are the 11 best foods for fighting this disease. They're all rich in calcium, potassium, fiber, magnesium, and vitamins A, C, and E—the nutrients that appear to pack the most punch. (And remember: It's best to get these nutrients through food, not supplements.) **1.** Beans. **2.** Dark leafy greens. **3.** Citrus fruit. **4.** Sweet potatoes. **5.** Berries. **6.** Tomatoes. **7.** Fish (choose cold-water fatty fish, such as salmon, the kind high in omega-3 fatty acids). **8.** Whole grains. **9.** Nuts. **10.** Skim milk. **11.** Fat-free yogurt.

## How to Avoid After-Dinner Distress

There are 48 million cases of food-borne illness every year in the United States. One of the most surprising culprits: sprouts. In fact, some activists have called for FDA warning labels—no joke! The reason: The ideal growing conditions for sprouts are also ideal for bacteria. Protect yourself: Cook sprouts, or swear off entirely.

your body stresses your skeleton as muscles try to compensate. Weigh your shoulder bag, backpack, or briefcase on the bathroom scale. If it's more than 10 percent of your body weight, pare it down.

### Carry less cash.

Hey, big spender: Sitting on a fat wallet all day tweaks the spine and can compress a crucial nerve in the buttocks. That can cause sciatica—inflammation of that nerve. This problem is so common among men that it actually has a name: wallet neuropathy.

### Reach for heat before pills.

When back pain strikes, try treating it with a wearable heat wrap rather than ibuprofen or acetaminophen. These pads provide 104-degree heat for up to eight hours. And one study published in *Spine*

(what, you don't subscribe?) found they supply more relief than the maximum dose of nonprescription pain relievers and have longer-lasting effects.

### Listen to your tailor.

Imagine this: You're getting your pants hemmed when your tailor mentions that one of your legs is shorter than the other. Well, pay attention—any discrepancy greater than about an inch might put a strain on your back. If the tailor detects a minor difference, try a Dr. Scholl's-type insole in your shoe or consult a podiatrist about custom inserts.

### Assume the position.

When sitting at your desk or on a long flight, put something under your feet so your knees are slightly higher than your hips. This move eases pressure on the lower back.

## How to Buy Medicine Online—Safely!

Shopping online is convenient and economical, but the potential for trouble is bigger when you buy pills on the Internet than when you click on a jacket at [landsend.com](http://landsend.com). The National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP) has reviewed over 8,000 online-pharmacy websites—and concluded that only 4 percent appear to be complying with pharmacy laws and standards. Following a few simple rules can keep you safe.

“It is a mathematical fact that 50 percent of all doctors graduate in the bottom half of their class.”

Anonymous

### **“No prescription necessary”? No, thanks.**

No matter how tempting it may be to order a drug like Viagra without an embarrassing conversation with a doctor, if an online seller doesn't require a prescription, there's a good chance the pills you receive (if you get them at all) will be counterfeit, improperly formulated, or expired. (Besides, that face-to-face with your doctor may uncover important clues to better treatment.)

### **Check the hit list.**

The NABP publishes lists of “recommended” and “not recommended” online pharmacies at [nabp.net](http://nabp.net). Or just look for the blue-and-red VIPPS seal on the pharmacy's home page. It stands for Verified Internet Pharmacy Practices Sites and signifies compliance with NABP standards and state and federal laws.

### **Beware of those Canadians.**

Although plenty of Canadian online pharmacies are legit, the FDA prohibits businesses in other countries from shipping prescription drugs to Americans, because

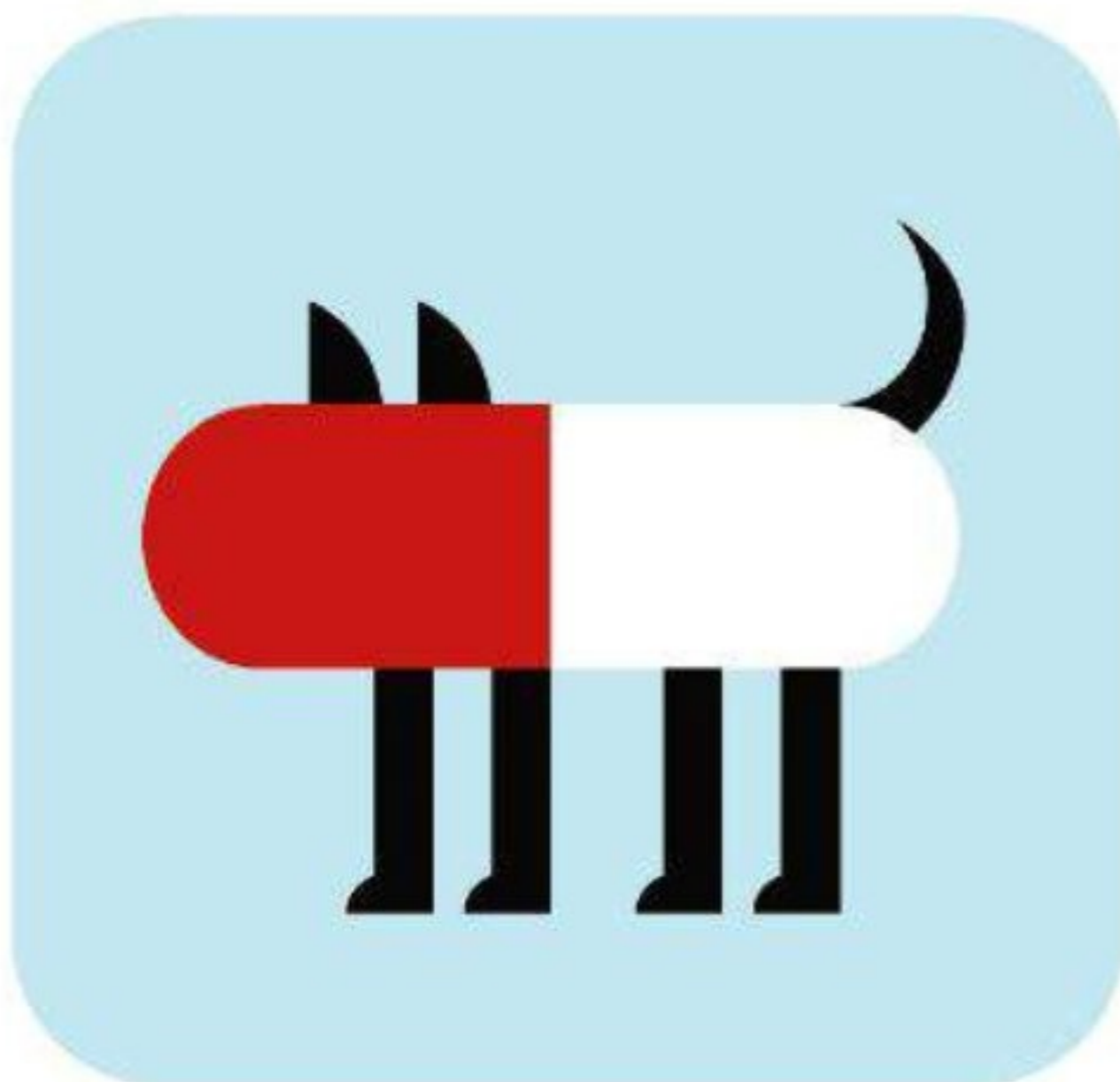
it can't ensure the safety and efficacy of those products. So despite how trustworthy our northern neighbors may seem, they're selling to you illegally.

### **Compare prices.**

Don't assume you always get the best deal online. By the time you pay for shipping and handling or overnight delivery, your savings may not be that substantial. To compare a NABP-accredited online pharmacy to one around the corner, use the search engine at [pharmahelper.com](http://pharmahelper.com).

### **Watch the weather forecast.**

Drugs can lose potency in extreme conditions (which is why they shouldn't be stored in your hot, steamy bathroom). In fact, researchers in Phoenix found that one asthma medication significantly degraded after as little as 30 minutes at 158 degrees—a temperature that's commonly reached in sealed metal mailboxes and delivery trucks in that part of the country. See if your meds have temperature recommendations on their labels. If so, either ask your online supplier to ship accordingly or buy locally.



## **Pills for Pets**

It can be expensive to keep your pets healthy, but ordering medications over the Internet carries the same risks for them as it does for you. The NABP accredits online pharmacies that sell prescription drugs for animals. Look for the brown *Vet-VIPPS* symbol on the site's home page or visit [nabp.net](http://nabp.net) for a list of accredited businesses.

## How to Live to Be 100

**S**ure, your genes have something to do with your life span, but the doctors we spoke to agreed that you can make a big dent in your risk of chronic disease by doing 12 simple things. What's more, the following checklist isn't just a prescription for living long; it's your ticket to living well.

### 1. Stop smoking.

Four years after doing so, your chance of having a heart attack falls to that of someone who has never smoked. After ten years, your lung cancer risk drops to nearly that of a nonsmoker.



comes with risks, though, so don't start on your own.)

**7. Know your blood pressure.** It's not called the silent killer just to give your life a little more drama. Keep yours under 120/80.

**2. Exercise daily.** Thirty minutes of activity is all that's necessary. Three ten-minute walks will do it.

**3. Eat five servings of produce daily.**

**4. Get screened.** No need to go test-crazy; just get the health screenings recommended for your stage of life. Check with your doctor to make sure you're up-to-date.

**5. Get plenty of sleep.** For most adults, that means seven to eight hours every night. If you have a tough time turning off the light, remember that sleep deprivation raises the risk of heart disease, cancer, and more.

**6. Ask your doctor about low-dose aspirin.** Heart attack, stroke, even cancer—a single 81 mg tablet per day may fight them all. (Aspirin

**8. Stay connected.** Loneliness is another form of stress. Friends, family, and furry pets supply vitamin F.

**9. Cut back on saturated fat.** It's the raw material your body uses for producing LDL, bad cholesterol.

**10. Get help for depression.** It doesn't just feel bad; it does bad things to your body. In fact, when tacked onto diabetes and heart disease, it increases risk of early death by as much as 30 percent.

**11. Manage stress.** The doctors we surveyed say that living with uncontrolled stress is more destructive to your health than being 30 pounds overweight.

**12. Have a higher purpose.** As one physician advised, "Strive to achieve something bigger than yourself." By giving back, you give to yourself.

# Caught in a Trap

**The crime looked horrific: kidnapping, torture, and sexual assault. But nothing was as it seemed.**

**By Christopher Goffard**

● FROM **The Los Angeles Times**

# H

**e kept thinking there had been a mistake.**

That was before the detective informed him of the charges and before the article in the *Ventura County Star*. “Man Held After Woman Found Raped and Tortured,” read the headline, and there was his name, Louis Gonzalez III, along with a quote from a police officer: “In 19 years of police work, this has to go down as one of the most brutal attacks I have ever seen.”

He had been standing on the sidewalk outside the Simi Valley Montessori School, having just flown in from Las Vegas, hoping to get a look at his five-year-old son’s new



kindergarten—standing there, waiting to scoop the boy up in his arms and fly him to Nevada for the weekend. The sky was beautiful that afternoon. Gonzalez remembered it felt like spring.

The officer arrived on a motorcycle and headed straight for him. As he snapped on the handcuffs, Gonzalez noticed little faces pressed against the schoolhouse glass and asked if he could be moved just a bit so his son didn't have to see.

Soon, he'd surrendered all the items that tethered him reassuringly to the rational, workaday world. The BlackBerry he used a hundred times a day. His credit cards and photos of his son. His shoes and socks, his shirt and jacket, his belt and slacks and underwear. He stepped into a set of black-and-white-striped jail scrubs, the kind his son might wear on Halloween.

**M**inutes before Gonzalez's arrest around 2 p.m. on February 1, 2008, Tim Geiges placed a frantic 911

call. By the account he would give consistently in years to come, he'd just returned from work and found his wife, Tracy West, naked and bound in an upstairs bedroom of their Simi Valley home.

The dispatcher tried to calm him. "Sir, somebody beat your wife up?"

"Somebody tied her up, and I just got home—oh, my God ..." He was whimpering. "I just untied her head just now. She's crying. I need somebody, please!"

He managed to say that his wife's attacker would be at the Montessori School, a mile away.

"Who is this person?"

"Louis. Louis Gonzalez the Third."

**Detective David Del Marto** found West, 33, in the emergency room of Simi Valley Hospital. Her face was swollen, her lip gashed, her hair torn out in chunks. A cord, found tied around her neck with a slipknot, had left an angry red line, and there were burns on her stomach and ring finger.

West was unequivocal about who had attacked her. It was Gonzalez, she said. He was her ex-boyfriend, the father of her son.

Del Marto made his voice gentle. "I need to find out what happened, OK? You know he's in custody, right? You don't have to worry anymore about him for now."

In a small, fragile voice, West explained that she and Gonzalez, 30, had been fighting over custody since their son's birth. She and Geiges were raising the boy, along with their younger daughter.

She said Gonzalez had ambushed her in the garage, dragged her to an upstairs bedroom, hog-tied her with her clothes, singed her with matches, and assaulted her sexually with a wooden coat hanger. Then, she said, he forced a plastic bag over her head and held it tight, and she feigned unconsciousness until he left.

"He told me he was gonna kill me," she said. "He told me that. Seven or eight different times."





***In the emergency room, Tracy West was unequivocal: She'd been attacked by her ex-boyfriend, Louis Gonzalez.***



“Did he have anything with him in his hands?”

“He had a bag. Like a little mini-duffel bag.”

During the attack, she said, she awoke from a blackout to find Gonzalez had placed mittens on her hands while he wore plastic gloves.

Del Marto thought this pointed to an uncommon level of sophistication—to a man who took extraordinary pains to avoid leaving fingerprints or traces of his DNA. In his report, the detective noted another detail she gave: Her attacker had worn overalls, as if to shield his clothes from evidence.

Del Marto thought West was lucky to be alive.

***A few hours after the arrest,*** Del Marto pulled the accused out of his cell.

He studied Gonzalez. He saw no

scratches on his face or hands and thought, The mittens.

“What is the accusation?” Gonzalez asked.

“That you assaulted Tracy at her house.”

“That I assaulted? At what time did this take place?”

Del Marto stopped him. He had to read him his Miranda rights, a delicate business he knew could end the interview fast. Gonzalez agreed to talk anyway.

Maybe he thinks he's smarter than me, Del Marto thought. The guy came off as a little arrogant. Gonzalez had

an impressive title: senior vice president for business banking at the Bank of Las Vegas.

This is about a custody fight, Gonzalez said. He insisted he'd never been to West's house. Didn't even know the address.

"You work for a financial institution," Del Marto replied. "It's not hard to get a property profile on somebody."

The attack could have taken as little as 15 or 20 minutes, he said, and it was just two or three minutes from West's house to the school where he was arrested.

What about evidence at the house? Gonzalez asked.

Del Marto thought of the gloves. "Somebody probably watches *CSI* quite a lot."

"I didn't do this," Gonzalez said. "I know you think I did it, but I didn't do it."

"Yeah, I think you did it. I do," the detective replied.

**G**onzalez and West had met in a study group at the University of Nevada in summer 2001. He was a high school dropout from the Bronx who had become a career-minded student; he wore pin-striped suits to class. She was smart, with brown hair and pretty hazel eyes, a vegetarian in flowered dresses who spoke softly.

Their relationship was brief. They had been apart for months when she called during a sonogram appoint-

ment. Suddenly he was listening to the heartbeat of their son.

In her fourth month of pregnancy, West met Gonzalez at a Denny's in Vegas. According to a police report, she said he became upset because she wouldn't go back to him. She said he slapped her and punched her stomach.

Gonzalez's version: They had gotten back together and argued because she was seeing another man and lying about it. He admitted to breaking her windshield, but only after she "went nuts hitting him," the police report said. He was arrested on suspicion of misdemeanor domestic violence. The charge was dropped.

The family-court battle began before the boy's first birthday.

Gonzalez's custody attorney, Denise Placencio, said West had tried relentlessly to curtail his time with his son, accusing Gonzalez of domestic abuse. The campaign continued, Placencio said, after West married Geiges and moved to California with the boy.

The courts allowed Gonzalez two weekends a month with his son. He would pick him up from the Vegas airport on Friday and take him back on Sunday, a knife twisting in his stomach as he watched his five-year-old loping down the Jetway, a gangly little guy with reddish hair, glancing back uncertainly.

In January 2008, Gonzalez sent an e-mail to West explaining that he wanted to see the boy's new Montessori school in Simi Valley. He would pick him up there on February 1 and

fly him to Nevada for the weekend.

West pressed for specifics. “What time are you planning on being here? Are you going to drive or fly?”

He would arrive by plane around noon, he wrote, and expected to get to the school around 2 p.m.

The e-mail exchange soon descended into acrimony. All these trips to Vegas were taking a toll on their son, West wrote. “Having to tell him that he has to go despite his obvious distress is not what I want.”

miliate her as much as humanly possible before killing her” and fleeing with their son, Deputy District Attorney Andrea Tischler wrote in court papers.

The judge ruled: no bail.

**When she met Gonzalez**, lead defense attorney Debra S. White was struck by his eyes. He looked distraught and tired and angry.

This is about the boy, Gonzalez insisted. She wants me out of his life.

**“This is about the boy,”**

**Gonzalez insisted. “Nail down my alibi and get me out.”**

Gonzalez answered that he hadn’t seen these signs of distress—his son seemed happy to see him. “My focus right now is to make the best of what little time I have with him,” he wrote.

West replied by writing that he had “proven time and time again” that he did not put their son’s needs above his own whims.

It was hardly the nastiest exchange Gonzalez could remember. But he found himself thinking about it as he awaited arraignment. His hope of a quick release now seemed remote, considering the charges. If convicted of all counts, he faced five back-to-back life sentences.

“His goal was to degrade and hu-

Nail down my alibi and get me out. He recited a detailed list, compiled over hours in his cell, of everybody who might have seen him around the time West said the attack occurred.

White called her sister, Leigh-Anne Salinas, her investigator on big cases. Salinas related to Gonzalez’s businesslike, hard-edged manner but didn’t think a jury would like him much. She was pessimistic about human nature and suspected Gonzalez might be guilty. She thought, Wow, this guy really thought this out.

Her task: verify Gonzalez’s whereabouts in the hours preceding his arrest. West had accused Gonzalez of attacking her between 12:30 and



**Detective David Del Marto drove the route Gonzalez had taken that day. The timing didn't add up.**

12:45 p.m. She knew the time, she told police, because she was about to leave to pick up her younger daughter early from school.

Salinas began retracing Gonzalez's movements, starting with his arrival at the airport in Burbank around noon. She walked into Enterprise Rent-a-Car on Hollywood Way, where employees remembered Gonzalez. He was the guy who needed a child's car seat. His receipt said 12:09 p.m.

Next, Gonzalez would have driven northwest to Simi Valley, a 28-mile trip. Salinas verified that Gonzalez was on his cell phone with another Nevada banker during the drive. Phone records confirmed this call lasted from 12:43 to 12:48 p.m.

At the Montessori School, Salinas's job proved tougher. School employees knew West, and Salinas sensed their

reluctance to help the man accused of brutalizing her.

Salinas was polite and persistent. School workers remembered Gonzalez arriving between 12:45 and 12:50 p.m. He greeted his son and briefly toured the school. One lady joked that she felt underdressed alongside his suit and tie. They told him to return in about an hour to pick up his boy.

Gonzalez said he walked to a bagel shop at a nearby strip mall. The manager, Jung Soon Shin, recalled Gonzalez coming in around 1 p.m. to order a tuna sandwich on a sesame bagel.

When Shin explained that she didn't take credit cards, Gonzalez had patted his pockets—no cash—and promised to be back.

At the Wells Fargo a few blocks away, Salinas discovered, an assistant manager named Mercedes Saunders remembered Gonzalez coming in to make a withdrawal. They'd chatted, and she found him calm and pleasant. Surveillance cameras confirmed

he was there from 1:14 to 1:38 p.m., a bored-looking man in a dark suit.

Back at the bagel shop, Shin saw him return sometime before 2 p.m. with cash to buy his sandwich. She remembered him because he wasn't a regular and because after he left, she had to fish his reusable red sandwich basket out of the trash.

Salinas called her sister. West's story didn't hold up, she said.

"Wow," White said. "He actually may be innocent."

**D***el Marto wanted to* find the duffel bag that West said Gonzalez had been carrying. Had all the items Del Marto couldn't find—the mittens, the gloves, the overalls—been stuffed in there and discarded?

He'd looked in storm drains and sewers. He'd searched roofs and freeway shoulders. He'd even inquired at Simi Valley mailbox companies, in case Gonzalez had been calculating enough to mail it to himself. No sign of the bag.

With doubts beginning to gnaw at him, he climbed into his car to time the route between the airport and West's house. He picked a Friday just after noon for his experiment, to replicate the conditions Gonzalez would have faced. He pushed his car to 80 mph. His partner held a stopwatch.

Even if Gonzalez had raced up the freeway, the detective discovered, he could not have arrived at West's house earlier than 12:42 p.m. And witnesses confirmed he was at the

Montessori School right around then.

Did Gonzalez commit the attack after he left the school and before he was seen at a nearby bank? Or perhaps after he left the bank and before he was seen buying a bagel?

The detective concluded that each scenario would have given Gonzalez a narrow window of opportunity at West's house: six minutes.

Was that enough time?

Enough time for Gonzalez to find her in her garage, knock her out, drag her up the stairs, put gloves on his hands and mittens on hers, and slip on protective overalls so that his suit would remain immaculate?

Enough time to strip her, tie her up, burn her with matches, sexually assault her with a coat hanger, and try to suffocate her with a plastic bag?

Enough time to dispose of all this evidence, along with a duffel bag?

Why did no one, before or after, notice that Gonzalez was nervous or out of breath?

He remembered how West looked that day, bruised and traumatized. But the medical records seemed at odds with the sexual assault she described: They showed no internal tears or bleeding.

Maybe, Del Marto thought, the gloves, mittens, and overalls didn't exist. Maybe they were props in a story.

He withheld judgment until he could see the footage captured by the security cameras at McCarran Airport in Las Vegas.

Getting it required weeks of calls to the Transportation Security Ad-

ministration. Finally, Del Marto and his partner were led to a private room in the bowels of Los Angeles International Airport and handed a disc.

Del Marto slid it into his laptop. He watched bodies shuffle through the security line in Vegas, taking off shoes, placing luggage on the conveyor belt. The detective trained his eyes on the screen for one thing in particular: the duffel bag. The airline said he hadn't checked bags. Had he carried it on board?

Ventura County prosecutors were not deterred. They intended to put West on the stand to tell her story. There she would face a defense team that had lined up ten alibi witnesses and was preparing to portray her as a pathological liar.

On April 21, 2008, the day before the hearing was to begin, prosecutors learned that West was in the hospital. They had obtained a note in what appeared to be West's handwriting.

"The DA asking me to relive my

***The detective froze the video and leaned forward. "I don't know how he could have done it," he said.***

Three cameras captured Gonzalez walking through the metal detector. Del Marto froze the frame and leaned forward. Gonzalez's hands were empty.

Del Marto turned to his partner. "I don't know how he could have done this," he said.

***The preliminary hearing*** in *State v. Gonzalez*, to determine whether he should face trial, was weeks away, and Del Marto was expected to testify on West's behalf. The detective did something rare in his 23-year career. He called the prosecutor to say that he was uncomfortable testifying in his own case.

horror of Louis Gonzalez attack is more than I can bear. For them it is a case. For me it is my life shattered," read the note. "I died of Rx overdose—suicide."

Later, in family court, West would say she didn't remember writing the note and blamed the hospitalization on drugs her psychiatrist had prescribed.

At 5:26 p.m. on April 22, prosecutor Andrea Tischler sent defense attorneys a brief e-mail: With West unavailable to testify, they were dropping the case. For now.

Jay Leiderman, one of Gonzalez's defense attorneys, hurried to the jail. Gonzalez was accustomed to odd-hours visits from the lawyer, but this



time, Leiderman was smiling. “You’re going home tomorrow,” he said.

Gonzalez’s father was there to greet him. So were Gonzalez’s mother, brother, sister, and aunts, sweeping him up in a crush of family. After 83 days in a solitary cell, things felt wrong. All these people in one place, all this open air, made him dizzy.

He had his freedom. Now he wanted a sandwich. Then he wanted to get as far away from Ventura County as possible and start figuring out how to reclaim everything else he’d lost: his son, his job, his name.

**The job turned out to be** the easiest—the Bank of Las Vegas valued his abilities.

*Lou, hey, welcome back ... So ...*

He got used to telling the story. It was all about the custody case, he said. She wanted me gone.

No one came out and said anything directly, but he sensed people were

**A bank security tape proved to be powerful evidence for Gonzalez’s innocence.**

wary. As if people figured that he hired a crack legal team and bought his way out of trouble. He knew certain things reinforced this perception: His accuser was walking free, after all, and retained custody of his son.

*How come your ex isn’t in jail? People kept asking.*

He didn’t have a good answer.

**Getting to see his son** proved tougher. He missed his sixth birthday. A custody judge withheld visitation, concerned Gonzalez might still face criminal charges.

He was finally allowed to see his son—eight months after his arrest. It was a brief visit at the office of a family reunification specialist.

Soon after, on his day off, Del Marto gave a deposition to the family law

attorney whom Gonzalez had enlisted to fight for full custody. All the physical evidence had been processed, the detective said, and none of it implicated Gonzalez.

“Based on my investigation, I see no reason why he should not be able to see his son.”

**Winning back his name** was hardest of all. Stories persist on the Internet. Once, a date told him she had Googled him, and he had to explain.

holes in West’s story and the numerous alibi witnesses.

Prosecutors did not want Gonzalez declared innocent. They knew a jury wouldn’t convict him but said they couldn’t be positive of his innocence.

In January 2009, nearly a year after Gonzalez’s arrest, Leiderman called him excitedly: The judge had sided with them. Gonzalez was soon holding a certified copy of the judge’s order declaring him factually innocent.

He drove to the bank and put it in a

## **What if he’d grabbed breakfast**

**before his flight? His alibi gone, he could be in prison for life.**

Leiderman thought it was not enough that the government dropped charges. There is such a thing as a declaration of factual innocence, he explained to Gonzalez. A judge can grant it. It is exceedingly rare—so rare that many lawyers go a career without seeing one. It means not just that prosecutors couldn’t make a case against you but that you didn’t do the crime.

The case remained on the docket of Ventura County Superior Court judge Patricia Murphy, who had earlier ordered Gonzalez held without bail. Leiderman petitioned the judge, trying not to get his client’s hopes up. He laid out the case, pointing out the

safe-deposit box. He figured he would need it if he wanted to continue in banking, where the blot on his record would otherwise scare off future employers. It would help in his fight to win custody of his son. But it hardly made him whole.

**Asked why West hadn’t** been charged with filing a false police report, James Ellison, Ventura County’s chief assistant district attorney, gave this explanation: “We could not say with 100 percent certainty that Tracy West was lying.”

Leiderman said he thinks the district attorney’s office is embarrassed and wants the case to disappear. “No



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one wanted to believe a woman would make something like this up,” he said.

Del Marto can't say for sure what happened in that upstairs bedroom. He ruled out the possibility that West's husband, Tim Geiges, inflicted the wounds on her; his cell phone records proved he was elsewhere as she lay tied up.

Now and then, he found himself thinking of something he discovered on West's computer. It was a link to a sexual-bondage website that West had recently visited, Del Marto said. When he asked about it, she replied that a friend had sent it as a joke.

The site featured men and women in elaborate restraints and a depiction of a double-loop slipknot with a little eyelet on one end. To Del Marto, it resembled the knotted cord a nurse had removed from West's bruised neck on February 1, 2008.

The detective tried to imagine West hating her son's father enough to injure herself in such a methodical way. Tying the cord around her own neck, cutting off clumps of her hair, battering her own face... and the other things. He'd seen people

give themselves a scratch or bruise to impersonate victims, but nothing like this. “My God,” he said, “to this extent?”

Del Marto said prosecutors asked him whether a case could be made against her. His reply: not without her confession. His supervisor praised his detective work, but Del Marto found the outcome unsatisfying. No one punished was a bad way to leave it.

**A**s the custody battle

staggered on, hearing by hearing, Las Vegas family court judge Bill Henderson wrestled aloud with the implications of the criminal case. He didn't believe Gonzalez had attacked West. Must he conclude, he asked, that she made it up? Perhaps someone else attacked her?

No, testified John Paglini, the court-appointed psychologist who had interviewed West four times: Either Gonzalez attacked her, or she lied.

West's voice was soft, at times barely above a whisper, when she took the stand last June. Her dark hair fell to her shoulders. She held her hands

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Statement required by the Act of August 12, 1970, Section 3685, Title 39, United States Code, showing the ownership, management and circulation of READER'S DIGEST, published ten times a year at 44 South Broadway Floor 17, White Plains, NY 10601, as filed on September 30, 2011.

The names and addresses of the publisher, editor-in-chief, and managing editor are: Publisher, Mark Josephson; Editor-in-Chief, Peggy Northrop; and Managing Editor, Ann Powell, of 750 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017.

The owner is Reader's Digest Association Inc., 750 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017, and the names and addresses of Bondholders, Mortgages and other Security Holders owning one percent or more of the total amount of Bonds, Mortgages or Other Securities are RDA Holding Co., 750 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017.

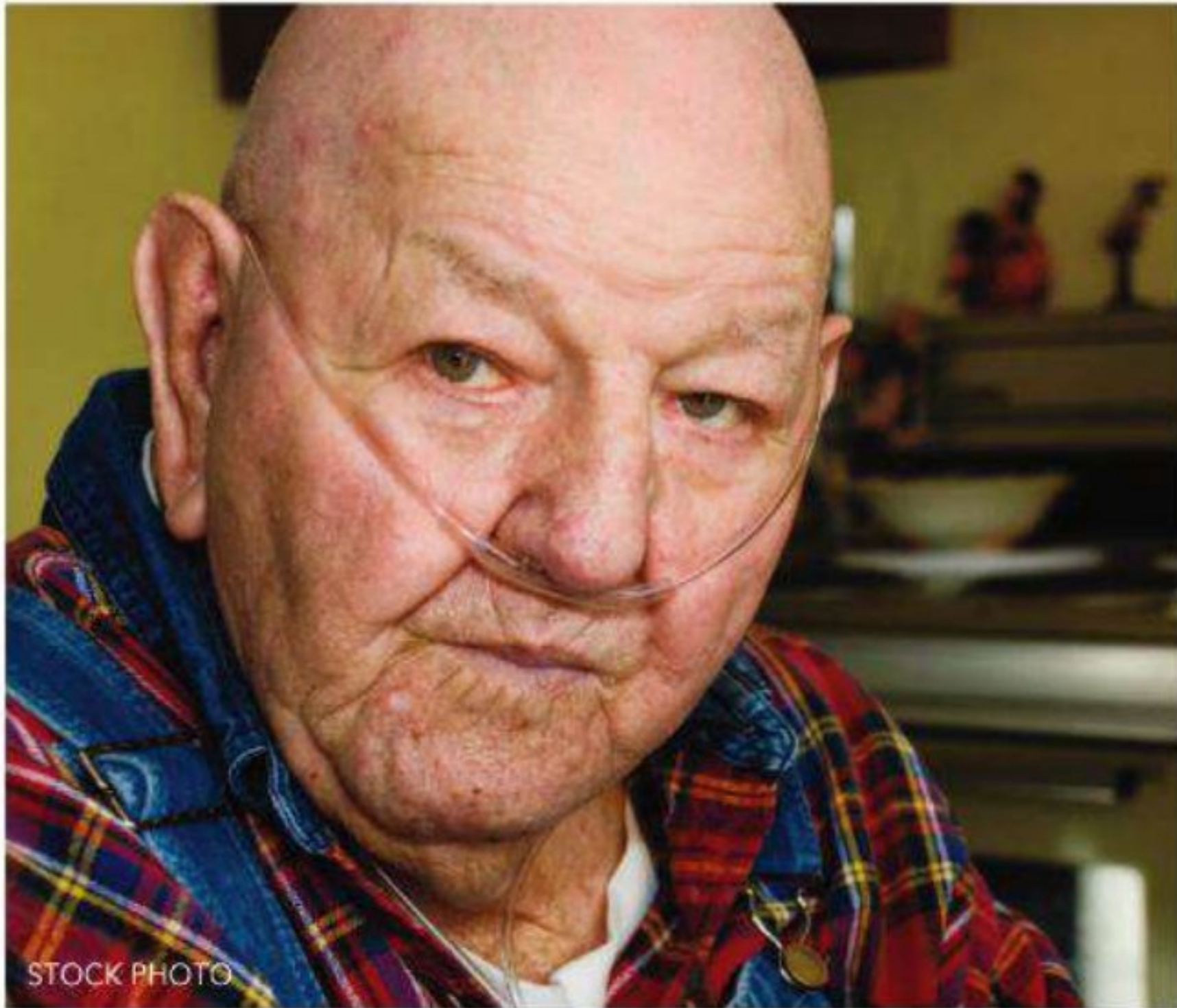
Annual subscription price: \$24.95.

Average number of copies of each issue during preceding 12 months, and of the single issue nearest to filing date, respectively, are as follows: Total number of copies printed (net press run) 6,181,552—5,104,277; paid distribution—sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales 227,736—207,088; paid mail subscriptions 4,930,998—4,841,809; total paid distribution 5,158,734—5,048,897; free or nominal rate distribution 499,954—550,307; total distribution 5,658,688—5,599,204; copies not distributed 522,864—505,073; percent paid: 91.16%—90.17%.

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—Irene R.

I have had both hips replaced and been through breast cancer. Regular exercise was not something I could do every day and still move. But with this wonderful machine I can! Thank you again. —Carol H.

After using the Exerciser Elite® twice a day for one week the swelling in my ankles went away. It has also helped my breathing, as I can get out and walk without having to stop and catch my breath! Thank you. —Shirley H., Florida

I am 97 years old and have edema in my left foot and leg. My daughter saw the Exerciser Elite® in an ad and encouraged me to try it. It is helping a lot and I feel alive again. Thank you! —Grace R.

I am an 88 year old woman with multiple health problems. After seeing the ad for the Exerciser Elite® I ordered it and use it daily. I can tell it has improved circulation in my legs and by doing that it has helped my balance and walking problems. To those of you that think that you can't do regular exercise anymore, try this piece of equipment and you will be amazed how much better you will feel. —Mildred F.

I have had such lower back pain that I could hardly stand it. I saw your ad two years ago and thought it wouldn't help me. But, I ordered one anyway. I have used it for four months now. I have very little back pain, am more regular, and I sleep much better thanks to the Exerciser Elite®. —C. Cordes

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demurely in her lap, a still presence with an air of vulnerability.

She deserved her son, she said. She talked about how close he was to his little sister, how they belonged together in California; her voice broke.

Her lawyer asked her about February 1, 2008. She steadfastly insisted Gonzalez attacked her.

“Did you do it to yourself?”

“Absolutely not.”

In her closing argument, Gonzalez’s custody attorney, Denise Placencio, said West had been trying to divide father and son for years.

“The last resort was to frame Mr. Gonzalez and put him in jail for life,” she said.

The judge concluded that West’s insistence on Gonzalez’s guilt “with no rational basis” was an attempt to remove the boy from his father’s life.

“She continues to maintain that he’s guilty of this heinous crime, and he’s not,” the judge said. She appeared to be a good mother otherwise, he said, and it was with “a heavy heart” that he awarded custody to the father.

The judge was not, however, prepared to accept the psychologist’s either-or view of the case—that if Gonzalez didn’t do it, West had made it up. What West believed about February 1, 2008, “remains unclear,” and the possibility that she suffered a “delusion” had not been ruled out, the judge said.

West would stay in her son’s life. She moved back to Nevada.



**n Fridays** and Sundays, Gonzalez and West exchange custody at a McDonald’s or Starbucks. If possible, he waits in the car and sends his mother in to do it.

Sometimes Gonzalez wonders how much worse things might have turned out. What if he had grabbed breakfast in Las Vegas before boarding his flight? He wouldn’t have needed that bagel in Simi Valley, so he wouldn’t have gone to the bank for cash and wouldn’t have been caught on security cameras.

His alibi evaporates, and he’s in prison for life.

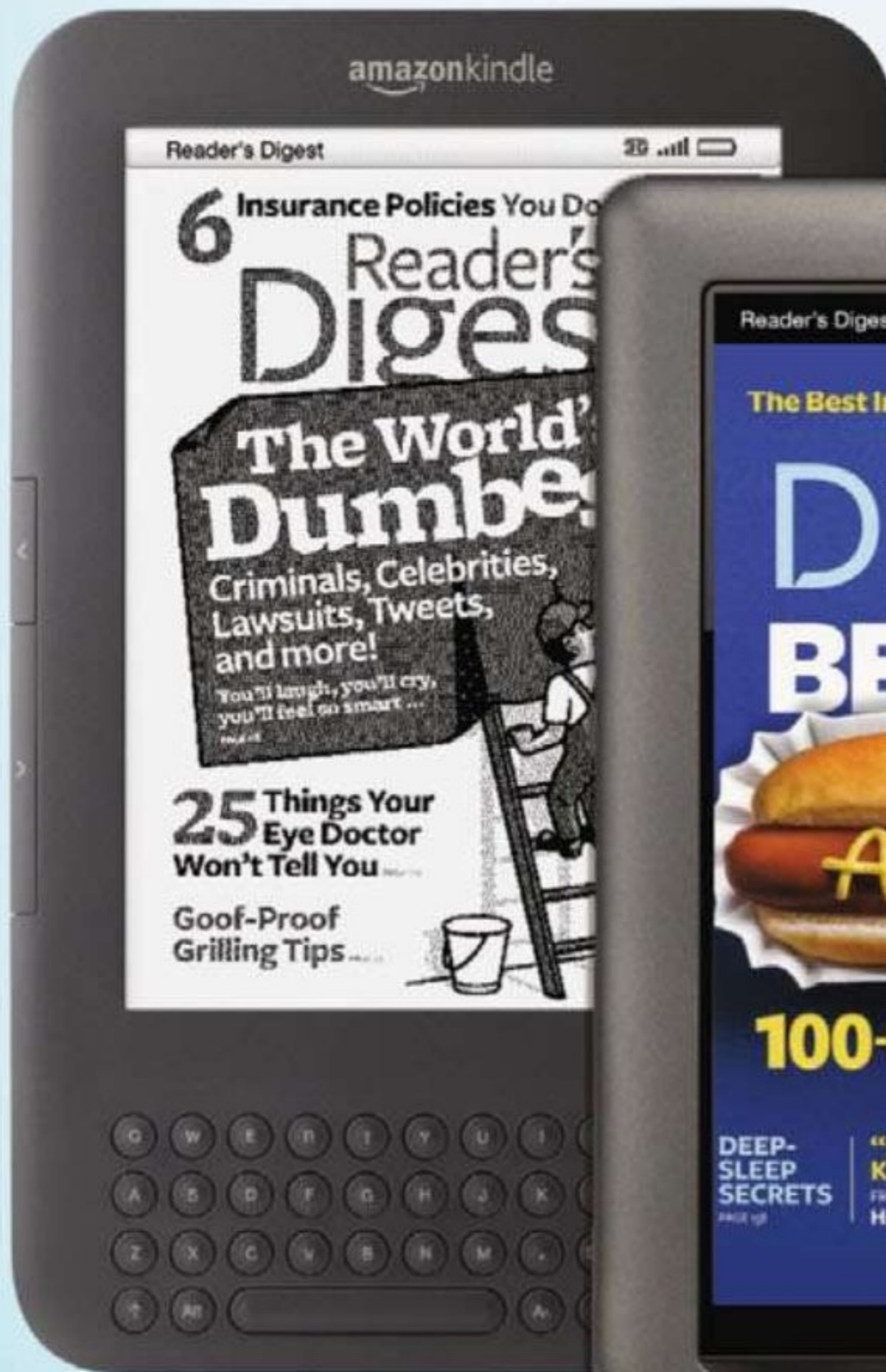
At the end of the day, his mind automatically replays his movements, hour by hour because it was his ability to do that that saved him. After his release, he developed the habit of meticulously documenting his whereabouts, eliminating time gaps that might leave him vulnerable.

If he’s in an airport or at a 7-Eleven, he makes sure the surveillance cameras get a good look at his face. Anytime he can swipe his credit card and sign his name, even to buy a pack of gum, he does it. He fills his wallet with receipts and the world with a conspicuous trail.

He feels most vulnerable when he is asleep, when, for six or eight hours a night, no cameras are watching, no witnesses are marking his presence, and no one but Louis Gonzalez III can say with certainty where he is. ■

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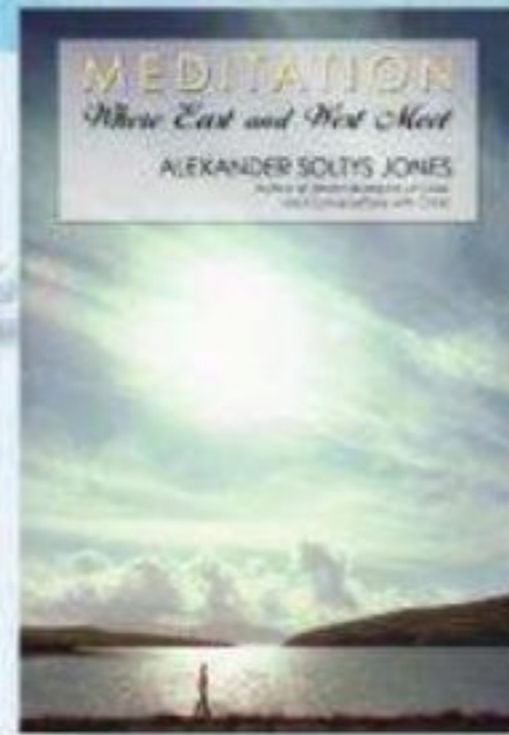


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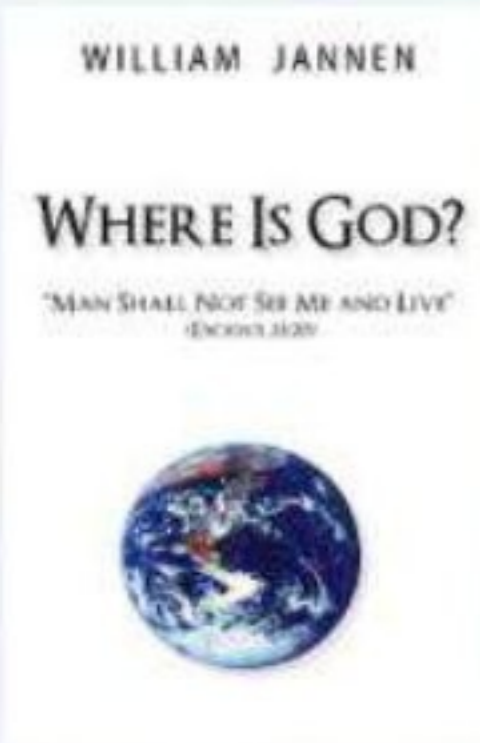
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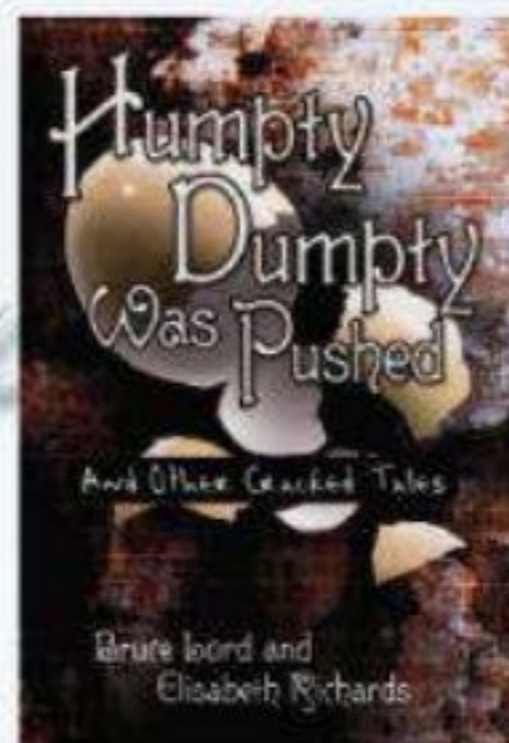
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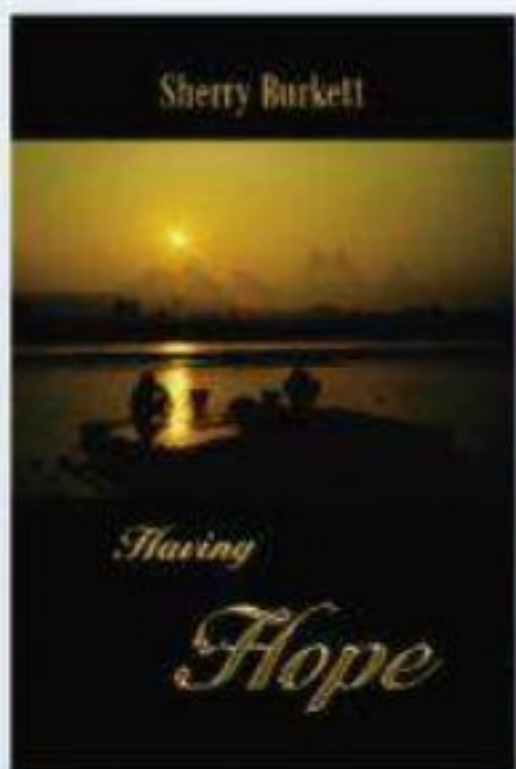
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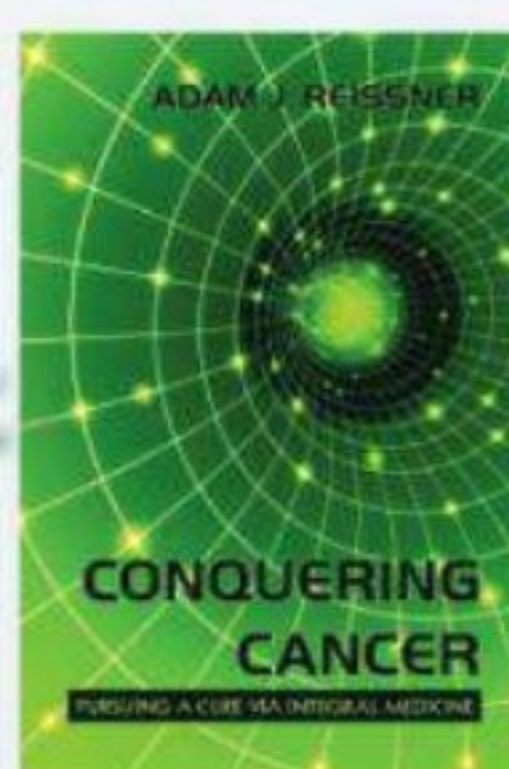
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# Quotes

If you don't know where you're going, any road will take you there.

*George Harrison*

Never tell anyone to go to hell unless you can make 'em go.

*Bill Clinton*

To the uneducated, an A is just three sticks.

*A. A. Milne*

Lust is what makes you keep wanting to do it, even when you have no desire to be with each other. Love is what makes you keep wanting to be with each other, even when you have no desire to do it.

*Judith Viorst*

To remember friendship is to recall those conversations that it seemed a sin to break off: the ones that made the sacrifice of the following day a trivial one.

*Christopher Hitchens*

He who limps is still walking.

*Stanislaw Lec, poet*

Thanksgiving is the one occasion each year when gluttony becomes a patriotic duty.

*Michael Dresser, columnist, Baltimore Sun*

One can go to war alone, but you can't build peace alone.

*Jacques Chirac*

It's one thing to feel that you are on the right path, but it's another to think that yours is the only path.

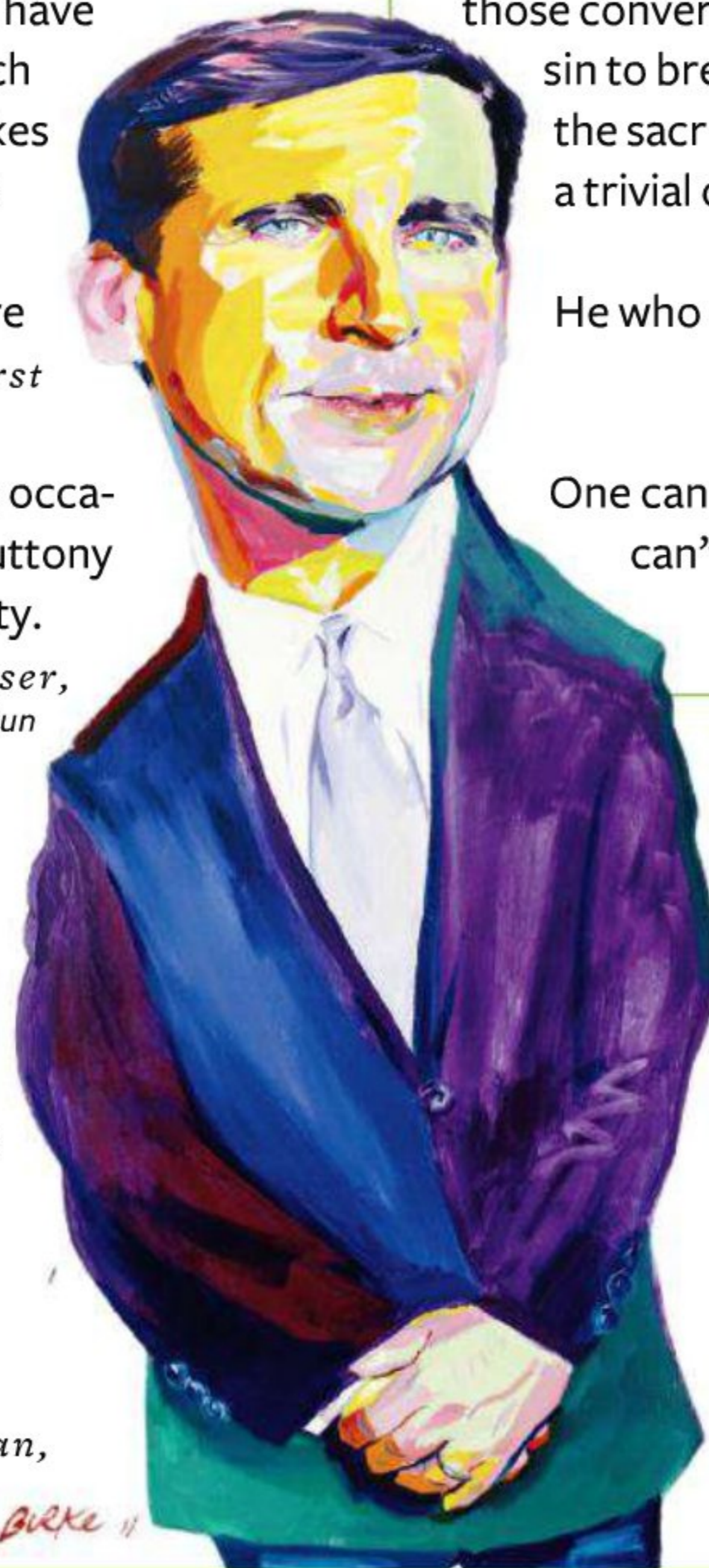
*Paulo Coelho, novelist*

Failure is just another way to learn how to do something right.

*Marian Wright Edelman, children's-rights activist*

Nothing to me feels as good as laughing incredibly hard.

*Steve Carell*



# OffBase

**M**y helicopter crew landed on a frigate in order to evacuate a sick sailor who, we later learned, was suffering from a skin infection called cellulitis. When we arrived, we asked a crewman what was wrong.

Pointing to the stricken sailor, he said, “She has cellulite.”

*Rebecca Fosha,  
New Orleans, Louisiana*

**For my nephew** Sam’s eighth birthday, my brother took him to a football game. During halftime, a Marine band played, and Sam studied them intently.

“Why the interest in the band?” his father asked.

“I’m checking to see if Ben and Matt from our synagogue are in it. They’re Marines.”

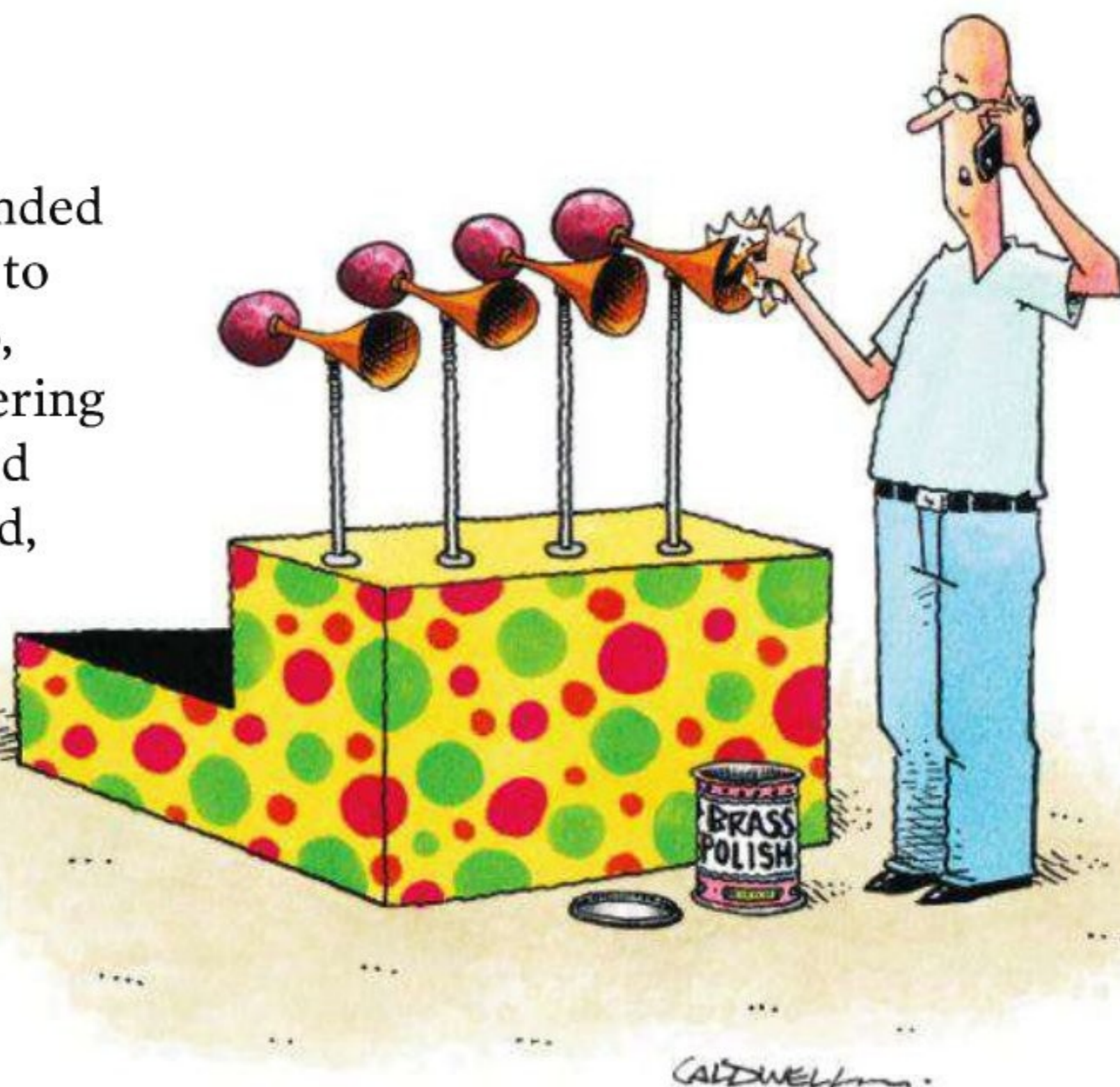
“But they’re in Afghanistan.”

“If I were in a marching band, I’d say I was in Afghanistan too.”

*Chana Pawliger, Atlanta, Georgia*

**During my time** in the Navy, everyone was getting KP or guard duty except me. Not wanting to get in trouble, I asked the ensign why.

“What’s your name?” he asked.



*“I’m flattered by your call, Mr. President. But I believe you’ve reached the wrong seal team.”*

“Michael Zyvoloski.”

“That’s why. I can’t pronounce it, much less spell it.”

*Michael J. Zyvoloski, St. Cloud, Minnesota*

**Visiting a new port** is always exciting, and when our destroyer docked in Kiel, Germany, it was no different. In fact, one of my men was awestruck.

“Look, Chief,” he whispered excitedly. “They have Volkswagens over here too!”

*Ralph Gross, Pinellas Park, Florida*

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# Word Power

EMILY COX & HENRY RATHVON

**Two of a Kind** Whether you're from Walla Walla, Washington, or Wagga Wagga, Australia, we double-dare you to master this month's quiz—all about words with repeating sets of letters. (Don't go gaga, though.)

See [page 214](#) for answers.

**1. baba** ('bah-bah) *n.*—  
A: rum-soaked cake.  
B: maternal relative.  
C: mild bruise or scrape.

**2. muumuu** ('moo-moo) *n.*—A: radical militant.  
B: lagoon in an atoll.  
C: long, loose dress.

**3. pupu** ('poo-poo) *n.*—A: tree with yellow fruit. B: sea breeze.  
C: Asian appetizer.

**4. chichi** ('shee-shee) *adj.*—A: frigid, icy.  
B: loose, lanky.  
C: showy, frilly.

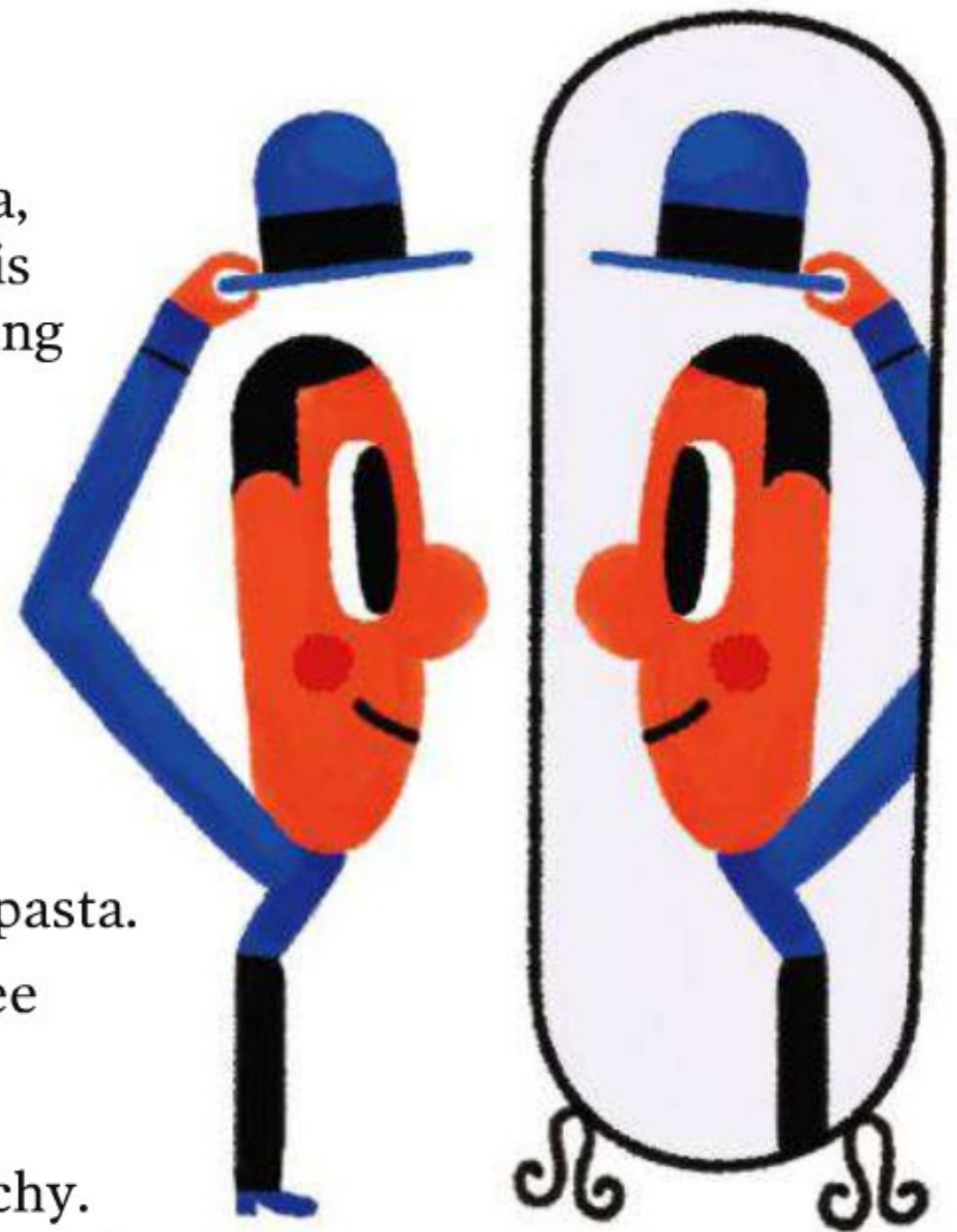
**5. Isis** ('eye-sis) *n.*—  
A: fiery river of Hades.  
B: Egyptian nature goddess.  
C: rainbow personified.

**6. furfur** ('fer-fer) *n.*—A: about 1.25 miles.  
B: dandruff.  
C: bow-shaped pasta.

**7. tsetse** ('set-see or 'teet-) *n.*—  
A: type of fly.  
B: Greek hierarchy.  
C: opposing force of energy or gravity.

**8. chop-chop** (chop-'chop) *adv.*—  
A: sarcastically.  
B: intently. C: promptly.

**9. nene** ('nay-nay) *n.*—A: endangered state bird of Hawaii.  
B: forbidden behavior.  
C: cheap trinket.



**10. tam-tam** ('tam-tam) *n.*—A: pouty look. B: gong.  
C: skiing maneuver.

**11. chin-chin** ('chin-chin) *n.*—A: broom. B: type of dog.  
C: salutation or toast.

**12. juju** ('joo-joo) *n.*—  
A: West African music style. B: trophy. C: candy.

**13. couscous** ('coos-coos) *n.*—A: semolina dish.  
B: Moroccan beach strip.  
C: Congolese dance.

**14. meme** ('meem) *n.*—  
A: perfect imitation.  
B: recycling symbol.  
C: idea or trait that spreads within a culture.

**15. bulbul** ('bull-bull) *n.*—  
A: songbird. B: knobbed head on a cane. C: croak of a male frog.

## Deep Roots

Someone who's in **la-la land** is said to be in a dreamlike state, detached from the everyday world. The term itself, though, is rooted in a real place: Los Angeles (i.e., L.A.). *La-la land* was originally used to poke fun at the alleged eccentricities of Los Angelenos, and then it eventually expanded in meaning. Some also say it's a nod to the nonsensical "la la" lyrics often found in songs.





## Answers

**1. baba**—[A] rum-soaked cake. Nothing completes a holiday feast like Becky's homemade *baba*.

**2. muumuu**—[C] long, loose dress. Natalie was jealous of the authentic *muumuu* her sister brought back from her honeymoon.

**3. pupu**—[C] Asian appetizer. Art's favorite part of the meal? The *pupu* platter of fried shrimp and egg rolls.

**4. chichi**—[C] showy, frilly. As we'd predicted, Lucy got just what she wanted: an over-the-top, *chichi* engagement ring.

**5. Isis**—[B] Egyptian nature goddess. Certainly, Bob Dylan was inspired by the mystical *Isis* when he penned his famous song.

**6. furfur**—[B] dandruff. "I have a great remedy for that *furfur* on your dog's coat," Tiffany offered.



**7. tsetse**—[A] type of fly. Sleeping sickness, a disease marked by lethargy and confusion, is transmitted by the *tsetse* fly.

**8. chop-chop**—[C] promptly. Yes, the soup arrived *chop-chop*, but I seriously doubt it's homemade.

**9. nene**—[A] endangered state bird of Hawaii. A bird lover, Marty was delighted to see the *nene*

up close during his trip.

**10. tam-tam**—[B] gong. Lauren was fascinated by the *tam-tam* player in the orchestra.

**11. chin-chin**—[C] salutation or toast. Neville looked forward to saying "*chin-chin*" to his classmates at the reunion.

**12. juju**—[A] West African music style. Featuring a breathtaking beat, Alec's *juju* composition relies on heavy percussion.

**13. couscous**—[A] semolina dish. Our family's *couscous* recipe is five generations old.

**14. meme**—[C] idea or trait that spreads within a culture. The abuse of the word *like* is an unfortunate *meme* dating back to the '80s.

**15. bulbul**—[A] songbird. The *bulbul* makes frequent appearances in Persian poetry, Emily learned during her graduate studies.

## Sound Smarter

Our mother tongue can be tricky when it comes to **words with similar spellings**. Some deceptive duos: *collegiate* (relating to college) and *collegial* (relating to a colleague), *delegate* (to entrust to another) and *relegate* (to assign to a lower status or place), *homey* (relating to a home) and *homely* (plain or unattractive), and *homogenous* (genetically related) and *homogeneous* (of uniform characteristics, as a neighborhood).

### VOCABULARY RATINGS

- 9 and below: so-so
- 10–12: be-all end-all
- 13–15: out-and-out master

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# Laugh! :)

**T**he Three Wise Men sound very generous, but what you've got to remember is that those gifts were joint Christmas and birthday presents. Comic *Jimmy Carr*, from *Snark! The Herald Angels Sing*, by Lawrence Dorfman (Skyhorse Publishing)

## Stop the Presses!

*These holiday "headlines"—concocted by the satirists at the Onion—are completely fabricated. And yet they have the ring of truth.*

- Coal Now Too Expensive to Put in Christmas Stockings
- Study Finds Link Between Red Wine, Letting Mother Know What You Really Think
- Accountants Pack Times Square for Fiscal New Year
- Book Given as Gift Actually Read

From *The Onion Presents: Christmas Exposed* (Quirk Books)

**A man tells his** doctor, "Doc, help me. I'm addicted to Twitter!"

The doctor replies, "Sorry, I don't follow you ..."

Submitted by *Christine Schrum*, Sudbury, Ontario

**December 25 is** National Jews Go to the Movies Day!

*Jon Stewart*

**I identify with football players because I know what it's like to spend your whole life training for a large, jewel-encrusted ring.**

Comic *Sarah Blodgett*

**I want to have a kid** the way other people want to own stock in Google: I don't want to be responsible for it; I just want to go to parties and talk about how well it's doing.

Comic *Raquel D'Apice*

**Tinsel is really** snakes' mirrors.

*Stephen Wright*



*"So they bring a tree in the house and put all these shiny, dangling things on it, then freak out if I go near it ... This is why I drink."*

## English Witerature

Here are intentionally bad first lines from nonexistent novels, from the annual Bulwer-Lytton Fiction Contest:

■ Cheryl's mind turned like the vanes of a wind-powered turbine, chopping her sparrow-like thoughts into bloody pieces that fell onto a growing pile of forgotten memories.

*Sue Fondrie* (grand prize)

■ As his small boat scudded before a brisk breeze under a sapphire sky dappled with cerulean clouds with indigo bases, through cobalt seas that deepened to navy nearer the boat and faded to azure at the horizon, Ian was at a loss as to why he felt blue.

*Mike Pedersen*

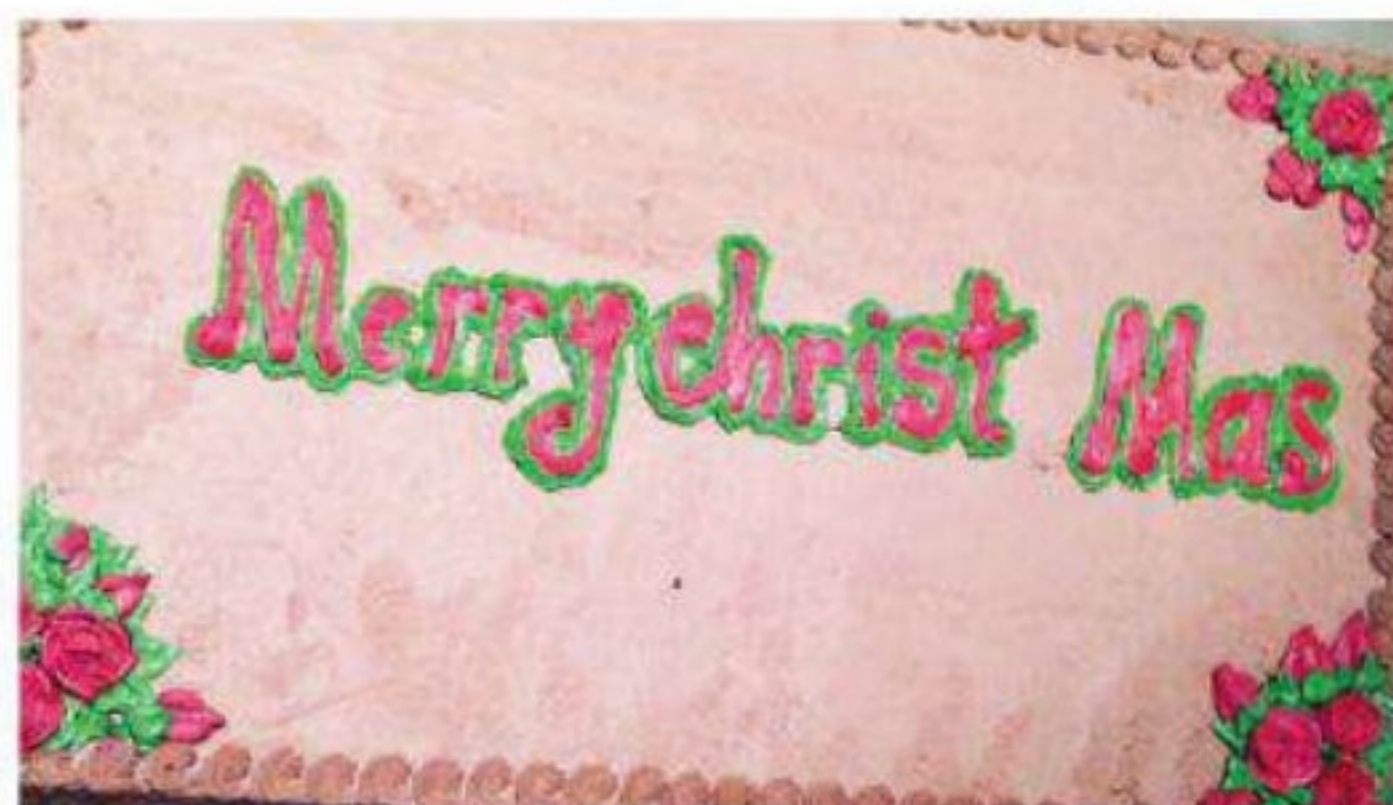
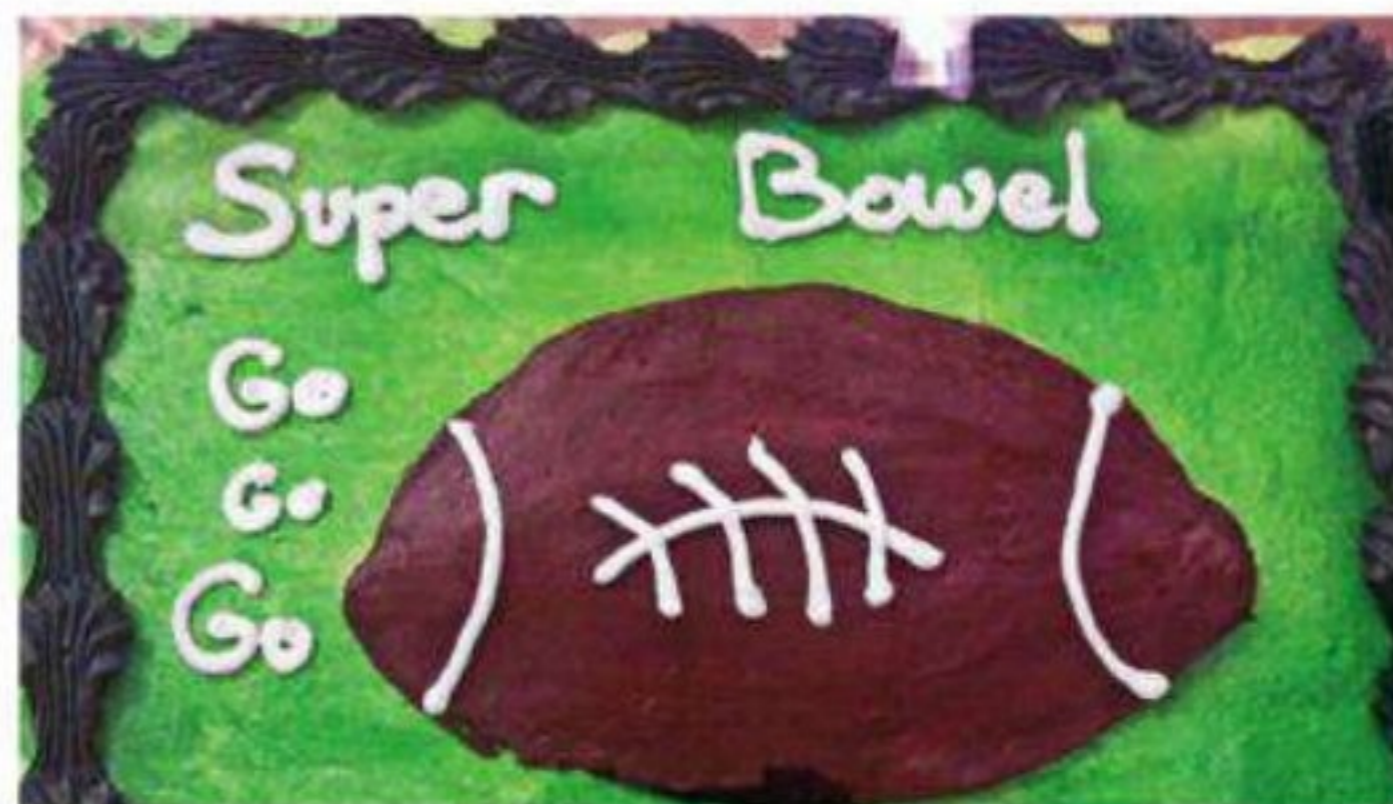
■ Convinced that the fabled Lost Treasure of Eggsbury was concealed within the statue of the beloved Sister Mary Francis in the village square, Professor Smithee would steal away in the darkest hour of each night to try to silently chip away at her impervious granite vestments—a vain and fruitless nightly exercise, he well knew, but it was a hard habit to break.

*Rodney Reed*

▶ **Your favorite new joke, funny anecdote, or crazy news story might be worth \$\$\$.** See [page 84](#) for details.

## Mixed (but Tasty!) Messages

Are you ordering a cake for the holidays? Take heed, lest you succumb to these adventures in miscommunication.



From *Wreck the Halls: Cake Wrecks Get "Festive"* by Jen Yates (Andrews McMeel Publishing)

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